

Destinations International Foundation HBCU Scholarship Program

Creating exposure, interest, and opportunities for students to thrive in the destinations side of the industry

Background

Destinations International recognizes and advocates the importance of cultivating a unified travel industry where everyone is welcome, where there is equitable access for all, and to help reshape existing power structures so that systemically marginalized voices and perspectives are heard and valued.

The Destinations International Foundation HBCU Scholarship aims to attract underrepresented and ethnically diverse students who are seeking a degree in hospitality management or tourism management. Since 2023, this program has provided \$104,000 in funding to thirteen students, along with valuable networking, educational, and professional development opportunities throughout the academic year. In 2025, Destinations International will provide upwards of 12 scholarships to eligible applicants.

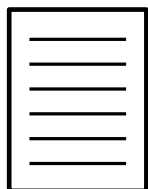
In October 2024, Destinations International published its 10-year vision for workforce diversification and retention. The continued evolution and impact of the HBCU Scholarship Program is a key part of achieving this vision.



Students receive \$8,000 in tuition assistance, event access, networking, mentorship, and professional development through the Destinations International Foundation HBCU Scholarship.

Beyond Scholarships: How Destination Organizations and HBCUs Can Partner Together

As DI enters the third year of this scholarship program in 2025, we recognize the opportunity to support relationships between destination organizations and HBCUs, in turn enriching the student experience. Destination organizations are encouraged to engage with HBCUs through recommended activations on page 3. Twice a year, we will invite all destinations to come together and share best practices, challenges, and inspiration for continued success.

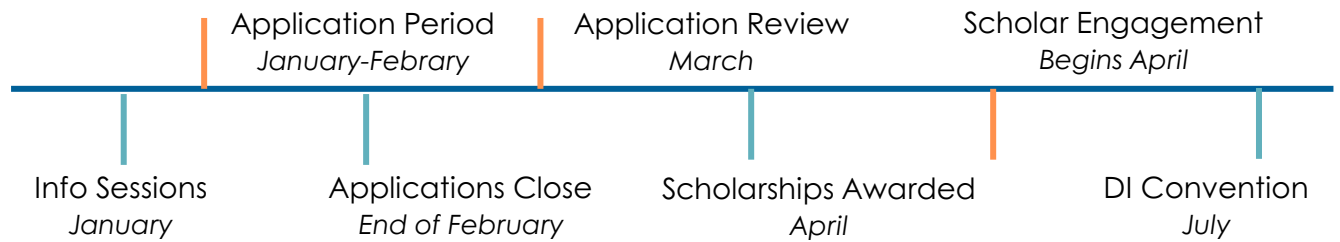


Learn about the impact of the HBCU Scholarship program



Hear about Celine Trombi's experience at 2024 Annual Convention

Scholarship Timeline



1. [December-January] Info Sessions for Students

Destination organization joins DI and scholarship alum (as applicable) when creating awareness on the DI Foundation HBCU program. Destination organization reiterates the purpose of organization and importance in the community and furthers connection with both program faculty and students.

2. [January-February] Application Period

students are invited to apply to scholarship. Must be enrolled full-time with good academic standing and GPA of 2.5 or higher. Application requirements include essay, video, resume, and transcript.

3. [March] Application Review

Destinations International and Social Inclusion Committee (DI members) review applications.

4. [April] Scholarships Awarded

Destinations International informs student and university of acceptance, and student is reintroduced to local destination organization. Destinations International works with university to plan tuition funding allocation.

5. [April-Onward] Scholar Engagement

Destination organization and Destinations International engage with students to provide education, mentorship, and professional development. Refer to activations on page 3.

6. [July] Scholars Attend DI Annual Convention

Scholars attend DI's Annual Convention with all costs covered. Convention is largest gathering of destination leaders and industry professionals, providing 2+ days of learning, networking, and celebrations. Scholars are awarded onstage during Convention.

Virtual programs for professional development and networking are provided after Annual Convention through the remainder of the academic year. DI encourages pledges to the scholarship program year-round. Roughly 20 organizations and 60 industry professionals pledge annually.

Recommended Activations for Destinations

1. Destination Organization and HBCU Relationship Establishment

Destination organizations have a point-of-contact at a nearby HBCU and established a shared interest in student awareness.

2. Destination Awareness

Destination organizations facilitate presentation(s) to HBCU program students, explaining the purpose and importance of DMOs in the community and the value of having an inclusive and diverse workforce.

3. Student Ambassadorship Program

Destination organization establishes and rolls out an ambassadorship program to involve HBCU students in events and meetings in the community. Students are invited to "apply" as volunteer ambassadors.

4. Destination Office Visits

Destination organization coordinates office visit days with HBCU students. In addition to touring the office and visitors center, students have the opportunity to hear from different departments about their roles and responsibilities.

5. Destination Shadow Days

Destination organization coordinates an extended shadow day (or days) with students based on interests. Students are tasked with small projects to gain exposure to day-to-day work.

6. Destination Internships

Destination organization establishes internship opportunities and works with HBCU to validate requirements, skillsets, and responsibilities. HBCU supports destination by promoting internship offering as part of curriculum.

7. Curriculum Involvement

Destination engages more extensively in HBCU curriculum, providing sessions on destination management and related fields.

8. Community Involvement

If a destination has community/industry related partners who value workforce development and diversification, partners are encouraged to engage with students.

9. Student Mentorship

Destination pairs student(s) with employee(s) for 1:1 mentorship experience.