



THE US SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM
GUIDE

2026

themarketingacademy.org

THE MARKETING ACADEMY US SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY:



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INTRODUCTION

Whether you're a prospective applicant, nominator, or you're just interested in learning more about The Marketing Academy Scholarship Program, this guide will give you all the information you need.

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"A one-of-a-kind leadership development experience every marketer wishes they had."

WHAT WE BELIEVE

There are many development programs which will teach you how to be a better marketer and many more that can tell you how to become a better leader. We deliver the only program that will also show you why.

We believe that marketing, media and advertising at their best are the means to create a powerful & meaningful impact on the citizens of our planet. The only function and industry that truly influences the way people think, the choices they take and the decisions they make. For this collective power to be wielded in a positive way, our talent needs to be nurtured & developed.

We are dedicated to delivering programs that ensure the commercial and positive social impact of marketing, media and advertising is felt in every board room, now and in the future. A future which is in the hands of our emerging leaders.

We also believe that money should not be a barrier to the development of our talent. So, whilst highly selective, our programs are delivered free of charge.

We can do this because we unite a powerful, committed and engaged community of client-side CEOs & CMOs, media and creative agency CEOs and subject matter experts from every marketing discipline in the industry who share their wisdom and knowledge on a pro bono basis.

THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS WE:

- Identify the industry's brightest & best minds and equip them with the values, beliefs, behaviours and skills to be outstanding leaders.
- Enable our emerging leaders to gain wisdom and experience from C-Suite leaders within diverse sectors and disciplines.
- Provide a platform for high potential talent to learn best practice from around the globe, and be inspired to create world-changing results.

"The Marketing Academy delivers the best marketing leadership programs in the world."

Syl Saller CBE, Former Global CMO, Diageo

WHO WE ARE

The Marketing Academy is a non-profit organisation operating in the UK/EMEA, Australia/APAC and the United States.

We identify and develop exceptional talent in Marketing, Media, Communications & Advertising by providing a forum for C-Suite executives, marketing experts, business leaders and coaches to inspire, develop and mentor an entire generation of future leaders.

We deliver programs for different levels:

THE FELLOWSHIP
For CMOs

THE SCHOLARSHIP
For emerging leaders

There are over 1400 Alumni of our programs around the world who enjoy ongoing development through powerful Alumni Programs operating in each region. Our Alumni are amongst the top 1% of industry talent, globally.

WHAT WE DO

To deliver The Scholarship Program, we unite an entire ecosystem of brands, media owners, creative agencies, media agencies, academic institutes, and leadership organisations.

We bring together CEOs, CMOs, executive coaches, authors, experts, inspirational speakers, founders of charities and sporting legends who contribute to the curriculum on a pro bono basis, ensuring the Scholarship is a totally unique and immensely powerful learning experience.

Every year, in the UK, Australia & USA, we select just 30 emerging leaders from each region from within Marketing, Media, Communications and Advertising sectors to experience this part-time program together.

The Marketing Academy programs are highly selective. We only take those with the talent, drive, motivation and potential to be exceptional.

For those selected, our programs are completely free of charge.



THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM EXPLAINED

The curriculum is designed around our 4P modules. These are core modules through which we empower our Scholars to be the best they can be:



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Be an extraordinary human. Unleash potential, build confidence, challenge beliefs & change behaviours, improve performance, supercharge communication skills



PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

Be an inspirational leader, build high performing teams, inspire phenomenal results, boost leadership skills, develop other leaders.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Be an exceptional marketer. Skills development in marketing strategy, digital transformation, innovation, leading creativity, behavioural economics & more.



PURPOSE

Be a change maker. Understand 'purpose' in every context, pay forward learning and be an ambassador for change

THE 4P MODULES ARE DELIVERED ACROSS 4 LEARNING STREAMS:

RESIDENTIAL BOOTCAMPS

Three immersive events packed with leadership development, inspirational speakers & master classes.

ONE-TO-ONE MENTORING

Meet with up to 8 high profile experienced and influential CEOs and CMOs.

EXECUTIVE COACHING

Regular sessions with a dedicated Coach who will facilitate personal development.

THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS PROGRAM ACCESS

A supplementary curriculum of LIVE keynote sessions, ON-DEMAND learning and Learning Journeys. Scholars can invite colleagues to enrol for access to The Virtual Campus Hub.

The US Scholarship runs from October 2026 to May 2027. Scholars invest around 13 days of time during the duration of the program.

THE SELECTION CRITERIA

Whether your experience is in a B2C or B2B brand, public or charity sector, media or creative agency, media owner or platform, entrepreneur or working for companies large or small, all applicants are assessed equally against our criteria.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR IN THE IDEAL SCHOLAR:

- Between 8 to 18 years in a marketing or agency role
- In a leadership position and holds - current or past - experience of managing people
- Highly ambitious to further career in marketing leadership, aspiring to C-Suite or board roles
- Evidence of commitment to broadening horizons, such as an interest in charitable, social, cultural, creative, travel or sporting endeavours.
- Demonstrates commitment to career with evidence of results and achievements
- High emotional intelligence & natural drive to succeed
- Currently employed on a permanent basis* in the US and have worked in current company for a minimum of 6 months.
- No known risk of termination or resignation for the duration of the program

Please note: We have Scholarships available for individuals who do not have a 'classic' marketing background. Those who have demonstrated exceptional potential as natural marketers or who have shown outstanding entrepreneurial ability or exceptional achievement in the face of adversity will be considered.

*There are many reasons that this program is not suited to individuals currently in transition between roles or freelancing. Please refer to the FAQ section on pages 8-11 for more information and support.

While the program is open to applicants from the U.S.A, Canada, and those based in the US holding valid U.S. visas, we may have to defer an applicant's place in the program or in the selection process to the 2027 cohort if, at any point, it appears that border restrictions, visa issues, or other travel limitations may prevent full participation in the required residential events. This measure is in place to ensure a fair and complete experience for all participants.

"The Scholarship is like no other learning experience. Forget textbooks, assignments and exams – it's all about learning from inspirational leaders, being more self-aware and ultimately becoming the leader you want to be."

THE SELECTION PROCESS & KEY DATES

The Scholarship Program is free but highly selective, so we ask senior business leaders to nominate the best emerging leaders they know via www.themarketingacademy.org/us

JUNE

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

APPLICATION

Submission Deadline:
Monday 22nd June 2026

This three-part application must include submission of: A full CV, An Employer's Endorsement, a Two-Minute Digital 'Showcase Me'.

THE PITCH

Monday 3rd August –
Friday 14th August 2026

Successful applicants at application screening will be invited to a 10 minute 'pitch' via video call followed by a 15-minute Q&A.

THE PANEL

Thursday 10th September –
Friday 18th September 2026

Successful applicants from The Pitch will be invited to a video call interview with a selection panel of Marketing and HR Professionals.

REVEAL PARTY

Thursday 15th October 2026 (NYC)
Successful Scholars will be asked to join our Reveal Party where we will announce their place on the Scholarship

GRADUATION/SHOWCASE

Wednesday 12th May 2027 (NYC)
Our Scholars invite our community to their Graduation Party, where they showcase what they've learned during the program

OCTOBER

JANUARY

MAY

BOOTCAMP 1

Friday 16th October –
Monday 19th October 2026 (NY)

BOOTCAMP 2

Monday 25th January –
Tuesday 26th January 2027
(California)

BOOTCAMP 3

Monday 10th May –
Tuesday 11th May 2027 (NY)



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ABOUT THE COST

It's free to attend the program but, as a not-for-profit company, we don't contribute to any travel or accommodation expenses.

The residential Bootcamps require a total of five-nights* accommodation and dinners which must be paid by the Scholars or their employers (we try not to book expensive venues!). Attendance to all Bootcamps and staying overnight(s) is mandatory, even if you live nearby.

*More nights may be required the nights before/after Bootcamps depending on travel needs.

ABOUT THE COMMITMENT

To ensure the program creates the greatest impact on your development, you'll need to dedicate up to 13 days in total to attend 3 'Bootcamps', up to 8 mentoring sessions, Virtual Campus events, and regular coaching sessions.

Mandatory key dates can be found on page 7. In addition, there may be time outside of work where you prepare for mentoring or coaching sessions or to share your learning within your teams or externally.

If a Scholar changes employer during the program or demonstrates a lack of commitment required to reap the benefit of the program, we reserve the right to terminate their place. Scholarship places are not transferable.

In our experience, for many reasons, the learning curve of starting a job with a new company doesn't mix well with the intense experience of attending the program.

If you are currently seeking a new role or are at risk of moving employer at any point during the duration of the selection process or the program, then you do not meet our selection criteria. Please contact us and we can arrange for you to be invited to apply for a place on the program next year.

HOW YOU CAN APPLY

First, you must be nominated by someone who knows you i.e. your boss, peer, supplier, business partner.

Once they've nominated you via our website, you'll receive an email which will tell you all you need to know about the selection process.

Ultimately, you'll need the support of your employer as you won't get through the selection process without an Employer's Endorsement. We may choose to contact your employer directly to verify your endorsement.

FAQS

HOW ARE THE 13 DAYS FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP BROKEN DOWN?

8 days of residential learning are split across three Bootcamps.

Up to 8 hours for your mentoring sessions. Scholars will have around 8 x 60-minute sessions, and these are spread throughout the program. These are organised by the Scholars and their mentors directly post the first Bootcamp.

6 sessions for your coaching. Scholars will have around 6-8 hours of coaching, and these are spread throughout the program. These are organised by the Scholars and their assigned Executive Coaches.

TMA Virtual campus events – a supplementary curriculum of LIVE keynote sessions, ON-DEMAND learning and Learning Journeys. The time for these will vary from Scholar to Scholar depending on their learning needs.

WHAT ARE THE BOOTCAMPS, AND DO I HAVE TO ATTEND THEM?

The 3 Bootcamps are intense, immersive, and residential events, attended by the entire cohort of 30 Scholars, and are packed with learning, speakers, and workshops.

Full attendance to ALL 3 Bootcamp events is mandatory. You will need to attend in full and failure to do so will result in termination of your Scholarship place. Please do not apply if any of the Bootcamp dates are likely to be problematic.

ARE EMPLOYERS EXPECTED TO GIVE THE SUCCESSFUL SCHOLARS FULLY PAID LEAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM?

Whilst employers must be in support of the Scholar's application to the program, it is not compulsory for them to give their Scholar fully paid leave. In our experience employers appreciate the level of development the Scholarship provides to their rising stars and the ripple effect it has on their team, so tend to be extremely generous in giving our Scholars fully paid leave to attend. That said, some employers may require Scholars to take some time as holiday or unpaid leave.

FAQS

WHAT HAPPENS IF IM LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?

The learning curve of the Scholarship does not mix well with the learning curve of a new role. In fact, we have found that it can be so detrimental to the Scholar (and their new employer) that we reserve the right to terminate the Scholarship place if they change roles during it.

We minimise this risk by ensuring that Scholars are employed, supported by their current employer, are under no known risk of resignation, are crystal clear on their career goals – and timings – before embarking on the program. If the Scholar is in 'transition' or seeking the next role while on the program then we find that most of the learning and interactions with Mentors, Coaches and the other Scholars are experienced through that lens, which ultimately results in a reductive experience.

So, if you're exploring new opportunities, please do not apply this year as you will not meet our selection criteria.

If you are in transition, freelancing or contracting, you may be eligible to enroll on our Virtual Campus program:
<https://themarketingacademy.org/us/the-marketing-academy-virtual-campus/>

WHAT IF I AM INBETWEEN ROLES, FREELANCING OR ON A SHORT-TERM CONTRACT?

The Scholarship criteria requires the nominees to be fully employed or own their business.

The learning provided throughout the Scholarship centers around leadership development. We have discovered that Scholars with a wide and consistent span of direct leadership & influence within one company, are able to implement the learning immediately and can practice the tools and techniques in real time. This also enables the Scholars to get the most out of the Mentor sessions, allowing them to discuss & debate real situations which mirror the practical experience of the Mentors. Depending on the span of the freelance role this consistency can be significantly reduced, along with the ability to make wide reaching impact across a business where the Scholar is directly accountable for the long-term results.

We can only take 30 Scholars on any program. With over 250 people involved in their development and learning it's essential that we ensure the widest possible 'ripple effect' of the learning so that the benefit of the Scholarship can be felt more widely within the industry. Experience has taught us that Scholars in significant leadership roles, directly employed by one company for the duration of the program, can have a greater lasting impact on their business than those in temporary, interim or short-term roles.

The nature of some freelance work means that the likelihood of embarking on and / or seeking new roles is higher.

FAQS

I WANT TO APPLY FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP BUT I AM BASED OUTSIDE OF THE PROGRAM'S HOST COUNTRY. CAN I STILL APPLY?

You can apply if you are based in the US or Canada. It is essential that you are able to travel for all the Scholarship events to make the most of the Scholarship (events take place in the US).

Please note: while the program is open to applicants from the U.S.A, Canada, and those based in the US holding valid U.S. visas, we may have to defer an applicant's place in the program or in the selection process to the 2027 cohort if, at any point, it appears that border restrictions, visa issues, or other travel limitations may prevent full participation in the required residential events. This measure is in place to ensure a fair and complete experience for all participants.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT WHAT PREVIOUS SCHOLARS THOUGHT ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE?

You can read more about what our alumni have to say about the program [here](#).

WHAT HAPPENS TO NOMINEES WHO ARE NOT SELECTED FOR A MARKETING ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIP?

Nominees who apply for the Scholarship and don't make it on the program are given access to our Virtual Campus. We also sometimes share free or discounted learning opportunities with the nominees who aren't selected for a Scholarship. We also advise nominees to re-apply in later years, as we have had many Scholars who were successful on their second, third or even fourth try.

WHERE CAN I FIND A LIST OF ALL THE PEOPLE AND COMPANIES INVOLVED IN THE ACADEMY?

You can find a list of all the mentors, coaches, partners, judges, and companies who are involved in delivering the Scholarship on the [website](#) under the 'Who's Involved' tab.



HOW TO NOMINATE SOMEONE

WANT TO NOMINATE SOMEONE?

You can nominate anyone you feel deserves a place on the Scholarship and who meets the criteria.

There's **no limit to how many people you nominate**; all you need is their name, company, job title, email and contact number.

We support diversity, inclusion and equality in every context and firmly believe that everyone, irrespective of race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender or religion, should have the same opportunity to fast track their careers and learning via our programs. Please take this into account when nominating talent.

We rely on you, as a nominator, to help us identify a breadth of talent across the entire industry.

Go to www.themarketingacademy.org to nominate.

CAN I NOMINATE MYSELF?

No. To be eligible you will need to be nominated by someone who considers you worthy of a place. We will not accept self-nominations and the nomination portal is regularly cross-checked and verified.

ONCE I'VE NOMINATED SOMEONE, WILL I BE INFORMED OF THEIR PROGRESS?

Sadly, we don't have the resources to let you know, but if you follow the Marketing Academy on [LinkedIn](#), you'll certainly see the final cohort selected.

WILL THE PERSON I'VE NOMINATED BE INFORMED OF MY IDENTITY?

By submitting your nomination you agree to us telling the nominee who made their nomination. If you prefer your nomination to be anonymous, please request this by emailing meg@themarketingacademy.org

We do recommend you give your nominee some warning before you nominate them – you might consider sending them a copy of this guide.

DO I HAVE TO BE THE NOMINEE'S BOSS TO NOMINATE SOMEONE?

No. You can nominate whoever you choose, be it a member of staff, colleague, boss, peer, supplier, client, friend, or family. You can nominate someone at an agency or business that you've worked with and have been very impressed by, or any great marketer who you feel is a rising star. But the bottom line is your nominee should fit the selection criteria which can be found on page 6.

CAN I WAIT UNTIL JUST BEFORE THE NOMINATION PORTAL CLOSES BEFORE I NOMINATE?

Yes, but you may disadvantage your nominee as there is a short turn-around time between the closing of the nomination portal and the application submission date. It takes a lot of thought, time, and resources for a nominee to put together the 3-part application. The earlier you nominate, the more time your nominee will have to design and submit their application.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I ENTER MY NOMINEE'S DETAILS ON THE WEBSITE?

You will see a pop up which confirms that we've received it and your nominee will receive an email which has all the details they need to apply for a place.

WHAT IF THE NOMINEE IS IN BETWEEN ROLES, FREELANCING OR ON A SHORT-TERM CONTRACT?

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The learning curve of the Scholarship does not mix well with the learning curve of a new role. In fact, we have found that it can be so detrimental to the Scholar (and their new employer) that we have the right to remove Scholars from the program if they change roles during it (much as we hate to do so). We minimise this risk by ensuring that Scholars are employed, supported by their current employer and are crystal clear on their career goals – and timings – before embarking on the program.

If the Scholar is in 'transition' or seeking the next role while on the program then we find that most of the learning and interactions with Mentors, Coaches and the other Scholars are experienced through that lens, which ultimately results in a reductive experience. The nature of some freelance work means that the likelihood of embarking on and / or seeking new roles is higher.

If you are or know of someone in transition, freelancing or contracting, they may be eligible to enroll on our Virtual Campus program - please send them this link

<https://themarketingacademy.org/us/the-marketing-academy-virtual-campus/>

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM PARTNERS

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM PARTNERS

COMMUNITY & ALUMNI PROGRAM PARTNERS

FACULTY LEARNING PARTNERS




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