



*American Guild of*  
**ORGANISTS**

**National Headquarters and The American Organist Magazine**  
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## **Organ Scholar Program**

### *Guidelines for Host Institutions*

#### I. About

The purpose of this organ scholar program is to create a skills-based investment in young organists who have a strong interest in church music. The scholar will acquire practical experience through an immersive full-time church music program. The host church should have an active and vibrant music program with a proven and capable leader.

#### II. Scholarship monetary information

The scholarship will be made to the qualified host institution for the sole purpose of the employment of a full-time organ scholar for 10 months (August-May).

1. The AGO National budget will make ten monthly payments of \$1,000 each to the host church for a total contribution of \$10,000.
2. The affiliated AGO chapter budget will make ten monthly payments of \$1,000 each to the host church for a total contribution of \$10,000.

The host institution must:

1. Abide by employment practices such as withholding taxes, FICA, and contributing toward health insurance.
2. Provide at least \$10,000 to match the other two contributions to this scholarship.
3. Provide appropriate housing to the organ scholar. This should be described as a guest house or apartment with private living quarters.

In addition to the monthly scholarship payment, the AGO will:

1. Reimburse up to \$2,000 total for expenses of interviewing and auditioning the 3 final scholarship candidates. Submission of receipts is required.

2. Provide the registration fee, 4 nights of hotel, and up to \$300 for transportation to attend the AGO National Convention in the summer of the year concluding the scholarship. If the scholarship concludes in an odd numbered year where no National Convention takes place, the AGO will pay the registration fee for the organ scholar to attend the next AGO National Convention in the following even-numbered year.

### III. Host Institution Eligibility Requirements

The Host Institution:

1. Must have a music ministry that is broad, dynamic, nationally recognized for excellence and able to offer considerable amounts of hands-on experience to a scholar. Any denomination is welcome.
2. Must be committed to mentoring the scholar actively and intentionally.
3. Must commit to fostering a safe and healthy work environment including abiding by the [AGO Code of Ethics](#) and the [Policy on Harassment](#).
4. Will be the scholar's only legal employer during the length of the Scholarship. This will include being responsible for payroll and all details related to employment.
5. Will participate in an exit interview at the conclusion of the Scholarship.
6. Will encourage the scholar to take one or more AGO certification exams during the year. Scholars are entitled to complimentary registration fees for these exams if taken during the organ scholar program year.

### IV. Application Process and Deadlines

Online application forms are available on the AGO website:

[agohq.org/organ-scholar-program](http://agohq.org/organ-scholar-program)

1. Prospective Host Institutions and Chapters should submit one application together according to the deadlines that are posted on the AGO website.
2. Completed applications should be submitted electronically.
3. The AGO scholarship committee in conjunction with the AGOYO committee will review all applications and will select and recommend a Host Institution to the National Council for a vote and confirmation. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application within one week of the vote of the AGO National Council. The selected Host Institution will be announced on the AGO website and in *The American Organist Magazine*.

## V. Organ Scholar Selection Process

The Host Institution and Chapter:

1. Will take a considerable role in advertising and recruitment of suitable organ scholar applicants.
2. Will take the lead, working with the AGO committees, on interviewing and selecting scholar finalists.
3. May and should request additional information from scholar candidates as well as conduct interviews and auditions.

When the AGO scholarship committee, AGOYO committee, and Host Institution have found an agreeable recipient as well as two alternates, their names will be submitted to the AGO National Council for a vote and confirmation. A decision will be made by April 1, 2022.

The selected Scholar, alternates, and all other applicants will be informed of their status by the AGO President and Councillor for Young Organists.

In the event that the selected Host Institution refuses to accept any of the Scholarship candidates, the AGO reserves the right to withdraw the scholarship and select an alternate Host Institution.

## VI. Contracts

Once the Host Institution, Chapter and the Scholar have been approved by the AGO National Council, contracts will be issued to the Host Institution, Chapter and to the Scholar for signatures.

## VII. Payment of Scholarship

Upon receipt of the signed contracts, AGO National and the affiliated AGO chapter will disburse the Scholarship. The scholarship will be paid to the selected Host Institution in monthly installments of \$1,000 for ten months, beginning in August of the program year. These payments will be made payable to the Host Institution, who will apply them to the Scholar's salary.

Failure to follow the policies and guidelines of the Scholarship by any party or failure of the Scholar to complete the Scholarship program will result in immediate termination of the Scholarship.

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Approved by the AGO National Council, April 2021.