



THE LEE SCHIPPER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

ACTION: 2026 program guidance.

DATES:

Expressions of Interest (EOI): EOIs should be submitted online no later than **April 17, 2026**.

The Scholarship Board encourages earlier submission of EOIs. A shortlist of applicants will be invited to submit full applications.

Applications: Applicants whose EOIs have been selected will be given approximately three weeks to prepare and submit a full application.

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1 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 Scholarship Goals

The Schipper Family and EMBARQ, the former sustainable urban mobility initiative of the World Resources Institute's (WRI) Ross Center for Sustainable Cities, in cooperation with leading scholars and policymakers, spearheaded the creation of a Scholarship in memory of Leon J. Schipper ("Lee" or "Mr. Meter"). The Scholarship is jointly provided by the Schipper Family, WRI, Volvo Research and Education Foundations (VREF), and the Kuehne Climate Center.

The Lee Schipper Memorial Scholarship for Sustainable Transport and Energy Efficiency supports the momentum of Lee Schipper's contributions to enriching the international policy dialogue on sustainable transport and energy efficiency. Schipper, an international physicist, researcher, musician, and co-founder of EMBARQ, inspired and shaped the thinking of a generation of students and professionals and was widely recognized for enriching policy dialogue with his passion for data and challenging conventional wisdom.

The Scholarship aims to expand the contributions to sustainable transport and energy efficiency research and policy dialogue. In memory of Lee's work, the Scholarship will support initiatives that catalyze transformative research outcomes. The Scholarship emphasizes "iconoclastic" contributions (challenging conventional wisdom) that yield clear, transformative outputs and lead to measurable change. The scholarship will support proposals that nurture different stages of policy dialogue, including:

- Data collection and data quality
- Diagnosis through data analysis (qualitative and quantitative)
- Policy analysis and evaluation
- Interdisciplinary and international comparative analysis

The Scholarship aims to support individual young researchers and students in their pursuit of enriching policy dialogue consistent with Lee Schipper’s contributions.

Table 1: Categories of the Five Lee Schipper Memorial Scholarship Awards

		Geographic Scope	
		Global	Africa
Sustainable Transport Scope	Global Transport	2 Global Scholars	1 African Scholar
	Freight Transport or Logistics	1 Global Freight Scholar	1 African Freight Scholar

Up to five scholarships, each with different sustainable transport and geographic scopes, will be awarded, as illustrated in **Table 1**. Three of the scholarships will support research on sustainable transport, while two will specifically focus on sustainable freight transport or logistics. Three of the scholarships will support global scholars, while two scholarships will be awarded to African researchers.

- Two **Global Scholarships** will award up to two exemplary candidates a maximum of \$12,500 each to advance transformative research in efficient and sustainable transport.
- One **Global Freight Scholarship** will award up to one exemplary candidate a maximum of \$12,500 to advance transformative research in efficient and sustainable freight transport or logistics.
- One **African Scholarship** will award up to one exemplary candidate from the African continent a maximum of \$12,500 to advance transformative research in efficient and sustainable transport.
- One **African Freight Scholarship** will award up to one exemplary candidate from the African continent a maximum of \$12,500 to advance transformative research in efficient and sustainable freight transport or logistics.

The Scholarship is governed by an Advisory Board of selected experts in the field and will be managed under the umbrella of the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations. The scholarships will be awarded through a transparent process with strong governance procedures.

1.2 Selection Process and Priorities

1.2.1 Expressions of Interest (EOI)

The application process begins with an Expression of Interest (EOI). The EOI is a simple form intended to give the Board an early assessment of the proposed topic and the applicant's background and affiliations. It also allows the Board and prospective applicants to begin a collaborative process to ensure early scholarship success. EOIs should be submitted as early as possible but no later than **April 17, 2026**. The Board considers the EOIs to be an essential component of the application submission and decision-making processes. If necessary, the

Board will work with pre-applicants before the EOI deadline to ensure the application is eligible and appropriate, if applicable. Once an EOI is received, it will proceed through a two-step process:

- Screening for completeness and eligibility (both applicant and research proposal eligibility);
- Selection of shortlisted EOIs.

Up to seven (7) EOIs for each of the three scholarship categories — Global, Freight, and African — are expected to be shortlisted and asked to submit a full application. EOIs will be shortlisted based on broad criteria that will include consistency with Lee Schipper's contributions, merits of the research topic, applicant merits, and the prospective applicant's probability of success. The Freight and African call submissions will also be considered for the Global scholarship.

1.2.2 Finalist Application Screening

Applicants whose EOIs have been selected will be given approximately three weeks to prepare and submit a full application. To give prospective applicants adequate time to complete their applications (while incorporating any guidance clarifications or revisions), the Board reserves the right to adjust application dates. Once an application is received, it will proceed through a three-step process:

- Screening for eligibility (both applicant and research topic eligibility), and completeness (ensuring that the application provides complete and sufficient information for the evaluation process);
- Evaluation panel review process, applying “evaluation criteria,” and
- Final review and selection, applying “selection criteria.”

1.2.3 Finalist Application Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be individually reviewed and assessed against three (3) evaluation criteria, organized into several sub-criteria each, as detailed in **Table 2**. For each applicable criterion, the application will be assigned a rating of between zero and five points based on the application's fulfillment of the objectives of each criterion. These individual criterion ratings will then be accounted for according to the priority of criteria (weight) to arrive at an overall rating for the application.

The Board will require a rigorous analysis of the applications. Applicants must provide the requested information with the greatest possible clarity and conciseness to ensure an adequate assessment of their merits.

Table 2: Finalist Application Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Factors
1. Topic merits towards a transformational outcome in sustainable transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of innovative, transformational outcome (“real outcome”) • Consistency with Lee Schipper's Contributions (quality data collection and sound methodology; Diagnosis through qualitative or quantitative data analysis; Policy analysis and evaluation; Interdisciplinary and international comparative analysis) as means to a transformational outcome • Alignment with sustainable transport. In the case of the Freight Scholarships, alignment with sustainable freight transport or logistics.

2. Applicant merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Affiliation ● Academic background ● Research background (previous contributions) ● Strength of academic references
3. Application feasibility merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Realistic and feasible scope, schedule of activities, and budget ● Readiness of project to be commenced ● Likelihood of research topic's anticipated merits

1.2.4 Finalist Application Selection Criteria

These criteria will be applied to select the final candidate. Once the full applications are evaluated on their merits against the evaluation criteria above, the Board will select final applications based on the selection criteria (one of which is the score from the evaluation criteria). The Board will collectively review the applications to ensure consistency and balance projects against the Scholarship priorities and schedule. **Table 3** below summarizes these selection criteria for the finalists.

Table 3: Finalist Application Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria: All Finalist Applications
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Merits associated with the evaluation criteria 2. Geographical diversity and equity of applicant and application 3. Likelihood of Scholarship Award success 4. Visibility of the Scholarship Award outcome

1.2.5 Additional Application Selection Criteria for African Scholarships

The two African scholarships are intended to support young researchers from the African continent currently living and working there. In addition to the overall selection criteria above, the following specific criteria will be applied to both African Scholarship applications (**Table 4**).

Table 4: Additional African Scholarship Finalist Application Criteria

Additional Selection Criteria: African Scholar
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicant currently has citizenship of an African country 2. Applicant currently lives and works in Africa 3. Applicant is associated with an African-based institution (or an African branch of an international institution) 4. Research takes place in Africa

2 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Applications will be required to meet minimum requirements for applicant and research project eligibility. To the extent that an application's substance exceeds the minimum eligibility requirements described below, such qualifications will be considered.

2.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for the Scholarship Program depends on the applicant and the application meeting the specified requirements.

Applicants are eligible if they are young individual researchers. For the purposes of this Scholarship, a young researcher is an individual with five or fewer years of experience since their last academic degree (Master's or Ph.D.) and is not yet 36 years old at the submission deadline for the EOI¹.

The applicant must be a young individual researcher affiliated with an academic institution or research institution (public, private, or not-for-profit).

- Researchers affiliated with academic institutions will typically be Master's or Ph.D. students, or post-doctoral research fellows, at the time of submission of the EOI
- Researchers affiliated with research institutions will need to demonstrate that the research institution has been a legal entity for at least one year at the time of the EOI and has a track record of published, peer-reviewed publications.

For the African scholarship, see additional applicant eligibility criteria in Section 1.2.5.

2.2 Eligible Projects

EOIs and Applications must be for eligible research projects. These include the following requirements:

- Topic must be related to sustainable transport or energy efficiency.
 - The Freight scholarships will be awarded to projects related to efficient and sustainable freight or logistics.
- The topic(s) must be consistent with Lee Schipper's main work areas in Sustainable Transport and Energy Efficiency:
 - Data collection and quality,
 - Diagnosis through data analysis (qualitative and quantitative),
 - Policy analysis and evaluation,
 - Interdisciplinary and international comparative analysis
- The research project has not been previously published or submitted to a journal
- For the African scholarships, the research should take place in Africa.
- Ideally, the research project will be completed by March 2027. Please indicate the expected completion date if you are unable to meet this date.

2.3 Other Prerequisites

In general, applications must meet the following additional prerequisites:

- Applications must be submitted in English;
- Applications must be complete;
- The research project must result in *independent utility*².

¹ The eligibility periods can be extended in case of specific and properly documented circumstances such as parental leave. In case of parental leave, the applicant may request up to 18 months extension for each child born. The Scholarship Committee will assess the eligibility period based on evidence provided at the time of expression of interest submission.

² A research project is considered to have independent utility if it will result, upon completion, in the creation of new or substantially improved research contributions on its own with no additional research necessary.

3 AWARD INFORMATION

3.1 General Award Information and Anticipated Award Amount

The Board anticipates awarding up to US\$12,500 to each scholar. The Board is choosing to award through this solicitation an amount that will allow for future rounds of solicitations and awards. There is no predetermined allocation between this and any future solicitations; all such distributions will cumulatively reflect the nature and timing of the selected applications and the available endowment for the Scholarship Program.

3.2 Cost Sharing and Matching

The Scholarship share of the costs will cover up to 100 percent of the costs for the proposed research project, but no more than US\$12,500.

4 APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 Applying Online

Based on the criteria above, the Scholarship Committee has established a user-friendly online form for application submissions.

4.2 Content and Form of Application

The scholarship application has two parts: (1) an EOI, and for selected finalists, (2) a final full proposal.

4.2.1 Expression of Interest (EOI)

All prospective applicants must submit an EOI through an online form, which consists of the following components:

- **Research Project Description** – a brief (maximum 3,500 words) overview of the project's main features, purpose, expected outcome, cost, and benefits from the research project; and
- **Applicant Eligibility** – answers to questions regarding the applicant's background, affiliation, and experience to carry out their proposed research project.
- **Supporting Documentation** – including resume/CV, letter of recommendation, and list of academic publications
- **Scholarship Category Selection** – indication of which scholarship category/categories (Global, Freight, African) the applicant is applying to.

To focus prospective application efforts and remedy concerns, the Board may contact potential applicants if any questions arise from the information submitted in an EOI or if the information raises questions about the eligibility of the proposed research project or applicant.

Applicants must complete all EOI package components as required in the section above; failure to do so may result in the application being removed from consideration for an award.

4.2.2 Finalist Application Package Components

Shortlisted applications in each scholarship category (General, Freight, and African) will be invited to submit a full research proposal. The components will consist of a five to 10-page proposal including the relevance of the work, the transformational character, the methodology, expected impact, timeframe, and costs, in addition to the already provided information for the EOI. The full proposal will be submitted as a pdf via email.

4.3 Submission Dates (estimated)

The approximate schedule for the 2026 scholarship submission deadlines and milestones is described in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Approximate 2026 Scholarship Milestone Schedule

Milestone	Date
EOI submission	April 17, 2026
Finalists notified	End of May 2026
Finalist application submission	Late June 2026
Award announcement	End of August 2026
Select scholars present research at Transforming Transportation conference in Washington, D.C.	March 2027 (exact dates TBD)
Envisaged research project completion	March 31, 2027

5 AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

5.1 Award Notice

Upon approval of an application, notification will be sent to the potential awardee recipient informing them that the award is awaiting acceptance. Once the notice is received, the awardee will have approximately two weeks to formally confirm their interest. If the confirmation is not received, the Board will conclude that the awardee is no longer interested and will give the award opportunity to the next best-rated potential awardee on the list.

The Board will publicly announce selected awardees and funding.

5.2 Scholarship Payment

The Scholarship recipients will receive two payments, each for 50 percent of the proposed research project costs (no more than US\$6,250 each). The first payment will be administered upon acceptance of the award. The second payment will be made upon the applicant's successful completion of the project and upon the Scholarship Board's approval of the agreed-upon deliverables.

Scholarship recipients will be responsible for paying any taxes associated with the scholarship funds.