



Equalizing Access to Educational Opportunities for Community Impact

US Address

3503 Yosemite St, San Diego, CA 92109

Cameroon Address

Bamenda: Building beside NFC Bank Nkwen:
Opposite Auto Ecole Canadienne, Chapelle Obili,
PO Box 8687 Yaoundé

Website: www.open-dreams.org

Email: info@open-dreams.org

Open Dreams Summer Academy 2025 - Application Form

Open Dreams Organization is an International NGO founded in 2013 to help high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds attend university and achieve quality education at no major cost to them. Over the past years, we have worked with highly motivated students from Cameroon who have successfully had placements in some of the best universities in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America. Though we started our pilot program in Bamenda - Cameroon, our vision is global. We aim to be an organization that provides equal access and the best educational resources and opportunities to students from all corners of the globe, regardless of creed or color. To this end, we have also helped students in Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, Nepal, South Africa, and beyond. As we grow our organization, we will keep striving relentlessly to reach brilliant young students who only need a little impetus to attain their full potential. We celebrated our 10th anniversary last July 2024.

Primarily, our model works by providing **Open Dreams Education Hubs**, physical office locations where we have educational resources including books, computers, projectors, Internet access, program facilitators, and spaces for our scholars to come for rigorous lessons, mentorship orientation, interactions, computer programming, international education, blogging, public speaking project-based learning programs, entrepreneurial leadership and deep self-regulated academic work on further educational opportunities available globally. At our incubation or nursery, young dreamers have a chance to push their creativity to the limit, nurturing and testing their concepts under mentorship. We are not conventional in our procedures and expect our scholars to push boundaries in their adventures. Through the Open Dreams Summer Academy, we train mentees who have excelled in academics and demonstrated great leadership potential, whether at home, school, church, or anywhere in their communities. We provide them with the tools necessary to prepare for international education. These include, but are not limited to, Internet access, computers, classes on academic writing, research, SAT/TOEFL/Duolingo/IELTS/GRE preparation materials as well as other resources they need to acquire global competencies etc. In 2022, we kick-started an e-mentorship program (Project Moon) to provide as many services online as we do in the physical spaces in Bamenda, Douala, and Yaoundé – Cameroon. Going forward, this hybrid mentorship model will allow mentees from any part of the globe to be able to access our mentorship resources 24/7 and also participate in live sessions.

The students who show great emotional intelligence, in addition to academic aptitude, and also excel during the Summer Academy are upgraded to Open Dreams Scholars. Scholars will be paired with mentors to help them navigate the college application process. The mentors are usually current students or graduates from foreign universities, accomplished Open Dreams Scholars, thought leaders, and models in the society who are very familiar with the college application process. They will connect with our students on platforms including social media, email, and Zoom. Their responsibilities are limited to providing advice and playing guidance-counselor roles. Scholars are strictly prohibited from seeking financial assistance from their mentors.

Open Dreams Mentees selected from the Academy will be provided with additional educational resources and further college application materials. After several SAT & TOEFL/Duolingo practice tests, students will be expected to take these tests by the month of October/November. Students who have not comfortably demonstrated through practice tests that they can achieve scores set by their target schools will be required to continue studying until they would have improved on their scores or go for test-optional institutions.

The 2025 Open Dreams Summer Academy will run from July 7th – August 23rd, 2025 in Bamenda, Douala, and Yaoundé. Anyone applying from outside Bamenda, Douala or Yaoundé must have the provision to spend this time in the town of choice



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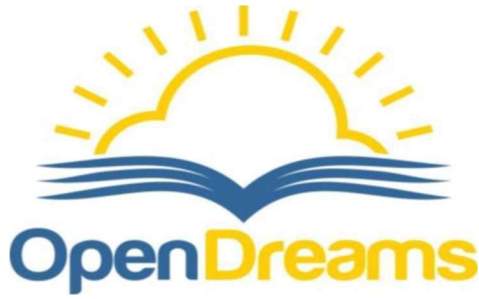
at his/her own cost if he or she gets accepted into the program. Those who cannot make it to Bamenda/Douala/Yaoundé, who is eligible to join Open Dreams, will be able to explore the online mentorship program (Project Moon) and also participate in regular Zoom sessions. As long as they have the right qualifications and demonstrate commitment and leadership excellence, they will enjoy similar privileges like those who attend the summer academy. The application window opens on March 31st, 2025, and closes on June 22nd, 2025. Interviews shall be conducted from June 27th – 28th, 2025, both in-person and online. Decisions shall be released via email between June 30th and July 4th, 2025.

I. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- 1. Students must be currently in high school and must have scored at least 27 points at the GCE Ordinary Level or they must be 2024 high school graduates with at least 20 points at the GCE Advanced Level. Students who had the GCE A/L before 2024 are ineligible for the summer academy but may be eligible to join Open Dreams. Visit our website for more specifications.*
- 2. Students should seek institutional endorsement from their high schools. The form should be signed by the Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Master of Discipline, a Head of Department or a school counselor. This applies only to students who are currently in high school.*

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- 1. Secondary and High school transcripts*
- 2. Ordinary Level Certificate and Advanced Level Certificate or Bacc where applicable*
- 3. Any other certificate or testimonial of your accomplishments in leadership.*
- 4. Six Application Essays (four short-answer essays and two essays of discretionary length), which have to be typed on extra sheets and attached to the application form or submitted online via email or through the application available at the Open Dreams website. Please, do not use AI, as you may be disqualified. Also, rely on your own ability, not that of parents, guardians, siblings etc.*
 - a. What do you hope to gain as an Open Dreams Scholar? (100 words max)*
 - b. What are your academic and career ambitions? If you want to become a Lawyer, an Engineer or Doctor, explain why. What is your motivation to pursue this particular discipline or profession? (250 words)*
 - c. In few words, describe your most significant extracurricular achievements. (50 words max)*
 - d. State one community challenge you are passionate about addressing and what you have done this far in line with addressing it. (50 words max)*
 - e. Is the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon affecting you in any way? What role are you playing to contribute to peace-building and harmonious cohabitation? (50 words max)*
 - f. What do you think about the use of the Internet or the law as a political tool and how has any of them affected you, your family, a business you know, or the local economy of your town or region? (100 words max)*
- 2. Two letters of recommendation: Each student who wishes to apply is expected to obtain two letters of recommendation from his/her teacher attesting to his/her tendencies, conduct, leadership skills, attitudes, intellectual promise, sense of maturity, extraordinary abilities, extenuating circumstances, if any etc. These letters must meet the Open Dreams standards (See Q6, FAQs). A third letter of recommendation will be in the form of an institutional endorsement from the student's high school. The Institutional Endorsement Form is part of this application package.*



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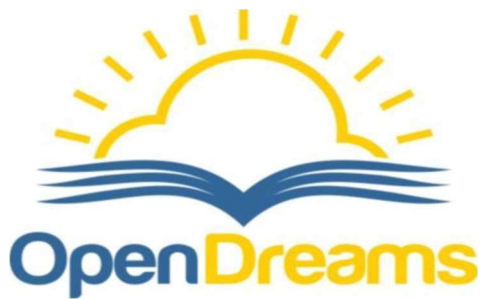
Email: info@open-dreams.org

3. There will be an interview component on WhatsApp or Zoom and at the Open Dreams hubs in Bamenda, Douala and Yaoundé. **The intake this year will be much smaller and thus more competitive than in previous years.** This is necessitated by the drastic changes in the USA.

III. [APPLICATION FORM, ODSA2025 \(Deadline: June 22nd, 2025\)](#)

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Title	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)	/	/	Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Last (Family) Name		First (Given) Name			Preferred First Name	
Current Address				City		
Postal Code		Province		Country		
Permanent (Home) Address				City		
Postal Code		Region		Country		
Applicant Phone:						
Applicant's Email						
Number of points at the GCE Ordinary Level		Number of points at the GCE Advanced Level or (BACC Grade)				
Please provide the name and contact details of the School Principal or School Official whom we may contact about your application.						
Name and Phone number of your advisor in school						
Email Address: Academic advisor						



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IV. Community Engagement and others

1. Did/do you belong to any club(s) on campus? If yes, explain
.....
.....
2. Did/do you hold any leadership role on campus or in the community? Explain.
.....
.....
3. Have you ever been involved with any NGO/Community-Based Organization?
.....
.....
4. Do you have any special skills or are you gifted in some way that might be very helpful to Open Dreams or your college application program? If yes, explain
.....
.....
.....
5. Do you have any medical conditions you may want us to know?
.....
.....

V. Parental Approval

Your son/daughter is applying to Open Dreams for mentorship. Besides other academic and community engagement exigencies at Open Dreams, this program may necessitate your son/daughter to travel abroad for academic studies or to attend professional development programs in the community. The entire mentorship journey requires parental support in areas such as providing basic finances for internet data at home, taxi money to get to the Open Dreams Center and back, paying a fee for SAT / IELTS / TOEFL / GRE / GMAT test, supporting your son/daughter in establishing a passport and permitting your son/daughter to travel abroad for academic studies etc. Sign below to endorse your son's/daughter's interest in being part of the Open Dreams Community.

Name of Parent/Guardian:.....
Phone number/email address of parent:.....
Signature and Date:.....



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HALI EFC Classification (*HALI – High Achieving **Low-Income** Student, EFC – Expected Family Contribution*). Provide honest answers to the following questions:

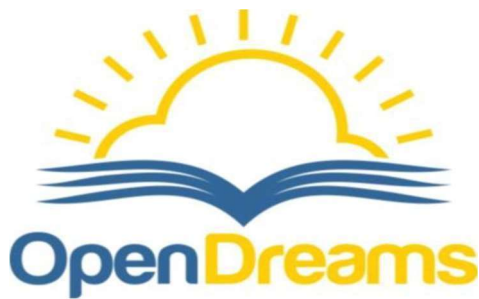
- 1) The Open Dreams Summer Academy runs in Bamenda, Douala and Yaoundé. In which town do you want to attend the Summer Academy? Please, state a first choice and a second choice.....
- 2) How many of you are in your household?
- 3) Do your parents own a car?
- 4) What is the profession of your mother?
- 5) What is the profession of your father?
- 6) Is any of your parents on retirement? If yes, which of them?
- 7) Who takes care of your school and daily needs?
- 8) Which high school do/did you attend?.....
- 9) Has your education ever been interrupted at any point due to finances or are there some very special circumstances about you that we need to be aware of? If yes explain.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

10. How did you learn about Open Dreams?
.....
.....

11. Do you have any first-degree relative in Europe or North America (first-degree relative refers to a parent or a sibling)

Completed application forms should be emailed to info@open-dreams.org no later than June 22nd, 2025. Alternatively, visit www.open-dreams.org/summer for the online application.



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INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT FORM

Dear Principal/Vice Principal/Dean/Administrator,

The student who has presented this form to you is applying for admission into the Open Dreams Academic Mentorship Program. Open Dreams is an international non-profit organization (501c3) founded in 2013 in New York, USA, with the mission, “Equalizing access to educational opportunities for community impact”. The access organization assists high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds to attend college on scholarship from funding organizations or partner institutions, at no major cost to the student. Open Dreams Scholars attend top universities in the world, in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America. Details about Open Dreams are available at www.opendreams.org and www.facebook.com/OpenDreamsForAll. For general inquiries, send an email to info@open-dreams.org

By completing this form, you take a promissory engagement, on behalf of your institution to:

- (1) Be supportive to the student in every way administratively possible;
- (2) Where possible, provide the student with leadership opportunities or opportunities to serve within the school milieu as a requirement for the program, which requires leadership skills;
- (3) Grant permission, when necessary to the student to be away from school for a day or two in order to take the required standardized tests (SAT, TOEFL) in the city of Yaoundé or Douala.
- (4) Make available to the student, report cards with ranks or transcripts on time, to enable the student to send to colleges that require them to make time-sensitive admission decisions.
- (5) Respond as soon as possible to any incoming email with regards to the student’s application.
- (6) Update us, should there be significant changes in the student’s academic progress, conduct

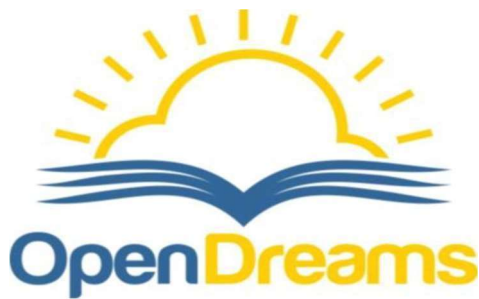
NAME OF APPLICANT _____

1. Is this candidate of good moral standing? Please explain

.....

.....

.....



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2. During community service activities (e.g. campus cleaning), does this student willingly and actively participate without being followed up? Yes ___ No _____

3. Is there anything more you may want us to know about this student?

.....
.....

4. I endorse this student (please underline one of the options below)

(a) Enthusiastically (b) highly (c) averagely (d) barely (e) I do not endorse this student

Your Name _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

POSITION/TITLE _____

Name of Institution and official stamp (where available)

PHONE Number(s) _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please, return this form to the candidate in a sealed envelope or email it directly to info@open-dreams.org by June 22nd, 2025, latest.

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Open Dreams Summer Academy, ODSA2025, The Batch of Fortitude
Open Dreams, Equalizing Access to Educational Opportunities for Community Impact



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FAQs - 2025 Open Dreams Summer Academy, *The Batch of Fortitude*

1. Does OD offer specific courses?

Answer: The ODSA curriculum spans academic and extracurricular activities, some of which include college exploration and presentations, essay writing, scholarship application, and one-on-one mentorship. Scholars are also taught essential skills such as critical writing, research, programming, coding, team building, leadership, community engagement, and effective communication, and are exposed to networking, personal branding, hackathons, public speaking, and project-based learning.

2. *I want to study medicine. Do I go for prep classes for the competitive entrance examination (color) into medical school or should I attend the Open Dreams Summer Academy, if granted a chance?*

Answer: If your passion is primarily going to medical school, then the Open Dreams Summer Academy is not the best option for you. This is because it is quite challenging to get admission into medical school in the USA and Canada - a degree and a pass in the MCAT are required. Less than 1% of international students make it into medical school in the USA. Hence, you are encouraged to go for preparatory classes for medical studies in Cameroon. As long as you are eligible to join Open Dreams, you will be part of the organization and can participate in its programs, mostly online. If you succeed in making it into medical school in Cameroon, you gain the status of a full Open Dreams Scholar. As part of the Open Dreams Community for your duration of studies, you can participate in Community Engagement activities and short programs abroad. By the time you are done with your medical degree in Cameroon, you may then consider options abroad for specialization. Medics are among the most successful at Open Dreams in harnessing scholarship opportunities and carrying out impactful community engagement activities.

On another hand, if you are interested in studying Medicine in Russia, China, Turkey, Japan, and Morocco, then you are encouraged to apply, with your GCE Advanced Level, for the scholarships offered by the governments of those countries when the programs are launched. There are many successful cases at Open Dreams to guide you through the process. Applications are done through the Ministry of Higher Education, Cameroon. Students with five straight A-grades at the GCE Advanced Level are more likely to be awarded such opportunities.

Note that you do not have to drift away from your passion just because you want to join Open Dreams – so if Medicine was your original intention, we have to work as best as possible for that to happen before considering other options.



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3. What is the cost of attending the Open Dreams Summer Academy?

Answer: This would be determined case-by-case depending on the family background and in a way that every student who is admitted is able to attend.

4. Are scholarships guaranteed for everyone selected by Open Dreams for the Summer Academy?

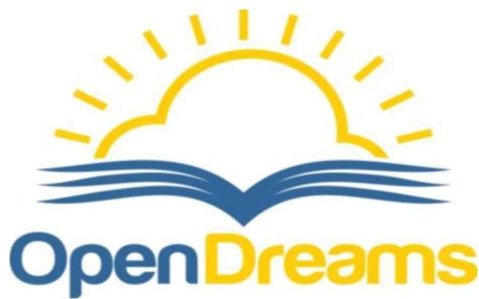
Answer: Not at all. Nothing is guaranteed. Even the best of students may not necessarily be the luckiest in being selected early enough for scholarships. It takes a lot more diligence and good strategy. Also, not everyone gets a scholarship at the end, but the success rate is over 65%, and sometimes it takes more than a year to get a great scholarship. So. Keeping a liberal mind on where one can study increases chances of making it.

5. What are the minimum academic requirements for a student to join the Open Dreams Community?

Answer: a) You need at least 20 points at the Cameroon GCE Advanced Level or 30 points in the Technical GCE or "Bien/Distinction" in the Bacc, if you just took these certificate exams.
b) If you sat for 4 papers at the GCE Advanced Level, then you require a minimum of 18 points or 3 A grades;
c) If you sat for 3 papers, then you need at least 2 A grades in two subjects that are not closely related (e.g. Math and Further Math, English Language and Literature in English are closely related).
d) If you are in Lower Sixth, then you must have at least 27 points at the GCE Ordinary Level. The cut off for the summer academy is usually around 29 points at the GCE Ordinary Level. More information is available here - <https://www.open-dreams.org/post/how-do-i-become-a-member-of-open-dreams>

6. In addition to the information provided above, where can a teacher find more information on what is required in the letter of recommendation?

Answer: Firstly, the letters must be addressed to an Admissions Officer ("Dear Admissions Officer"), and not to Open Dreams, and the name of the high school, the phone number and email address of the teacher, the subject he/she teaches, the length of time he/she has known you, the date it is written, must be mentioned. The letter should be between 350 – 500 words and must be typed and not handwritten. There should be no mention of the word "scholarship" in the letter, and the letter should be about one page long, containing key elements. The letters may be kept confidential and emailed directly to info@open-dreams.org (preferred option) or handed to the student in a sealed envelope. More information is available on this link. Please, share the link with your teacher and the information above. <https://www.open-dreams.org/post/general-guidelines-on-writing-letters-of-recommendation-for-open-dreams-pre-scholars>



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Students do not have to wait until they had received all these letters before they can submit their documents, as the letters can be submitted independently, no later than June 22nd, 2025. The teachers will be expected to act as contact points throughout the application process for the given student. They are also all expected to be members of the “Fulbright TEA App Guide” WhatsApp group. They can request through you to be added to the group, if they are not already members of the WhatsApp group.

7. What do I require to attend the summer academy?

Answer: If you have a laptop, great! If not, one good ledger to serve as a jotter is enough

8. What are the chances that I am selected?

Answer: There is high competition for the in-person summer academy, but merit counts. So, if you stand tall in academic performance and leadership, you will likely have a place when the interview would have been conducted. The acceptance rate among elite students is about 40%

9. What if I am not admitted? What options exist for me?

Due to stiff competition and limited space, sometimes, even students with 25 points at the GCE Advanced Level do not make it into the Open Dreams Summer Academy. However, they remain highly valued members of the Open Dreams Community and can sign up for Project Moon, the online version of the Open Dreams Summer Academy. As long as they attend all the sessions and meet up with set goals, they will receive the support they need to apply to universities. They will also be awarded Open Dreams Certificates, which constitute part of their college application package. More information about Project Moon can be found here > <https://www.open-dreams.org/online-academy> . As long as you put in the necessary hard work, you can even make it to an Ivy League University.

10. If I have more questions, how do I submit them to Open Dreams for answers?

You may send them by email to info@open-dreams.org or reach out to any Open Dreams Scholar or Member of the Administrative team or visit any Open Dreams Center or Hubs for answers. There are Open Dreams Hubs in Bafoussam, Bamenda, Buea, Douala, Yaoundé and budding hubs in Bertoua and Garoua. Also, there is an orientation WhatsApp group for those applying for the 2025 Summer Academy. It provides real-time support to everyone applying. You may reach out to any Open Dreams to add you to the group.

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