

# Athletic Scholarships



A U.S. Department of State Network



## EDUCATIONUSA ADVISES INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETES

THERE ARE OVER **520,000** STUDENT-ATHLETES IN THE UNITED STATES. OVER ONE THOUSAND U.S. COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALENTED STUDENTS TO PLAY FOR THE COLLEGE TEAM AS A MEANS OF PAYING FOR THEIR EDUCATION. *ARE YOU READY TO COMPETE?*

### QUESTION: WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

- 1 **Start early.** The application process is competitive and requires careful planning. Start your research approximately 18 to 24 months prior to your anticipated date of attendance at a university in the United States.
- 2 **Graduate from secondary school — “high school”.** Find your country in the National Collegiate Association (NCAA) International Standards for Student Athletes.
- 3 **Find a school:**
  - See the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sport listing to find a participating U.S. institutions. Division I schools are highly competitive and have the most scholarships available.
  - Consider your academic and athletic goals.
  - Ask your coach or other student-athletes for recommendations and contacts

#### Explore also these options:

- Over 250 small college athletics programs in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics ([NAIA](#)) also offer financial support for student-athletes;
- The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) is the second-largest national intercollegiate athletic organization in the United States with over 500 member schools in 44 states and also offers support for student-athletes.

4 **Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center** (or see the resource section below for NAIA and NJCAA institutions and certification).

- NCAA eligibility is based on a student-athlete’s academic readiness and amateur status.
- There are no deadlines to register. However, students must be certified before receiving athletic scholarship or competing with an NCAA Division I or II school.

5. Draft a sports CV that includes your accomplishments within your sport

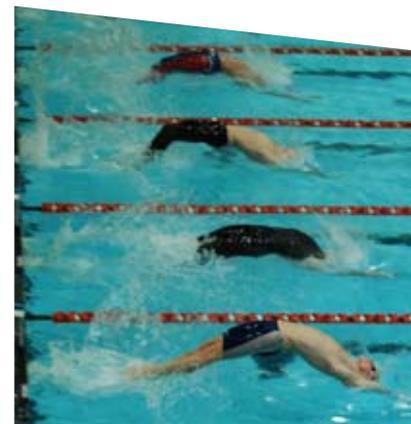
6. Write a cover letter to the head coach at each institution that explains both your academic and athletic abilities (this is where the sport CV comes in as an easy reference tool for athletic accomplishments).

7. Apply to chosen U.S. colleges or universities. Questions about application? Contact your EducationUSA center!

JOIN THE LARGEST ONLINE NETWORK CONNECTING SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETES AND COLLEGE COACHES!

Next College Student Athlete (NCSA) is the largest college athletic recruiting platform, with over 40,000 college coaches using NCSA to find athletes across 35 sports.

**TIP:** Search by academics and sports. Search broadly before adding additional points of interest to you.



# Key Points for Student-Athletes Considering U.S. Study



## KEEP IN MIND:

### NCAA Division I and II

- Students must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center
- Athletic scholarships may be available
- Scholarships may cover all or part of the cost of tuition and living costs for attending a U.S. college/ university

### NCAA Division III

- Each institution sets its own standards
- Athletic talent can attract other forms of scholarships & financial aid

## Understanding Athletic Scholarships: Everything You Need to Know

- Athletic scholarships cover tuition, fees, books, room, board, and sometimes living expenses.
- Offered at NCAA D1 and D2, NAIA, and NJCAA levels, with variations in the number of scholarships.

## How Much Scholarship Money Can You Get?

- Less than 2% of high school student-athletes receive scholarships, totaling over \$2.7 billion annually for D1 and D2.
- Most scholarships are not full rides, and amounts depend on the sport and scholarship type.

## Full-Ride Athletic Scholarships: A Rare Goal

- Only 1% of student-athletes receive full-ride scholarships.
- Different sports, divisions, and leverage can impact scholarship amounts.

## Ivy League Schools and Athletic Scholarships

- Ivy League schools provide need-based aid, not athletic scholarships.
- Don't let the lack of athletic scholarship deter you from pursuing an Ivy League education.

## Competing in College Sports Without a Scholarship

- Walk-on opportunities exist, allowing athletes to try out without a scholarship.
- More spots available than scholarships, offering alternative paths to join teams.

## Eligibility for Athletic Scholarships

- NCAA D1 and D2 programs require meeting academic standards and amateur athlete status.
- NAIA has its own eligibility center and requirements.

## Verbal Scholarship Offers: Non-binding Agreements

- Verbal offers are unofficial contracts; nothing is final until signing the national letter of intent.
- Committing early simplifies the recruiting process but should be taken seriously.

## Can Athletic Scholarships Be Taken Away?

- Scholarships can be lost due to injury, non-renewal, or ineligibility.
- Verbal agreements are non-binding, and coaches may decide not to renew scholarships.

## Exploring Other Scholarship Opportunities

- Academic scholarships are more secure than athletic scholarships.
- Consider need-based, merit-based and external scholarships for additional financial support.

**TIP:** Include a reference from a current or former coach in your correspondence with university coaches.

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES:

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has their "Eligibility Affidavit" and "Amateurism Questionnaire" available online as well.