

French Woods Festival Scholarship

The French Woods Festival is a co-ed performing arts summer camp for students located on over 1000 acres of hills, fields and woods bordering a private lake in the town of Hancock, New York in the Catskill Mountains (USA). Students come from all over the USA and from over 40 countries. Internationally recognized as a premiere programme in the performing arts, they feature options in music, art, theatre, dance, circus, magic and horseback. In addition to their core activities, all the programmes of a traditional USA summer camp, and more, are included in their offerings. Younger students have additional guidance and supervision, while older students can participate in community service and legacy projects.

Theatre is at the heart of the performing arts programme at French Woods. Performance opportunities abound in their five theatres where more than 80 full-scale productions are made every summer. Their music departments provide orchestra pits for musicals, whilst their sound, lighting, stagecraft and costume departments support the productions and give students opportunities to be involved backstage as well.

Following a very successful trip made by Charlie Betts (New Plymouth Boys' High School) in 2025, the Taranaki Musical Theatre Trust (TMTT) and New Plymouth Operatic Society (NPOS) wish to maintain a strong relationship with French Woods by offering a scholarship to assist with attending the Festival each year. We are looking for students aged 16-18 to attend the Festival for a minimum of 6-weeks (up to a maximum of 12-weeks), beginning in the first week of June each year. The time away will be dependent on what is possible for you, particularly in relation to your ongoing schoolwork.

It is important to emphasise that this scholarship is not based on raw talent alone. The scholarship is designed to champion leadership in the performing arts. It should be rewarding not only creative drive, but also the commitment to inspire the next generation and grow the local arts community. We are seeking students who are ready to act as role models and advocates for the performing arts within our community. TMTT and NPOS reserve the right to not award the scholarship each year.

TMTT and NPOS are very grateful for the support and guidance from Ryan Jacobs who worked as a director, writer, teacher and coach at French Woods for 13 years. He has been a strong voice for advocating the talent we have here in New Plymouth and his commitment and passion for this scholarship is vital to its ongoing success.

TMTT and NPOS wish to provide 2x scholarships each year valued at \$2,500.00 (NZD) each, supporting the financial cost towards attendance to the Festival. Based upon Charlie's trip this year, there will still be a shortfall of around \$5,000.00 (NZD) to ensure all is covered for the time away at the Festival. There will be time for those successful applicants to fund raise. NPOS will support this as much as possible, particularly if our rooms on King Street can be used as a venue to support fund raising activities, such as a Quiz Night.

Applications are due to the NPOS General Manager by **Monday 10 November 2025 – 5.00pm**. A review panel will then assess the applications before making recommendations to TMTT. Notification to all applicants will be made before the end of November 2025. Applications and general enquiries can be sent to office@npos.co.nz

We look forward to receiving your application!

On a separate document, please provide the following:

PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Full name
2. Age
3. School
4. Phone
5. Email

QUESTIONS

1. What are your future ambitions?
2. How would this scholarship benefit your development?
3. Describe a time when you took on a leadership role. What did you learn?
4. How do you currently engage with the local arts community?
5. What does “being an ambassador for the performing arts” mean to you, and how would you embody this role?

Email your application to office@npoz.co.nz by **Monday 10 November 2025 – 5.00pm**.