

Michigan State University Scholarships for Indian Students

A curated brief-and-detailed funding guide — eligibility, award value, application process and what's changing next cycle

\$1,250–\$15,000/yr

Typical award range across schemes

7

Scholarship routes covered

Nov 1

Early Action deadline for max. consideration

Prepared for: **Prospective Indian applicant (first-year/undergraduate)** | Source: admissions.msu.edu/cost-aid/scholarships/international | Compiled: **4 August 2026**

Figures are drawn from official MSU Admissions and Controller's Office pages current as of this date. Amounts, deadlines and eligibility are reviewed annually by MSU — always verify against the live webpage before applying.

1. The Brief (60-Second Version)

MSU's international scholarships are built almost entirely around **your application for admission** — for the flagship awards, there is no separate scholarship form. If you're an Indian student applying as a first-year undergraduate, the single biggest lever you control is **applying Early Action by November 1**, since that is what triggers "maximum consideration" for every scholarship on this list. Awards range from a modest \$1,250/year (Red Cedar, alumni-linked) up to \$15,000/year (President's Scholarship) — but MSU explicitly warns that meeting the criteria does not guarantee an offer, and only a limited number of considered students actually receive one.

Automatic for everyone (grade/rigor-based)	MSU Non-resident Scholarship — six tiers from \$3,000 to \$15,000/year, all international admits are automatically considered.
Best "extra" if eligible	Honors College Excellence Scholarship — \$13,000/year for international Honors College invitees, on top of automatic Honors consideration.
Niche but valuable	Red Cedar Scholarship — \$1,250/year, only for dependents/grandchildren of MSU alumni.
One-time, not annual	Presidential Study Abroad Scholarship — \$3,000–\$5,000 one-time, usable only for an MSU-sponsored study-abroad program.
Research-linked stipend	Professorial Assistantship — ~\$3,500/year stipend for 8–10 hrs/week of faculty-mentored research (Honors invitees).
Biggest pain point	Out-of-state/international tuition + fees run ~ \$45,000–\$46,000/year , with total cost of attendance (tuition, housing, food, books) near \$60,000–\$63,000/year — even the top \$15,000 award covers roughly a third of that.
Biggest forward-looking risk	This page and its award tables are for first-year (freshman) applicants only — MSU does not advertise a parallel list of international <i>graduate</i> scholarships here, so Master's/PhD-bound Indian students need to look at departmental/graduate assistantship funding instead.

Quick-Glance Comparison Table

Scholarship	Level	Amount	Type	Who it suits
MSU Non-resident Scholarship	Undergrad (1st-yr)	\$3,000–\$15,000/yr	Automatic	Every international admit — no action needed
Honors College Excellence Scholarship	Undergrad (1st-yr)	\$13,000/yr	Automatic (Honors invitees)	Top academic profiles invited to Honors College
Professorial Assistantship	Undergrad (1st-yr)	~\$3,500/yr stipend	Automatic consideration (Honors)	Research-inclined Honors/ homeschooled invitees

Honors College Distinction Scholarship	Undergrad (1st-yr)	\$5,000/yr	Automatic (Honors invitees)	Non-resident US citizens/PR or Canada/Mexico citizens invited to Honors — not for Indian passport holders
Red Cedar Scholarship	Undergrad (1st-yr)	\$1,250/yr	Automatic (if eligible)	Dependents/grandchildren of MSU alumni
Presidential Study Abroad Scholarship	Undergrad (in-course)	\$3,000–\$5,000 one-time	Apply after enrolling	Students doing an MSU-sponsored study-abroad program

Note: The Honors College Distinction Scholarship is restricted to non-resident U.S. citizens/permanent residents or citizens of Canada/Mexico — Indian nationals are **not** eligible for this specific award, even if invited to the Honors College. This is a common confusion point and is flagged again in Section 3.

2. The Detail — Scholarship-by-Scholarship

2.1 MSU Non-resident Scholarship **AUTOMATIC**

\$3,000 – \$15,000/year, renewable for up to eight consecutive fall/spring semesters as an undergraduate.

- **Award tiers:** President's Scholarship \$15,000 · Provost's Scholarship \$12,000 · Dean's Scholarship \$10,000 · 1855 Scholarship \$7,000 · Beaumont Tower Scholarship \$5,000 · Global Community Scholars Scholarship \$3,000.
- **Eligibility:** based on academic performance, with consideration given to the rigor and success of your overall high-school curriculum — no minimum GPA/test score is published; it is a holistic, competitive read.
- **Application:** none required — every international student admitted to MSU is automatically considered.
- **Decision timing:** released by mid-February for students who applied in time for the relevant cycle.
- **Renewal conditions:** must maintain international residency status for tuition purposes, enroll for and complete a minimum of 12 credit hours/semester, and remain in good academic standing; the award cannot be deferred to a later semester than your first enrollment.

Indian-student angle: This is the scholarship every Indian applicant should plan around — since it's automatic, your only real lever is submitting the strongest possible application (rigor of coursework, grades, essays) by the Nov. 1 Early Action deadline.

2.2 Honors College Excellence Scholarship

AUTOMATIC (HONORS)

\$13,000/year, over eight semesters, for a select group of international Honors College invitees.

- **Eligibility:** you must first be invited to the Honors College — there's no separate application; every MSU applicant is automatically considered for an Honors invite based on their record.
- **Selection:** awarded to a select group of non-Michigan-resident and international Honors invitees; not every Honors invitee receives it, as a limited number of awards are available.

Indian-student angle: Since Honors invitation itself is competitive and automatic, focus your application on demonstrating academic rigor early — there's no extra form to fill for this scholarship once you're admitted.

2.3 Professorial Assistantship

AUTOMATIC (HONORS)

~\$3,500/year stipend for 8–10 hours/week of faculty-mentored research or scholarly activity, renewable for four semesters.

- **Eligibility:** offered to a select number of international and homeschooled Honors College invitees based on a holistic review of academic records.
- **Nature of award:** this is a working stipend (research assistantship), not a tuition-fee scholarship — it compensates you for research hours alongside coursework.
- **Duration:** covers fall and spring semesters during undergraduate enrollment, renewable for four semesters (i.e., typically your first two years).

Indian-student angle: A good option if you want early exposure to faculty-mentored research in the US — factor the 8–10 hrs/week time commitment into your course load planning.

2.4 Honors College Distinction Scholarship

AUTOMATIC — NOT FOR INDIAN PASSPORT HOLDERS

\$5,000/year, over eight semesters.

- **Eligibility:** restricted to non-resident Honors College invitees who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, or citizens of Canada or Mexico.

Indian-student angle: Included here for completeness and to avoid confusion — Indian nationals studying on an F-1 visa are not eligible for this particular award, even with an Honors invite.

2.5 Red Cedar Scholarship

AUTOMATIC (IF ELIGIBLE)

\$1,250/year, renewable for eight semesters.

- **Eligibility:** for incoming first-year international students who are dependents or grandchildren of an MSU alum.
- **Renewal conditions:** same as the Non-resident Scholarship — 12 credit hours/semester, good academic standing, continued international residency status.

Indian-student angle: Only relevant if a parent or grandparent is an MSU graduate — worth mentioning proactively in your application/financial-aid contact if this applies to you, since it isn't always obvious from the standard form.

2.6 Presidential Study Abroad Scholarship

APPLY AFTER ENROLLING

\$3,000 or \$5,000 one-time award, tied to length of your study-abroad program (over 8 weeks = \$5,000; 8 weeks or fewer = \$3,000).

- **Eligibility:** incoming first-year international students, for use with an MSU-sponsored or co-sponsored study-abroad program outside the US.
- **Usage window:** must be used within your first eight semesters of undergraduate enrollment, or before completing your degree, whichever comes first.
- **How to claim:** notify the Office of Financial Aid directly at finaid@msu.edu once you plan to use it.

Indian-student angle: A nice bonus if you're keen on a semester in Europe/Asia during your MSU degree — but it's a one-time perk, not annual tuition support, so don't factor it into your core cost-of-attendance math.

2.7 #YouAreWelcomeHere Scholarship

AMOUNT VARIES

Amount varies, renewable annually for up to four years.

- **Eligibility & process:** listed among MSU's international scholarship regulations without a published fixed amount or standalone description on the main scholarships page — confirm current details directly with the Office of Admissions, as national #YouAreWelcomeHere programs typically target students from countries or backgrounds affected by travel/visa restrictions.

Indian-student angle: Because amount and criteria are not detailed publicly, treat this as a "check directly" line item rather than something to plan your budget around.

3. The Application Process

How Scholarship Consideration Actually Works

Unlike many universities, MSU does not run a separate scholarship application for its flagship international awards. **Your regular application for admission is your scholarship application.** The only exception is the Presidential Study Abroad Scholarship, which is claimed later, after enrollment, once you pick a study-abroad program.

- 1 **Apply as a first-year international applicant** through the MSU Admissions portal, choosing the "Early Action" option if you want maximum scholarship consideration.
- 2 **Submit a complete application by Nov. 1** — this includes the application form, transcripts, English proficiency proof (TOEFL/IELTS/SAT/MSU-ELT/MELAB for non-US students), and test scores if submitting them (MSU is test-optional).
- 3 **Automatic scholarship screening** — no extra form; MSU evaluates every international admit for the Non-resident Scholarship tiers and Honors College consideration as part of the same review.
- 4 **Early Action admission decision by Jan. 15** if you met the Nov. 1 deadline and selected Early Action on your application.

- 5 **Scholarship decisions released by mid-February** for the MSU Non-resident Scholarship specifically — separate from, and slightly after, your admission decision.
- 6 **Accept your offer and pay the acceptance/enrollment deposit** to secure your place — scholarships cannot be deferred to a later semester than your first enrollment term.

Documents an Indian Applicant Typically Needs

- Completed first-year application (via MSU's application portal), selecting "Early Action" if applying by Nov. 1.
- Official secondary school transcripts/marksheets (Class 10 and Class 12, or equivalent board records).
- English proficiency proof — TOEFL, IELTS, SAT, MSU-ELT, or MELAB, sent directly from the testing agency.
- SAT/ACT scores if you choose to submit them (optional, since MSU is test-optional) — ACT code 2032, SAT code 1465.
- Passport copy and financial documentation for the visa/I-20 process once admitted.
- Major preference on your application (changeable until May 1 for fall first-year applicants).

4. Key Pain Points for Indian Applicants

⚠ **Pain Point 1 — Scholarships close only a fraction of the real cost**

Out-of-state/international tuition and fees are estimated at roughly **\$45,000–\$46,000/year**, and total cost of attendance (tuition, fees, housing, food, books, personal costs) runs closer to **\$60,000–\$63,000/year**. Even the top-tier \$15,000 President's Scholarship covers only about a third of tuition — plan your visa financial documentation and family/loan funding around the full cost of attendance, not the discounted "after scholarship" figure, since US visa officers and MSU itself expect proof of the full amount.

⚠ **Pain Point 2 — "Automatic consideration" does not mean "automatic award"**

MSU is explicit that meeting the criteria for an award does not guarantee an offer, and only a limited number of considered students receive one. There's no published GPA/test-score cutoff for the Non-resident Scholarship tiers — it's a holistic, competitive read of your curriculum rigor. Don't assume a strong Class 12 percentage alone secures the top tier; the strength of your overall application (course rigor, essays, activities) matters.

⚠ **Pain Point 3 — The Nov. 1 deadline is a hard scholarship cutoff, not just an admissions nicety**

Applying Early Action by Nov. 1 is what "automatically ensures maximum consideration for all scholarship opportunities." MSU continues accepting applications until April 1, but applying later measurably reduces your scholarship chances even if you're still admitted — this is one of the most consequential dates in the whole process for Indian applicants used to later application cycles (e.g., January/February deadlines common elsewhere).

⚠ **Pain Point 4 — Easy to misread Honors-only awards as open to everyone**

The Honors College Excellence Scholarship, Professorial Assistantship, and Honors College Distinction Scholarship are all gated behind an Honors College invitation you don't apply for separately. Worse, the Distinction Scholarship specifically excludes Indian passport holders (it's limited to US citizens/permanent residents or Canada/Mexico citizens) — don't budget for it.

⚠ **Pain Point 5 — This page is undergraduate-first-year only**

Every scholarship listed on MSU's international scholarships page targets *incoming first-year* students. If you're applying for a Master's or PhD at MSU, none of these awards apply directly — graduate funding at MSU typically comes through departmental assistantships, fellowships, or research/teaching assistant (RA/TA) positions arranged at the program level, which is a materially different process from this admissions-linked scholarship list.

⚠ **Pain Point 6 — Renewal has real conditions attached**

All the annually renewable awards require maintaining international residency status for tuition purposes, completing a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, and staying in good academic standing. Dropping below full-time status without prior Office of Financial Aid approval, or a disrupted semester without an official leave of absence, can jeopardize continued disbursement — worth knowing before you make any mid-degree course-load changes.

5. Future-Driven Outlook — What to Watch for Your Intake

Application cycles open on a rolling annual basis — timing your intake matters

As of this guide, the fall 2027 first-year application is open, with the fall 2026 cycle already closed. MSU typically opens each new fall cycle's application in August of the prior year. If you're targeting a specific fall intake, mark the Nov. 1 Early Action date for that specific cycle as soon as the application opens, since scholarship-maximizing consideration is tied to it every year.

Tuition is rising ~2–5% annually — factor it into multi-year planning

Recent-year estimates show out-of-state/international tuition and fees rising roughly 1.8% year-over-year at the undergraduate level, with some graduate-program estimates budgeting for 3–5% annual increases. Because scholarship tiers (e.g., the \$3,000–\$15,000 Non-resident Scholarship bands) are not guaranteed to rise at the same pace, the effective share of tuition a scholarship covers may shrink slightly each year — model your four-year cost with a modest annual tuition increase rather than a flat number.

Test-optional policy may not stay static

MSU currently allows first-year applicants (including international) to apply without SAT/ACT scores. Test-optional policies at US universities have shifted back and forth in recent admissions cycles nationally; if you do have a strong SAT/ACT score, submitting it can still strengthen a scholarship-focused application even under a test-optional policy, and it's worth checking MSU's current stance shortly before you apply in case the policy changes.

Graduate funding path likely to matter more over time

Since MSU's public international scholarship list stays undergraduate-focused, Indian students increasingly aiming at US Master's/PhD study should expect to rely on program-level assistantships and departmental fellowships rather than a centralized "international scholarship" page — worth building a direct relationship with your target department's graduate coordinator well ahead of application, as funding decisions there are often made earlier and more informally than centralized undergraduate scholarships.

Suggested Application Timeline (for a Fall Intake)

- 1 **~13 months before intake (Aug, prior year):** Application for the target fall cycle opens — start your MSU application as soon as possible.
- 2 **10 months before (Nov. 1):** Submit a complete application selecting Early Action — transcripts, English proficiency proof, and any test scores must all be received by this date.
- 3 **7–8 months before (Jan. 15):** Receive your Early Action admission decision.
- 4 **6–7 months before (mid-February):** Scholarship decisions released for the MSU Non-resident Scholarship and related Honors awards.
- 5 **By May 1:** Finalize/change your major preference if needed; pay your enrollment deposit to reserve your spot.
- 6 **Following months:** Arrange I-20/visa documentation showing funding for the full cost of attendance (tuition minus confirmed scholarships, plus living costs), then apply for your F-1 visa.

Action Checklist

- ☐ Confirm the exact application open date and Early Action deadline for your specific target intake on admissions.msu.edu.
- ☐ Submit your complete application (transcripts + English proficiency proof) well before Nov. 1 — don't wait until the deadline day given international document processing times.
- ☐ Decide whether to submit SAT/ACT scores even though MSU is test-optional, based on how strong your scores are.
- ☐ Ask if a parent/grandparent attended MSU — you may be eligible for the Red Cedar Scholarship without realizing it.

- ☐ Budget for the full cost of attendance (~\$60,000+/year) for visa financial documentation, not the post-scholarship net figure.
- ☐ If pursuing a Master's/PhD, contact your target department directly about assistantships/fellowships rather than relying on this scholarships page.

Sources: MSU Admissions International Student Scholarships page (admissions.msu.edu/cost-aid/scholarships/international), International Scholarship Regulations (admissions.msu.edu/cost-aid/scholarships/international/scholarship-regulations), MSU Admissions International Applicants and Dates & Deadlines pages (admissions.msu.edu/apply/international), MSU Office of the Controller tuition rate pages (controller.msu.edu/student-accounts), and third-party tuition/cost-of-attendance aggregators (collegetuitioncompare.com, research.com) cross-checked against official MSU sources. All figures should be reconfirmed on the official Michigan State University website at the time of application, as scholarship values, eligibility and deadlines are reviewed and updated by the University each admissions cycle.

