

The Plastino Scholars Awards



Who is David Plastino?

- A very real person who takes a very real interest in this program
- Was a UD Chem major from Lancaster, PA; now lives in Philadelphia
- Worked on Wall Street and retired at age of 53
- Theory about three stages of life:
Learning, living, giving back
- Now he is giving back (and hopes someday *you* will, too)



What are the Plastino Awards?

- Study grants awarded to selected UD undergraduates who exhibit extraordinary talent, promise and imagination.
- To support self-designed, off-campus learning experiences that make a transformational difference in the lives of Plastino Scholars and others.



Why?

- Mr. Plastino wants to give a handful of selected students a chance to pursue a passionate interest to a degree not otherwise possible.
- So that they, too, can live, learn, and give back.



How much is a Plastino Award?

- The amount of each award will depend on the nature of the experience proposed.
- The maximum individual award is \$6,000.
- However, the amount awarded is 100% based on your actual planned expenses, provided in a budget.
- Most awards will be around \$4,000+.



What is *your* dream and your passion?

Some possibilities:

- Can be humanitarian but need not be.
- An intellectual or scholarly journey?
- A focus on changing the life of others? . . . And obviously, changing *your* life.



A thousand Plastino possibilities...

- But not a study-abroad program or a paid internship or for earning academic credit
- Not simply working alongside a professor who is organizing the project
- Not where the Plastino money supports or contributes to an organization's or agency's existing charitable work (You can work with or for an existing organization, but money must support *you* while doing it . . . *not* the organization)
- Not working with an existing student-focused volunteer program that you found on the internet (anyone can do that) and that you pay to join in



Plastino Scholars must demonstrate...

- Evidence of exceptional intellectual, creative, civic, or leadership ability
- The ingenuity to propose an experience that lets them pursue a passionate interest that goes well beyond the scope of an academic course, normal summer job, existing internship, service-based, or enrichment program



Who can be a Plastino Scholar?

You can, provided that you:

- Are a UD undergraduate
- At the time of application, are enrolled for at least twelve semester hours/credits at UD
- Are returning to campus next year as a student



To sum up, Plastino Scholars have:

- A compelling commitment to the endeavor they propose...
- The imagination and resourcefulness to plan that experience fully...
- Proven to us that receiving this award is likely to permit them to do something that otherwise would not be possible.



Who will make the decisions?

The Plastino Selection Committee consists of the Plastino director and three other UD professors from various UD colleges

- We read all the proposals
- We interview a *very* select few
- The interview is rigorous
- We choose the Plastino Scholars



Timing your Plastino Experience

- The Scholar experience must be *completed* within one calendar year (awarded in March 2023—must take place by March 2024) or before graduation from the University, whichever comes first
- Can take place in summer, in Winter Session, split between both summer and WS, or take place over a semester away



Plastino Timeline

- December 9, 2022...Applications and letters of recommendation are due. No exceptions.
- Mid February 2023: Students find out if they are on interview list
- Late February...Interviews with Selection Committee.
- Mid-March: Plastino Scholar finalists chosen; meet with me to finalize budget and meet with Dean
- Late March/early April: Scholar Awards are announced, and checks mailed

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications at each stage.



What should a proposal do?

1. Reflect your ability
2. Show how to advance your passionate interest in a demonstrable fashion and explain how this will affect you, your plans, and your life
3. Be concretely and coherently conceived and planned
4. Have a title; have a logical and definable duration and location, and justification of all aspects (e.g., this is much more than an “idea”—it’s real)
5. Be appropriate to the Plastino program and uphold all University rules, policies, and procedures
6. Be supported by a fully realized budget demonstrating that the experience has been planned in an efficient and economical manner and all possible costs considered



The application (download it)

There are three parts to the application:

Experience Abstract (250 words or less)

Title, purpose, duration, location, and so on. Charities, agencies, people or other organizations you plan to partner with (if applicable)

Personal Statement/Scholars Experience Proposal
(up to 5000 words)

Describe the experience you propose, why you are proposing it, and your qualifications to carry it out. Describe in full the organizations, groups, and contacts you will engage with and why.

The budget . . .



The third part of the application: A budget

A word of advice: David Plastino cares about this!

- List all the expenses connected with the experience as specifically as possible. Leave nothing out. A carelessly planned budget will disqualify you.
- Expenses should include travel, visa, all food, living expenses, local transportation, airport transfers, passports and immunizations, & everything you can think of. If you omit stuff, we will grill you about it!
- For rough figures, use something like the “Lonely Planet” series for travelers. (Why “Lonely Planet”?)

COSTS MUST BE “BUDGET-FRIENDLY,” APPROPRIATE AND REALISTIC FOR A STUDENT WHILE KEEPING SAFETY IN MIND



A sample budget

Alexandra Davis
February 25, 2013

2013 Plastino Award Program
Project Pop-Up: Feuling Local Businesses and Fostering Budding Entrepreneurs
Scholar's Experience Budget

Expense	Budgeted Amount	Notes
Airfare (as of 2/25/13)	\$2,200.00	Roundtrip ticket from New York, NY (JFK) to Cape Town, South Africa (CPT) via Delta Airlines
Living*	\$1,760.00	\$220.00 per week for eight weeks for home-stay living quarters (includes the cost of breakfast and dinner as well as transportation to and from the airport)
Food**	\$400.00	\$50.00 per week for eight weeks (considering the majority of meals will be accounted for in the cost of the home-stay)
Local Transportation**	\$1,064.00	\$133.00 per week for eight weeks (includes the cost of public transportation to and from Iziko Lo Lwazi everyday, transportation to the downtown area to conduct interviews with pop-up shop owners, as well as transportation to excursion locations)
Health Insurance	\$84.00	\$10.50 per week for eight weeks
Recording Device	\$79.99	"Flip It" video recorder for semi-structured interviews
Cultural Excursions	\$150.00	Table Mountain National Park, Robben Island Prison and Nelson Mandela's jail cell, game reserve and safari
Incidentals	\$100.00	Internet access, laundry, vaccines (cost share item due to study abroad trip to Ghana in Winter 2013)
Total:	\$5,837.99	

* Estimate based on rates from www.homestaybooking.com

** Estimate based on information from Lonely Planet South Africa, Lesotho, & Swaziland



The budget, continued

- Do not forget visa costs and shots—they can be hefty!
- Wherever possible all expenses should be actual rather than estimated (of course we understand that things might change)
- No expensive equipment or gear (e.g. costly things you will end up keeping)
- No gifts to hosts or others
- No expenses/fees that fund organizations or institutions (e.g. volunteer organizations that require sponsorship to participate; tuition fees) (RARE EXCEPTIONS)



The proposal should ...

- Include letters of support or explanatory material from charities, agencies, organizations, or individuals with which you will be working, if applicable
- Not include other written materials, slides, pictures, portfolios, or any other additional items



Recommendation Letters

- From two individuals who are in a position to:
 - Assess the talent/promise you cite as the basis for your consideration as a Plastino Scholar
 - Comment on the likely benefit and feasibility of the proposed project.
- At least one of your recommenders must be a university professor or instructor (not a teaching assistant)



The application: final items

- Include your résumé and a transcript (unofficial transcripts are acceptable) and sign the application
- Check for mistakes, typos, bad grammar (the program rewards passion *and* ability)



How many people will be selected?

- We don't know
- Last year there were two
- There could be as many as six
- Infrequently have we given a Plastino to a collaborative project—but let's talk about this.



If you are chosen to be a Plastino Scholar...

- Budget will be reviewed and adjusted if necessary; meet with Dean
- Release forms and various meetings with me
- Checks sent in late March/early April
- Any research done on people might need to be cleared by UD's Institutional Review Board
- Blog while you are gone and write a report upon return
- Serve as a Plastino “ambassador”
- Attend several dinners with David Plastino and others where you talk about your project
- Your life will never be the same!



David A. Plastino Scholars Awards for 2023

BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

LINK: [Application materials](#)

Email me (pswhite@udel.edu) with questions



Former Plastino Scholars

- Nana
- Anya

What did they do

. . . And how did they get a Plastino??

