

# U.S. Rugby Foundation Opens Applications for 2025 Nelson College Scholarships



Nelson College is an all-boys boarding school located in Nelson on New Zealand's South Island. Founded in 1856, Nelson College is New Zealand's oldest secondary school, and the school where rugby in New Zealand was started. Located on the shores of Tasman Bay, Nelson is a small city with a vibrant and diverse culture. Known as the sunshine "capital" of New Zealand, the area is blessed with stunning natural landscapes.



## Nelson College International

The Rugby Curriculum: Nelson College is a highly acclaimed academic institution where students carry a full course workload. What sets it apart - their point of difference - is their unique, even by New Zealand standards, Rugby Curriculum.



Of the nearly 1,000 students enrolled at Nelson College, 200 play rugby; and over 100 of these – "pathways players" – participate in a formal Rugby Curriculum where rugby technique classes are run daily for four different age groups from U-14 to U-17.

Rugby classes are based around the following six key pillars of player development: Technical; Tactical; Strength and Conditioning; Nutrition; Mental Skills; and Personal Development.

A perennial rugby powerhouse, the Nelson Rugby Program has developed five All-Blacks over the last 10 years - and 23 All-Blacks over the years. Fifteen current NZ Super Rugby players and 30 current National Provincial Championship (NPC) players are graduates of Nelson College.



**Timing:** The scholarship for 2025, to be awarded by the end 2024, is for a roughly 4 1/2-month program at Nelson College from mid-April 2025 to mid-August 2025, which coincides with the start of the Nelson College rugby training and runs through the end of the Nelson College rugby season. The USRF President will announce the scholarship award winner(s) by the end of 2024.

**Eligibility:** The USRF is accepting applications from U.S. high school male rugby players who are in good standing with their rugby team and their school. Applicants must have been born in 2007 or later.

**Key Characteristics:** The Nelson College coaching staff is looking for players who “are mature, are coachable with a positive attitude, have a strong work ethic, and are resilient under pressure.”

**What the Scholarship Covers:** The scholarship covers the cost of attending Nelson College, including tuition; boarding either at the school or in a homestay; travel and medical insurance; uniforms; extracurricular activities; and NZ government and administrative fees. Airfare for the student to and from New Zealand is also included.

**Application Requirements:** Each application must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the applicant’s rugby coach(es), his high school transcript and other relevant information explained in the on-line application. Finalists will be interviewed

virtually by the Nelson College Scholarship Committee. Completed applications and all recommendations are due by November 22, 2024. There are no extensions.

**... Apply Now! ...**

**Nelson College Interface:** Once our scholarship recipient is selected and admitted, the school's International Department will liaise with him and his family about all education, boarding, passport, visas, etc. The Rugby Department will look after the rugby side of his support. While at the school, the student will meet regularly with both groups for progress checkups.

**Nelson College Academics:** The student will have a normal high school course workload (core subjects and electives), in addition to the rugby curriculum. Nelson College will work with the candidate's U.S. high school regarding academic synchronization and the transfer of academic credits to ensure no loss of academic standing.

**Nelson College Contact Point:** Jonathan "Jono" Phillips is the Nelson College Director of Coaching and 1<sup>st</sup> XV Coach who has promoted and facilitated this scholarship. In Jono's six seasons as Head of Rugby at Nelson College he coached the school's 1<sup>st</sup> XV to three South Island championships, four Crusaders School titles and four consecutive quadrangular victories in one of the most fruitful periods in the school's 168-year history.



The Nelson College 2024 1<sup>st</sup> XV just completed an undefeated season, won the South Island Championship and was ranked the #1 High School rugby team in New Zealand. In September 2024 they will be competing for the National Title.

**Previous Scholarship Recipients:** The Foundation's Nelson College Scholarships Grants have placed four young men at Nelson College over the past two years. You can learn more about who they are, where they are from and their reflections on their experiences at Nelson by clicking on this link:

**... Learn More! ...**

Questions: Any questions about the Nelson College Scholarship program, the application process, the school, the rugby program, boarding arrangements, etc., should be directed to any one of the Nelson College Scholarship Committee members below:

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\* For technical help with the application form only.