



# ACC Benevolence Fund

## Providing Critical Support to Future Cardiologists in Times of Need

American College of Cardiology Foundation

### Benevolence Fund FAQs

#### 1. What is the ACC Benevolence Fund?

The American College of Cardiology Foundation's Benevolence Fund was established from a generous gift from M. Eugene Sherman, MD, MACC. The fund provides emergency grants of up to **\$1,500** to medical students, residents, and Fellows in Training (at US institutions) experiencing unforeseen financial hardship.

Dr. Sherman details his inspiration for the ACCF Benevolence Fund in the [August 2025 issue of Cardiology Magazine](#).

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#### 2. Why was this Fund created?

Dr. M. Eugene Sherman was motivated to establish the fund to ensure timely support for trainees in need—drawing from experiences such as aiding a refugee resident who struggled financially during fellowship applications. He wanted a permanent mechanism to assist future trainees in critical times so no one has to step away from their career due to temporary hardship.

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#### 3. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligibility criteria include:

- Current **ACC members in good standing**.
- Enrollment in a **U.S.-accredited medical school**, residency, or cardiology fellowship.
- A **commitment to a career in cardiovascular medicine**.
- Demonstrated **financial hardship** resulting from an emergency, health issue, or other unforeseen circumstances. (See Q3 for examples).

- **International trainees** enrolled in U.S.-based programs are also eligible.
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#### **4. What does the award cover, and what does it not cover?**

Applicants must have a documented emergency situation beyond their control and must be able to demonstrate financial hardship. Examples of emergency situations which could be considered for assistance:

- Death in immediate family resulting in financial hardship such as loss of income or medical expenses
- Disasters such as fire, flood, tornado, etc.
- Safety from Domestic Violence
- Illness/disability
- Theft/loss of essential property

The Benevolence Fund WG members recognize there may be other circumstances that qualify as emergency situations and do not consider the above a complete list of possible emergency situations that may result in financial hardship.

- **The following situations are not eligible for Benevolence Funding and will *not* be forwarded for review:**
  - Travel for conferences or professional development.
  - Tuition, academic fees.
  - Study materials or equipment (e.g., laptops, subscriptions).

***Additionally, the following situations are also not eligible:***

- Financial over extension/maintaining an unsustainable lifestyle.
  - Routine subscriptions and membership fees.
  - Common life occurrences that would not in and of themselves be qualifying events include routine car and home repairs/maintenance, divorce, legal fees, etc.
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#### **5. How is the application process conducted? Is my application information confidential?**

Applicants must submit:

- **Proof of enrollment** in their training program.
- **Photo ID.**
- **Letter from an advisor, mentor, or sponsor** (must be ACC member in good standing), on institutional letterhead, confirming the specific emergency/need and your commitment to cardiovascular care.
- **Letter from program director**, also on institutional letterhead, verifying good academic standing.

These materials should be submitted via the ACC site available on the Benevolence Fund site. If there are issues accessing or submitting the application, email [MemberEngage@acc.org](mailto:MemberEngage@acc.org).

***All application details, follow-up inquiries and selection decisions are confidential.***

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#### 6. How will selected applicants be notified?

- Approved applicants will be notified of the Review and Selection Committee's decision by email.
  - Funds will be made directly to the applicant, or as applicable to an appropriate third-party service provider.
  - The amount of financial assistance granted will be based on the purpose of the request, the severity of financial need, and the available funds in the ACCF Benevolence Fund.
  - Recipients of financial assistance must verify that the funds were used for the purpose outlined in the application.
  - ***All decisions of the Review and Selection Committee are final.***
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#### 7. What is the timeline for application and award cycles?

- Please refer to the ACCF Benevolence Site for updates on the application, review and notification cycle.
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#### 8. How are decisions made?

Decisions are made by a **Review and Selection Committee**, based on:

- Specific, immediate impacts of the emergency on academic or personal well-being.
- Nature and urgency of emergency and overall hardship.
- Availability of other support.

- Applicant's commitment to cardiology and endorsements from program leadership.
- Quality and completeness of supporting documentation.

Please note: while only minimal information is required to submit, applications that provide more detail about emergent circumstances and how funds will support pursuit of cardiovascular career will better inform the members evaluating requests.

Applicants might be asked for additional information if needed.

Additionally, applicants will be invited to share an update on their career trajectory within six months to help ACC understand the impact of the Benevolence Fund and continue to evaluate and assess the challenges medical students, residents and Fellows in Training encounter in their cardiovascular education and training journey.

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## 9. What if I'm not selected?

- Applicants **not selected** may **apply a total of two times** per calendar year.

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## 10. What are the expectations if selected?

- Recipients must commit to and attest to using the funds as outlined in their application. In the event the recipient does not provide sufficient documentation to verify the use of funds, or actually use the funds, for the intended purpose as set forth in the application, the recipient shall be responsible for promptly returning the funds to ACC.
- Recipients may be asked to provide **feedback on the impact** of the support they received.

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## 11. How can I contribute to the Fund?

To support the sustainability of the Benevolence Fund, individuals can donate. For details or interest in contributing, contact **Brynne MacCann** at [philanthropy@acc.org](mailto:philanthropy@acc.org).