

# Ready to begin a new life?



Since 1972, the Soroptimist Live Your Dream Awards program (formerly the Women's Opportunity Awards) has disbursed more than \$30 million to tens of thousands of women who have overcome poverty, domestic and sexual violence, divorce, the death of a spouse, or other life challenges. They are women—just like you—who had the courage and determination to turn their lives around.

live  
**YOUR**  
dream

education & training awards for women



Recipients may use the cash award to offset any costs associated with their efforts to attain higher education, including books, childcare and transportation. The program begins on the club level, where award amounts vary. Club recipients become eligible to receive region-level awards, which are granted through Soroptimist's 28 geographic regions. Currently, each Soroptimist region grants one first-place award for \$5,000.



Most regions grant additional \$3,000 awards. The first-place recipients then become eligible for one of three \$10,000 finalist awards.

Soroptimist also offers awards through its headquarters office to applicants who do not live within the territorial limits of a Soroptimist club.

Each year about \$1.7 million is awarded through the Soroptimist Live Your Dream Awards program.



powered by volunteers of  
**SOROPTIMIST**<sup>®</sup>



empowered by activists of  
**LIVEYOURDREAM.ORG**



# Instructions

## Formerly the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Awards

Deadline: Applications are due each year by **November 15**. Award recipients will be notified between January and June. Not all applicants will be selected for awards. Applications can only be submitted to one club. Your application will be reviewed by a panel of judges, but all information will remain confidential and will not be shared without your prior permission.

### Step 1: Determine if you are eligible

You are eligible if you are a woman who:

- Provides the primary financial support for yourself and your dependents. Dependents can include children, spouse, partner, siblings and/or parents.
- Has financial need.
- Is enrolled in or has been accepted to a vocational/skills training program or an undergraduate degree program.
- Is motivated to achieve your education and career goals.
- Resides in one of Soroptimist International of the Americas' member countries/territories (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guam, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, United States of America, Venezuela).
- Has not previously been the recipient of a Soroptimist Women's Opportunity or Live Your Dream Award.
- Does not have a graduate degree.
- Is not a Soroptimist member, an employee of Soroptimist International of the Americas or immediate family of either.
- Has a Social Security number or Tax ID number. (This is required for tax purposes and is only necessary if you are a resident of the United States. You will not be asked to share this information unless you have been given an award.)

### Step 2: Tell us about yourself

Fill out the award application telling us about yourself. Your information will be kept confidential and shared only with the evaluators unless you give us written permission to use your story to publicize the program. **\*\*You must use Adobe Reader (free to download) to fill out the form. If you do not use Adobe Reader, your answers in the application will not be saved and your submitted application will appear blank.\*\***

- Step 1: Download **Adobe Reader**.
- Step 2: Save a copy of the application to your computer.
- Step 3: Open Adobe Reader.
- Step 4: From the left column, choose 'My Computer' and find where you saved the application.
- Step 5: Open the application within Adobe Reader.
- Step 6: Hold your mouse over the first blue text box and click.
- Step 7: Type your responses into the application. (Note: You will not be able to change the type size. Please limit your answers to the space allotted.)
- Step 8: Once all parts of the form are completed, select "File" and choose "Save As" from the drop down menu.
- Step 9: Change the file name (for example, "LYDApplicationLG," where LG are your initials.)
- Step 10: Click "Save."
- Step 11: Submit.

### Step 3: Ask people to tell us about you

You will need two different people—who are not related to you—to fill out the **reference forms** you received with this application. It is recommended that you request references from people who know you from an education or work setting. Please email this form to your references and request they email the forms back to you when completed. Only two references will be accepted. Please use the form and do not submit reference letters.

### Step 4: Submit your application

Attach your application and two reference forms to an email and send to the contact person listed below by November 15. Incomplete applications or applications received without reference forms will not be considered.

Soroptimist Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions

Check out the Live Your Dream Award Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.Soroptimist.org/awards/DreamAwardsFAQforApplicants.pdf>. If you still have questions, contact the person listed above or Soroptimist headquarters at [siahq@soroptimist.org](mailto:siahq@soroptimist.org).

### Ready to Apply?

Begin your application on the next page now! We wish you the best of luck in achieving your educational and professional goals.

*Start your application now!*



# Ready, Set, Live Your Dream!

*Begin your application now.*

## Part I. Basic Information

Name (first, middle initial, last): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (number and street address): \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest level of education achieved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed : \_\_\_\_\_

Number of dependents you support (NOT including yourself): \_\_\_\_\_

How are they related to you (children, spouse, parents, etc.)?: \_\_\_\_\_

Ages (if they are children): \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II. What are your education and career goals?

A. What's the name of the school or training program you are attending or have been accepted to?

B. What are you studying? (example: Bachelor of Science nursing degree or computer science certificate)

C. When will you complete your studies (month and year)?

D. Are you working while you are getting your education? (check one)

YES

NO

If yes, how many hours per week? \_\_\_\_\_

E. In 300 words or less, please tell us about your career goals, and give specifics about how your education and training supports these goals.

### Part III. Financial Information

Live Your Dream Award recipients are chosen in part based on financial need. Please share information about your annual income and expenses. Please be as exact as you can.



**A. INCOME:** Please list your ANNUAL household income and savings (from the money you have left after taxes) in the chart below.

Employment: \$_____ per year	Government Assistance: \$_____ per year	
Savings: \$_____ per year	Social Security (U.S. only): \$_____ per year	
Child Support: \$_____ per year	Loans: \$_____ per year	
Alimony: \$_____ per year	Scholarships: \$_____ per year	
Please list any additional income, including income other household members receive.		
Source: _____	\$_____ per year	
Source: _____	\$_____ per year	
Source: _____	\$_____ per year	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME:</b>		

**B. EXPENSES:** Please list your ANNUAL household expenses in the chart below.

Housing: \$_____ per year	Utilities: \$_____ per year	
Food: \$_____ per year	Medical: \$_____ per year	
Childcare: \$_____ per year	Transportation: \$_____ per year	
Tuition: \$_____ per year	Books: \$_____ per year	
Please list any additional expenses.		
Expense: _____	\$_____ per year	
Expense: _____	\$_____ per year	
Expense: _____	\$_____ per year	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSES:</b>		



## Part IV. Tell us more about yourself

The Live Your Dream Award is all about helping women who have faced economic and personal hardships to live their dreams. Since 1972, the award has provided tens of thousands of women with cash grants to help them achieve their educational and career goals. The program helps women build a better life for themselves and their dependents. Do you think this award could help you live your dream? In 750 words or less, tell us about the challenges you've faced and how you think this award could help you to live your dream.

## Part V. Agreement

Please read the following information carefully. When you type your name below, you are agreeing to what you have read.

- I certify that all the information provided in this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I will notify Soroptimist if there are any changes.
- I understand this award is not a scholarship and is therefore taxable for citizens of the United States. (For more information, consult IRS publication 520. Residents of other countries should check their local tax laws.)
- I certify that this is the only application I have made—in any format or to any address—this year for a Soroptimist Live Your Dream Award.
- I understand that my application may be submitted electronically for evaluation.
- I understand that my application becomes the property of Soroptimist International of the Americas. The application will be considered confidential unless the applicant grants Soroptimist written permission to release personal information for the purpose of publicizing the award.

By typing your name below, you adhere to the above requirements.

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Signature of applicant

Date

Thank you for applying for the  
Live Your Dream Award.  
Congratulations on all you have achieved so far!



Soroptimist International  
of the Americas

1709 Spruce Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-6103  
215-893-9000  
[www.Soroptimist.org](http://www.Soroptimist.org)  
[www.LiveYourDream.org](http://www.LiveYourDream.org)



Formerly the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Awards

Thank you for agreeing to provide a reference for \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of applicant)

Since 1972, the Soroptimist Live Your Dream: Education and Training Awards have provided women with resources to improve their education, skills and employment prospects so they can live their dreams. Eligible applicants are women who:

- Provide the primary financial support for their dependents (dependents can include children, spouse, siblings and/or parents).
- Have financial need.
- Are enrolled in or have been accepted to a vocational/skills training program or an undergraduate degree program.
- Are motivated to achieve their educational and career goals.
- Reside in one of Soroptimist International of the Americas' member countries/territories (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guam, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, United States of America, Venezuela).
- Have not previously been the recipient of a Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award or Live Your Dream Award.
- Do not have a graduate degree.
- Are not Soroptimist members, employees of Soroptimist International of the Americas or immediate family of either.
- Have a Social Security number or Tax ID number (only necessary if a resident of the United States). This is required for tax purposes.

In order for applicants to be fairly judged, reference forms are required. Please do not submit other forms of references (such as a letter). They will not be considered as part of the application. Please email the completed form back to the applicant for submission. Reference forms must be submitted by the applicant with her application.


**\*\*You must use Adobe Reader—a free download—to fill out the reference form. If you do not use Adobe Reader, your answers in the form will not be saved.\*\***

- Step 1: Download [Adobe Reader](#)
- Step 2: Save a copy of the reference form to your computer.
- Step 3: Open Adobe Reader
- Step 4: From the left column, choose 'My Computer' and find where you saved the reference form.
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- Step 8: Once all parts of the form are completed, select "File" and choose "Save As" from the drop down menu.
- Step 9: Change the file name (for example, "LYDReferenceLG," where LG are your initials.)
- Step 10: Click "Save."
- Step 11: Submit.

Please use your personal knowledge of the applicant to respond to the following questions:

1. How long have you known the candidate, and in what capacity (employer, school instructor, friend, etc.)?

2. Please rate the candidate in the following areas, based upon your knowledge of her achievements and strengths. A score of "1" means that you "strongly disagree" with the statement; a score of "5" means that you "strongly agree" with the statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Mostly Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
A. The applicant has clear goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6
B. The applicant is motivated to reach these goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6
C. The applicant has demonstrated that she is responsible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
D. The applicant would be an inspiration to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6



3. Please tell us what you believe to be the applicant's particular strengths in her personal, educational, or professional life. If you can, give examples of particular accomplishments.

4. What is your knowledge of the applicant's educational goals and her progress toward achieving these goals? Consider any barriers or difficulties she has overcome.

5. Is there any additional information we should know about this applicant in regard to this award program?

COMPLETED BY (IMPORTANT: Please email completed reference form to the applicant for submission with her application.)



SOROPTIMIST  
Best for Women®



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

