

The Plastino Scholars Awards

Find out everything you need to know about applying for a Plastino Award this academic year!

Before viewing this presentation, please read all the material on the Plastino Scholars website ...and have a look at the list of awardees' projects from previous years!



What are the Plastino Awards?

- Study grants awarded to selected UD undergraduates who exhibit extraordinary talent, promise and imagination.
- They support a student's self-designed, off-campus learning experience that make a transformational difference in the lives of Plastino Scholars and others.



Why?

David Plastino, UD alum, a wants to give a handful of selected students a chance to pursue a passionate interest to a degree not otherwise possible.

- Learn more about him on the next slide!



Who is David Plastino?

- A very real person who takes a very real interest in this program
- He was a UD Chemistry major from Lancaster, PA; he now lives in Philadelphia
- He worked on Wall Street and retired at age of 53
- Now he is giving back to UD by creating the Plastino Scholars Award program



How much is a Plastino Award?

- The amount of each award will depend on the nature of the experience proposed.
- The maximum individual award is \$6,000.
- However, the amount awarded is based on your real expenses, provided in a budget (more about that later!)
- Actual award amounts vary depending on your project; usually they average around \$4,000+.



What is *your* dream and your passion?

Some possibilities:

- Your project can be humanitarian but need not be.
- It can be an intellectual or scholarly journey
- It can focus on changing the life of others . . . or on changing *your* life.
- Have a careful look on the Plastino website at all the previous awardees' projects—this should give you a clear idea of what kinds of projects get funded.



What sort of projects won't be funded?

- You can't be funded for a study-abroad program or for a paid internship. You cannot get academic credit as a result of your Plastino.
- You can't be funded for working alongside a professor who is organizing a project and you are merely an assistant. The idea must be yours.
- You can't use Plastino funding that supports or contributes to an NGO's or agency's existing charitable work (You can work *with* or *for* an existing NGO or agency, but the Plastino money must support you . . . *not* the organization)
- Plastino funds won't be given to students who simply want to join up with an existing student-focused volunteer program—or a program that finds an volunteer opportunity for you.



Plastino Scholars must demonstrate...

- Evidence of exceptional intellectual, creative, civic, or leadership ability
- The ingenuity to propose an experience that lets them pursue a passionate interest that goes well beyond the scope of an academic course, a normal summer job, existing internship, a volunteer position, or a service-based or enrichment program



Who can be a Plastino Scholar?

You can, provided that you:

- Are a UD undergraduate
- At the time of application, are enrolled for at least twelve semester hours/credits at UD
- Are returning to campus next year as a **student**.



To sum up, Plastino Scholars must have:

- A compelling commitment to the endeavor they propose...
- The imagination and resourcefulness to plan and budget that experience fully...
- Proven in their proposal that receiving this award is likely to permit them to do something that otherwise would not be possible.



Who will make the decisions?

The Plastino Selection Committee consists of the Plastino Director and three other UD professors from various UD colleges

- We read all the proposals
- We interview a very select few after Winter Session
- We choose the Plastino Scholars who will complete their Plastino Experience sometime over the next year



Timing your Plastino Experience

- A Plastino Scholar can propose an experience that will take place in summer, in Winter Session, is split between both summer and Winter Session, or take place during a semester off (but not during an academic study- abroad session).
- It cannot take place at the same time you are taking or enrolled in UD courses.



Plastino Timeline

- December of this year. Applications and letters of recommendation are due. No exceptions.
- Mid-February : Students find out if they are on interview list
- Late February...Interviews with Selection Committee.
- Mid-March: Plastino Scholar finalists chosen; finalize budget and meet with Dean
- Late March/early April: Scholar Awards are announced and checks mailed
- Awardees will complete their Plastino experience beginning in the summer of this next year and/or be finished by Winter Session of the following year.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications at each stage.



What should a proposal do?

1. Reflect your ability
2. Show how to advance your passionate interest in a demonstrable fashion and explain how this will affect you, your plans, and your life
3. Be concretely and coherently conceived and planned
4. Have a title; have a logical and definable duration and location, and justification of all aspects (e.g. this is much more than an “idea”—it’s real)
5. Be appropriate to the Plastino program and uphold all University rules, policies, and procedures
6. Be supported by a fully realized budget demonstrating that the experience has been planned in an efficient and economical manner



The application (download it)

There are three parts to the application.

1. Experience Abstract (250 words or less)

Title, purpose, duration, location, and so on. NGOs, agencies, people or other organizations you plan to partner with (if applicable)

2. Personal Statement/Scholars Experience Proposal (less than 5000 words)

Describe the experience you propose, why you are proposing it, and your qualifications to carry it out. Describe in full the organizations, groups, and contacts you will engage with and why.

3. The budget . . . Have a look at the sample budget and instructions on the Plastino website!



The third part of the application: a budget

A word of advice: your budget is **VERY IMPORTANT** because it demonstrates you have thought carefully about all aspects of the experience and its associated costs.

- List all the expenses connected with the experience as specifically as possible. Leave nothing out.
- Expenses should include: travel, visa, all food, living expenses, local transportation, airport transfers, passports and immunizations, & everything you can think of. If you omit stuff, we will grill you about it in an interview!
- For rough figures, a good budget travel book (we recommend the “Lonely Planet” series for travelers)

COSTS MUST BE “BUDGET-FRIENDLY,” APPROPRIATE AND REALISTIC FOR A STUDENT WHILE KEEPING SAFETY IN MIND



The budget, continued

Do not forget visa costs and shots—they can be hefty!

Wherever possible all expenses should be actual rather than estimated (of course we understand that things might change)

No expensive equipment or gear (e.g. costly things you will end up keeping)

No gifts to sponsors or to hosts

No expenses/fees that fund a sponsor, an organization, or institution (e.g. volunteer organizations that require sponsorship to participate; tuition fees) (Check with Plastino Director if you have questions)



The proposal should ...

- **Include** letters of support or explanatory material from NGOs, agencies, organizations, or individuals with which you will be working, if applicable
- **Not include** other written materials, slides, pictures, portfolios, or any other additional items



Recommendation Letters are Required

- From two individuals who are in a position to:
 - Assess the talent/promise you cite as the basis for your consideration as a Plastino Scholar
 - Comment on the likely benefit and feasibility of the proposed project.
- At least one of your recommenders must be a university professor or instructor (not a teaching assistant)
- Have your recommenders send their letters separately from your application



The application: final items

- Include your résumé and a transcript (unofficial transcripts are acceptable) and sign the application
- Check for mistakes, typos, bad grammar (the program rewards passion *and* ability)
- Information about where to send it and due dates are on the application, available on the Plastino website



How many people will be selected?

- We don't know
- Last time there were three
- There could be as many as six
- Infrequently have we given a Plastino to a collaborative project to two people—however, this requires that each person provides a separate proposal that describes their individual role in the collaboration, and discusses why this **MUST** be a collaborative project



If you are chosen to be a Plastino Scholar...

- Your budget will be reviewed and adjusted if necessary.
- You'll receive the funds you were approved for in late March/early April
- Any research done on people might need to be cleared by UD's Institutional Review Board
- You'll sign release forms and provide other information to the Plastino director before your Plastino experience
- You'll be asked to keep a blog while you are gone and write a report upon return
- You'll be asked to serve as a Plastino "ambassador" when you return (for 2022, graduating seniors are exempted)
- You'll be invited to several dinners or meetings at UD where you'll talk about your project
- **But most of all: Your life will never be the same!**



David A. Plastino Scholars Awards

BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

Application materials can be found at:

<https://www.cas.udel.edu/plastino-scholars>

Email the Plastino Director, Dr. Patricia Sloane-White (pswhite@udel.edu) with any questions

Read all the information on the Plastino Website carefully and look at the previous awardees' projects!

