



## SSA Detailed Application Instructions and Criteria 2023

### Wildlife Disease Association Graduate Student Scholarship Achievement Award (SSA)

#### About:

This award acknowledges outstanding academic and research accomplishment, productivity, and future potential in pursuit of new knowledge in wildlife health or disease. The award is offered annually, and selected winners are recognized at the annual international WDA conference.

#### Two WDA Graduate Student Scholarship Achievement Awards are available.

The scholarship has a minimum value of \$2,000 US, which can be used for fees, books, supplies, equipment, and other educational expenses incurred by you as a student during the pursuit of your graduate degree, or to support travel to conference and is awarded annually to an outstanding student pursuing master's or doctoral degrees specializing in wildlife health and/or disease research. An additional \$1,500 is available to each winner, if they choose to use the funds to attend the annual international WDA conference. The maximum amount of \$3,500 can only be dispersed to the winner following delivery of related receipts for travel, lodging, registration, and other conference-related expenses to the WDA treasurer. The two winners will also receive a 1-year membership to the WDA (Student or Regular Member Online).

#### Deadline:

Applications must be received electronically no later than – 5 pm Samoa Standard Time (UTC-11:00) on **January 25, 2023**

Awards will be announced March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

#### Applicant eligibility:

Applicants must be **students AND members of the WDA**. Confirm your WDA membership status or join WDA now

##### Definition of a student

Enrolled in a graduate student program at least half-time **or** is participating full-time in an internship or residency program which is approved for credit towards board certification or a graduate degree.

Applicants must be pursuing an advanced (graduate) degree (e.g., PhD, MSc, internship, residency) at the time of application. To be considered, the candidate must have completed a four-year baccalaureate degree. The candidate should be committed to leadership,



scholarship, and service in the wildlife health profession.

Candidates with an **overall grade point average of 3.5 or above in 4.0** systems or 80% or better in percentile systems will receive priority.

### Application criteria and process:

For consideration, applicants must electronically submit one copy of the following documents (formatted as PDF or MS Word files) as an e-mail attachment(s) submitted to the Co-Chair of the Student Awards Committee, **Stuart Patterson** [student.awards@wildlifedisease.org](mailto:student.awards@wildlifedisease.org). Where possible, please combine documents into a single PDF document and attach to the email.

### The application should include the following documents:

- a) Two letters of support, including one letter from the student's faculty advisor, that directly address the following specific abilities of the applicant: *academic achievement, scholarly promise, research ability, oral and written communications skills, industriousness, leadership abilities, judgment, and potential for contribution to the field of wildlife diseases.*

Additional letters (> 2) will not be read or evaluated, and letters not directly addressing the above qualities will not score well. Applications are scored based on this letter addressing each of the qualities listed above. One point will be subtracted if the letter is poorly written (spelling errors, improper format, etc.). Note: Letters can be sent directly to SAwC co-Chair **Stuart Patterson** [student.awards@wildlifedisease.org](mailto:student.awards@wildlifedisease.org). (This is a decision for the person writing the letter). Students will **only** be notified if letters are **not** submitted by the deadline to complete their applications.

- b) A curriculum vitae demonstrating evidence of superior scholastic achievement and productivity. See overview of scoring criteria below. CVs should specifically list and describe:
- Candidates must include a clear list of completed degrees (undergraduate, MSc, PhD) and residencies, indicating the date of completion, or noting in progress.
  - An overall grade point average must be provided for either the most recently completed undergraduate degree OR veterinary degree (whichever of the two was most recently COMPLETED). Please provide as part of the list above. Students not scored on the 4.0 grade point system must include an official explanation of the grade point or grade score system used at their institution and preferably provide a conversion to a 4.0 or percentile grade point average. It is the student's responsibility to have one calculated.
  - List all awards, scholarships, and grants.
  - List all publications and presentations, including presentations at local, regional, national, or international scientific conferences or meetings communication, as well as publications in magazines / newsletters (e.g., non-peer reviewed articles), are evaluated based on number of professional presentations and non-peer reviewed



publications. Authorship should be included.

- List all peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals. Authorship must be included.
- c) **All collegiate transcripts** Official transcripts (i.e., with the imprint or official seal of the institution and signature of the responsible university officer) or copies signed by the student's faculty advisor are acceptable. These allow the Student Awards Committee to verify the list of degrees and the GPA or equivalent provided. Student Awards Committee will not calculate overall GPAs based on your transcripts.

#### Grounds for disqualification include:

- Items missing, including overall grade point average / conversion to grade point average
- Submissions received beyond the deadline date.
- Failure to secure status as a student member of the WDA at the time of application.

#### OVERVIEW OF SSA SCORING CRITERIA:

**Evaluation:** There are 5 categories upon which the candidate is evaluated. Each section receives a numerical score of 1-5 with **5=excellent**, **4=above average**, **3=average**, **2=below average**, and **1=unacceptable**. The highest total score for all sections will determine the winner of the scholarship. The maximum score possible is **33**.

##### I. Scholarship.

**GPA:** Students should be scored for their GPA for *either* their veterinary degree or undergraduate degree (whichever of the two was most recently COMPLETED). GPA will only be considered for the most recent degree that was COMPLETED. If a GPA is not provided by an institution, it is the students "responsibility to have one calculated and provide information about the calculation.

**Number of degrees:** This category provides a score for the number of undergraduate or graduate degrees or residencies that have been **COMPLETED**.

II. **Awards/scholarships** Students are scored on the number of grants, scholarships, and other awards received. Scores will be weighted depending on the level of education completed.

III. **Letters** Only two letters are scored. Any letter > 2 is not read or evaluated, as determined by the Committee Chair. Letters of recommendation are scored on the following criteria: academic achievement, scholarly promise, research ability, oral and written communications skills, industriousness, leadership abilities, judgment, and potential for contribution to the field of wildlife diseases/wildlife health. One point will be subtracted if the letter is poorly written (spelling errors, improper format, etc.).

IV. **Communications** Student's ability to communicate is evaluated based on number of professional (oral and/or poster) presentations – these include presentations at local, regional, national, or international scientific conferences or meetings, as well as publications in magazines / newsletters (e.g. non-peer reviewed articles). Authorship should be included. Scores will be weighted based on level of education completed and whether the student is a first author on the presentation or other contributing or non-presenting author.



V. **Research potential** Students are scored by the number of peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals (do not count presentations in lay materials, websites, teaching notes, etc.). Authorship must be included. Note: 'In press' publications are counted, however publications which have been 'submitted', 'in review' or 'in preparation' "will NOT be counted. Scores will be weighted based on level of education completed and whether the student is a first author on the presentation or other contributing author.