



The Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS)
has two tuition programs to assist youth in obtaining post-secondary education.

2012-2013 Academic Year

New Jersey continues to make a commitment to provide financial assistance to eligible foster, adoptive, and homeless youth seeking a post-secondary (2 and 4 year colleges and vocational/technical) education. Through the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program, educational funding has been made available to help youth make a successful transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency.

This program is made possible by the passage of N.J.S.A. 30:4C-101 et seq., (*Tuition Waiver Bill*) and the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program through the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) initiative. This scholarship is dedicated to the memory of Claudette Haba. Ms. Haba was an artist who worked hard to improve the foster care system in New Jersey. She was working for the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) when she unexpectedly passed away in December 1999 at the age of 51.

New Jersey Foster Care Scholars (NJFC) is funded by State and Federal dollars. Youth may be eligible to receive assistance with the following:

- | |
|-------------------|
| Tuition & Fees |
| Room & Board |
| Books & Supplies |
| Transportation |
| Special Equipment |
| Computers |
| Child Care Costs |

Since the scholarship has two sources of funding, each has its own eligibility criteria. Some applicants will be limited to attending in-state public schools, full time, and their scholarship will only pay for their tuition and fees, while other applicants will be eligible for (not guaranteed) a maximum of \$5,000.00 for the year. Your personal status will determine which source of funding will fund your scholarship and what services your scholarship will pay for.

This publication is made possible by a partnership between Foster and Adoptive Family Services and the Division of Youth and Family Services



MAIL OR FAX COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION TO:

**Foster and Adoptive Family Services
PO Box 518, 4301 Route 1 South
Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852
Attention: Scholarship Department
Fax: 609-452-2635 or 609-520-1515**

THE NEW JERSEY FOSTER CARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program is intended to assist current and former foster youth in their pursuit of higher education. Some adopted youth and homeless youth living in transitional living programs may also be eligible to receive awards. Each application is processed on a case-by-case basis.

Use this page to help determine if you should apply for the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program. **Please use this page as a guide only.** Final eligibility is determined by the Department of Children and Families. ***Please note it may take up to 3-5 weeks for applications to process.**

If you have any questions, please refer to the frequently asked questions on the back (page 6) of this booklet, or call Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) at 800/222-0047 and ask to speak with a scholarship representative.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE NJFC SCHOLARS PROGRAM?

Applicants must meet all of the following six requirements:

1. Be between the ages of 16 and 22
2. Be in possession of a high school diploma or certificate of high school equivalency (GED) **(High school seniors may apply before receiving their diploma, but scholarship award is contingent upon graduation.)**
3. Be accepted in or granted admission to a degree or certificate granting post-secondary institution that has been accredited to receive Title IV funding (Federal Financial Aid) **(If you are unsure whether or not your school meets this criteria you may call us at 800.222.0047)**
4. Have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
5. Have made an application for Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) if attending a NJ school that offers this program. A list of schools may be found by going to http://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/EOF/EOF_programs.htm
6. Have a working e-mail address (New students will be emailed as part of the application process in order to verify.)

In addition, applicants must meet at least ONE of the following:

Out of Home Placements	Adoptions	Kinship Legal Guardianship*
<input type="checkbox"/> Have you been in the care and custody of DYFS, in an out-of-home placement, for a period of 9 months or more after your 16th birthday?	<input type="checkbox"/> Were you adopted through the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services after the age of 16?	<input type="checkbox"/> Did you leave an out-of-home paid placement through the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services to enter Kinship Legal Guardianship after the age of 16? * KLG is when the court grants the caregiver legal responsibility for the youth, and the caregiver has the rights of care, custody and supervision of the youth.
<input type="checkbox"/> Are you, or have you been, in the care and custody of DYFS, in an out-of-home placement after your 14th birthday for a total of 18 months?	<input type="checkbox"/> Were you adopted through the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services after the age of 12 and currently live in your subsidized adoption placement? (Subsidy must be in place at time of application.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Do you reside in, or have you resided in, a Transitional Living Program for youth or supportive housing for 3 months or more? <i>The facility or program must receive payment pursuant to the New Jersey Homeless Youth Act or the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.</i>		

When Can I Apply?

Each academic year a new scholarship application is made available (usually April or May)

Complete applications with all documents will be accepted until:
October 1st, 2012 for the Fall semester
March 1st, 2013 for the Spring semester

The NJFC Scholars Program recommends that students submit this application and all applications as early as possible.

If you have questions about the deadlines contact the Scholarship Department at the number below.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT:

This is an agreement that all NJFC Scholars recipients must sign and return to FAFS before funding will be awarded. The form will be emailed to you and must be returned within 15 business days. If you have any questions once you receive this form please contact the scholarship department.

FUNDING BENEFITS:

Based on the criteria that make you eligible for the NJFC Scholarship money, the staff at FAFS will discuss what benefits you can receive.

Mail or fax applications and all required documentation to:

Foster and Adoptive Family Services
P.O. Box 518, 4301 Route 1 South
Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852
Attention: Scholarship Department
Fax: 609-452-2635 or 609-520-1515

Call 800/222-0047 to speak to a scholarship representative M-F from 9am to 5pm EST.

For periodic updates, information and links to other scholarship opportunities, students are required to have a valid email address.

Email us: scholarships@fafsonline.org

NEW JERSEY FOSTER CARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM APPLICATION 2012-2013

All Students must complete all of the information in order to have a complete application. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

I am a: **New Applicant** **Re – Applicant** (Please check one)

I acknowledge that by completing this application I am applying for two scholarship programs – The Federal Education and Training Voucher Program and the State Tuition Waiver Program – My individual eligibility will be based on my DYFS case history.

1. Applicant Information

Legal Name: (Last, First, MI – Include Maiden Name If Applicable)		Age	Birth Date: (Mo/Day/Yr) / /	Social Security Number: - -
Mailing Address:		City	State	Zip Code
County:	Email Address:	Home Phone Number: ()		Cell Phone Number: ()
Name, Address, and Phone Number of a person who can always contact you:				Student I.D. # (If you have one)

2. Eligibility Information

Do you currently have an open DYFS case? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If you have an open case what is the name of your case manager? _____	Name of Current Resource Parent or Residential Program: _____	Personal Assets (Sum of: Bank Account, Car, Home, Etc.) If it is \$0 please state so. \$ _____
If you have an open DYFS case, are you receiving any services from them? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Telephone number of case manager: () _____	Telephone number of Resource Parent: () _____	Do you have your high school Diploma or GED? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Year received: _____
Please check your most recent placement status: <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Care <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted after age 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input type="checkbox"/> Group/Residential Program <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (Please specify)		If you haven't already graduated are you a high school senior or are you enrolled in a GED program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I will graduate or complete my program on: _____ (date of graduation) <input type="checkbox"/> No	
OFFICE USE ONLY : Student's Total Eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> ETV <input type="checkbox"/> TANF <input type="checkbox"/> "state option eligible" <input type="checkbox"/> NOT ELIGIBLE Date Eligibility Rec'd _____ Rev'd By _____ (Initials)			

3. Statistical Information (FEDERAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE WE GATHER THIS INFORMATION)

Race: <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown/Unable to Determine <input type="checkbox"/> Declined	Has a court ever found you guilty of committing an act of delinquency? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Do you have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Current Employment Status: <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently employed full time <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently employed part time <input type="checkbox"/> I am not currently employed	Are you in a branch of the Armed Forces? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Are you a participant in the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	How did you first find out about the NJFC Scholars Program? (Please Pick One)				
	<input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> DYFS Case Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> Web <input type="checkbox"/> Indep. Living Prog.	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource Parent <input type="checkbox"/> FAFS Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Media Source <input type="checkbox"/> Trans. Living Program	<input type="checkbox"/> College Rep. <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> NJFC Scholars Program Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Explain): _____

4. School Information

Name of college or program you are planning to attend or are currently attending:		School Telephone: ()
School Address:		I attend or plan to attend: <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time
I am applying for NJFC Scholars Program funding for: <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Semester <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Semester	I will be a: <input type="checkbox"/> Freshman <input type="checkbox"/> Junior <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore <input type="checkbox"/> Senior <input type="checkbox"/> Voc./Cert. Program	<p>In most circumstances a student is only allowed to earn one degree while in the program, with the exception of an Associate's Degree followed by a Bachelor's Degree. Please consider this when selecting your school and area of study. Special circumstances will be subject to state review and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>I am currently seeking a: <input type="checkbox"/> Voc. Training/Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> BA / BS</p> <p>If seeking Training or Certificate, my program is approximately _____ months</p>

5. Terms and Usage Agreement

I, the undersigned, do HEREBY CERTIFY that I am in need of financial assistance to continue my education. I affirm that I have fully read and have fully completed the NJFC Scholars Program application. I, the undersigned, do HEREBY DECLARE under the penalty of the laws of the State of New Jersey and the United States that this application has been examined by me and to the best of my knowledge is true and correct. I understand that, if I qualify for the NJFC Scholars Program, the amount awarded may vary depending upon my individual demonstrated need and other eligibility criteria. The award is for one year with the possibility of continued funding in subsequent years dependent upon my academic performance and budgetary considerations of the NJFC Scholars Program. I understand that any misuse of funding or concerns with my academic progress may result in termination of funding.

I agree to let the NJFC Scholars Program use my essay in part or in whole in any future publications. I understand my whole name will not be used.

Signature of Applicant:	Print Name:	Date:
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IMPORTANT!

YOU MUST SIGN ALL WAIVERS!

On this page you will find three waiver forms. The first allows the staff at Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) who administers the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program, to speak with your caseworker or other involved parties about your scholarship. The second allows the staff at FAFS to speak with your school regarding your academic progress and financial need, and the third is your agreement to participate in Project MYSELF and authorizes us to speak directly with them about your scholarship and other issues as they arise.

Please complete and sign all waivers and mail or fax the entire page back with your application packet.

DYFS DIRECT SERVICE WORKER AND DCF PROGRAM STAFF AND CONTRACT STAFF WAIVER OF CONSENT

Many students enrolled in the NJFC Scholars Program have individuals (e.g. caseworkers, transitional living program staff and aftercare program staff) helping them to maximize the use of their scholarship funding. These individuals sometimes call us to discuss issues on your behalf. We would like your permission to cooperate and work with DYFS Direct Service Worker(s), DCF Program Staff and Contract Staff to assist you in meeting your educational goals.

I, (print student's legal/full name)

as a student enrolled in the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars Program, do hereby permit the FAFS staff of the NJFC Scholars Program to share information pertaining to my scholarship funding, and education, with the direct service worker(s), DCF Program Staff and Contract Staff that have been assigned to assist me.

Student's Signature

Date

POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION WAIVER OF CONSENT

Due to state and federal regulations, no personal information about your financial or academic progress can be released by the post-secondary institution you attend without your express written consent. In order to process your award, the FAFS staff of the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program will need access to your academic and financial aid records.

Student's Name: (print legal/full name)

Social Security Number:

Telephone Number:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Email:

Student I.D.# :

College Attending:

College Phone Number:

By signing below, I hereby give permission to Foster and Adoptive Family Services or their designated appointee to access my financial and academic records at the school named above. I understand that any information gathered will be used for determining financial need and eligibility in conjunction with the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program.

Student's Signature

Date

PROJECT MYSELF E-MENTORING WAIVER OF CONSENT

I, (print student's legal/full name)

am fully aware that, as a participant in the NJFC Scholars Program, I am required to participate in the Project MYSELF Mentoring Program. As a student enrolled in the NJFC Scholars Program and Project MYSELF, I do hereby permit the FAFS staff of the NJFC Scholars Program to share information pertaining to my scholarship funding, and education, with the staff of the Project MYSELF program who will be assigned to assist me, as well as other pertinent information as it arises.

Student's Signature

Date

If you have any questions pertaining to these consent forms or the disclosure of your personal and/or financial information, please contact a scholarship support representative at 800/222-0047.

APPLYING FOR NJFC Scholars Program:

Who can I contact if I need help filling out my application?

Contact Foster and Adoptive Family Services at 800/222-0047 or send an email to scholarships@fafsonline.org.

What is The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)?

The FAFSA is a form produced by the Federal Department of Education which allows you to apply for all federally funded student aid. Applications can be obtained at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> or by calling the FAFSA hotline at 1-800-4-FED-AID.

What is acceptable proof that I filled out my FAFSA?

For the NJFC application, it is required that you submit proof of a completed, current FAFSA. This proof may be in the form of a Student Aid Report (SAR) or printed confirmation page from the FAFSA website (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>).

What is the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program?

The EOF program was created to ensure meaningful access to higher education for those who come from backgrounds of economic and educational disadvantage. To ensure the opportunity to attend college, EOF provides supplemental financial aid to help cover college costs and hosts an array of campus based outreach and supportive services at 28 public and 13 independent institutions. For more information or to find out if your school participates you may go to (<http://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/EOF>).

What will happen if my application packet is INCOMPLETE?

If the information received in your packet is incomplete, a NJFC staff member will call or send an email and you will have fifteen (15) business days from the receipt of the packet to provide the missing information. If your packet remains incomplete after fifteen (15) business days, your application may be denied for the current funding cycle.

What will happen if my application packet is COMPLETE?

Completed applications are usually processed in 3 to 5 weeks. If you are accepted into the NJFC Scholars Program, you will be emailed a participation agreement. This must be printed, read, signed and returned to the staff of the NJFC Scholars Program within (15) business days of sent email. You will also receive a welcome packet detailing how to access your scholarship, and reminding you about the participation agreement. The letter will include the business card of your scholarship associate, who can help guide you and answer any questions. If the participation agreement is not completed and returned, you will not receive any funding.

If my application is denied, can I re-apply?

Yes. If you were not eligible when you applied or if you did not submit a complete information packet.

What is considered a DYFS paid placement?

- Resource Family (foster parent)
- Group Homes
- Residential Treatment Centers
- Independent Living Facilities

Where do I send my completed application?

You may mail or fax your completed application to:

Foster and Adoptive Family Services
P.O. Box 518, 4301 Route 1 South
Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852
Attn: Scholarship Department
Fax: 609-452-2635 or 609-520-1515

ONCE ACCEPTED INTO NJFC Scholars Program:

Do I have to re-apply every year?

Yes. You must re-apply every year for the NJFC Scholars Program. The staff of Foster and Adoptive Family Services will send scholarship recipients a new application each year, usually via email. The application must be filled out and returned with the required supplemental materials.

Once accepted, how do I get help with tuition?

Keep Foster and Adoptive Family Services informed! Call us at 800/222-0047 after you have registered for classes. Foster and Adoptive Family Services will contact your post-secondary institution to determine how much additional funding you will need for tuition and associated fees. Your award will be sent directly to your post-secondary institution. Tuition and fees are always our first priority, followed by other school charges. No other funding will be awarded until school bills have been processed.

Once accepted, how long will it take to get my award?

Award disbursement dates vary. We recommend that students who are accepted into the program register at their post-secondary institution as early as possible. Students should keep their school informed that they are a part of the NJFC Scholars Program. Registering for classes early and informing your school's Student Accounting/Bursar's Office that you will be receiving our scholarship will help to speed up the award disbursement process.

In the tuition and fees that are paid first, what is considered a fee?

The fees that are included here are automatically added on to a student's bill when he/she registers for classes. Fees may include lab fees for science classes, recreational fees at the school, computer lab fees or medical insurance fees. If a student has another form of health insurance, such as the Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (MEYA), he/she should contact his/her school and ask if the medical insurance fee can be removed.

It is important to note that dorm or meal plan costs are not included in these initial fees. These items fall under additional supports.

Once accepted, how do I get help with other educational expenses (rent, computer, books, transportation, etc)?

To obtain educational supports other than tuition, send Foster and Adoptive Family Services a completed Educational Support Request form (ESR). These special forms are available on our website or by calling 800/222-0047. The total amount provided will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may not exceed the lesser of \$5,000 or your cost of attendance. A student's tuition need will be taken into account before providing any other educational supports. Fax requests to 609-452-2635 (alternate fax number: 609-520-1515) or email completed forms to scholarships@fafsonline.org. **NOTE: Checks take 4 to 6 weeks to process and are not routinely sent to students. Requests must be made as early as possible. Your request may be denied due to funding availability and/or eligibility.**

Can I use the NJFC Scholars Program at ANY school?

No. The school you attend must be able to accept Federal Title IV funding. An easy way to see if your school or program takes this Title IV funding is to ask at the financial aid department or check <http://www.students.gov>. Schools and programs that accept Federal Title IV funds have an assigned school code, which can be found on the federal website. Alternatively, you may call 800/222-0047 and ask a scholarship representative.

Do I have to contact someone to register for Project MYSELF?

No. Once you are accepted into the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program your information will be given to the Project MYSELF Program and they will contact you in reference to your role in the program and its requirements.

Do I have to participate in Project MYSELF?

Yes. All students accepted into the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program are required to participate in the Project MYSELF mentoring program.

What are my responsibilities as an NJFC Scholar?

- You must have a working e-mail address and stay in contact with FAFS and Project Myself on a monthly basis.
- You must sign the participation agreement, which will be sent to you upon your acceptance and adhere to the requirements listed in that document.
- You must maintain a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), pass all remedial classes, and make forward academic progress every semester.

DOCUMENTATION

The following items **MUST BE INCLUDED** with your application in order for it to be considered complete for this program.

Please double check your packet before submitting!

The checkboxes below have been provided to help you gather and organize the information you are submitting.

Remember: Incomplete packets **will not** be reviewed for approval.

New applicants: MUST SUBMIT ALL DOCUMENTATION (ITEMS 1-8)

Re-applicants: ONLY SUBMIT SHADED AREAS (ITEMS 1,2,3,7 & 8)

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Proof of completed and submitted Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (See FAQ for details.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Most recent transcript (does not need to be an official transcript) *NOTE: For re-applying students, this may mean you have to wait until Spring grades have posted to send in your application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Proof of acceptance (or current enrollment statement/schedule) from the post-secondary institution you are planning to attend or are currently attending *NOTE: For re-applying students, if you are not going to attend the same school you have been attending you must provide proof of the number of credits you are transferring. If you are not bringing any credits with you please provide a letter stating the reason(s).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Letter of recommendation from an adult who knows you well
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. A goal or goals you hope to accomplish by attending school and participating in the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program. These may be listed or put in a sentence/paragraph form.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Proof of application to the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program if you are planning to attend a school in NJ that offers this program (See FAQ for details.) This would be obtained through the EOF office at the particular school you plan to attend. If it is too late to apply, or if you are ineligible, a letter from the EOF Department confirming that is sufficient.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Completed and signed application (All questions must be answered. New applicants will be emailed to verify their email address.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Signed waivers (three waivers are required and are located on the reverse of the application)

KEY SUPPORTS INVOLVED WITH FOSTER YOUTH

Foster and Adoptive Family Services

- Private non-profit organization that administers the NJFC Scholars Program
- Receives and reviews documentation
- Distributes awards
- Conducts outreach to students, schools, and related organizations

Foster and Adoptive Family Services can answer any questions about the program and will work with students to assess their financial need as it relates to their scholarship.

Office of Education Stability

The Office of Educational Stability within the Department of Children and Families (DCF) oversees the NJFC Scholars Program. This office also provides technical assistance to all DCF staff and offices regarding educational issues.

Office of Adolescent Services

The DCF Office of Adolescent Services (OAS) is responsible for the oversight of relevant programming, services, training, policy, and best practice standards that support DCF involved adolescents and young adults to successfully transition into adulthood. OAS also collaborates with other state departments, community stakeholders, businesses/corporations, parents, and youth to identify priorities and needs, increase resources, and create a service linkage system that is accessible, adequate, and appropriate for adolescents and young adults in New Jersey.

Project MYSELF

Description: Project MYSELF (Mentoring Youth toward Social, Educational, and Life Fulfillment) is a multi-service program for former and current foster youth as they pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. Project MYSELF participants are automatically enrolled into Project MYSELF upon receiving financial assistance from the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program (NJFC). Through a partnership with Transitions for Youth's Project MYSELF hosted by the Rutgers School of Social Work, DCF and NJFC, young adults aging-out of the child welfare system also receive the mentorship, support, guidance, referrals and encouragement needed to stay in and succeed in school. Each Project MYSELF participant is assigned a support coach, who is available to help youth with issues related to academic functioning, emotional resiliency, physical wellness, and community, peer and adult partnerships.

The program is designed to (1) improve academic performance, (2) increase retention rates, (3) complete post-secondary education degrees, and (4) offer opportunities to develop essential life skills and competencies to live and succeed independently.

PM services include (1) support coaching, (2) assessment and referrals, (3) face-to-face mentoring, e-mentoring and tele-mentoring (4) crisis intervention, (5) emotional resiliency skill-building workshops, (6) monthly outreach in the form of a newsletter and (7) social networking site (Facebook) which highlights information related to PM events, meetings, resources and information on relevant topics around positive youth development and improving their academic functioning. Speaker's Bureau, a peer- to-peer paid training opportunity, is open to NJFC scholars.

If you have any questions about the Project MYSELF Program, please feel free to call Lesley Dixon, Sr. Project Coordinator at 973-353-5776 or go online to www.transitionsforyouth.org