

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS

HOW TO SEARCH FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER RESOURCES



HOW TO SEARCH FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are based mainly on excellence, although financial need can be a secondary factor. Volunteer community service or extra-curricular experience are requirements for many large scholarships where donors are looking for well-rounded students.

It takes persistence and effort to find scholarship money. Make the commitment. The pay-off can be huge. If you qualify, you may not have to work part-time or go deeper in debt to make ends meet. **READ THE SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA.** If you meet the general criteria, then apply, even if you are not sure your marks and experience are sufficient. Do not waste time applying for scholarships that have criteria you do not meet. Find excellent application tips under 'Resources' at scholarships.com and visit twinbro.com.

- Start your scholarship search in Grade 10 or as early as possible
- Start with the financial aid and awards websites of the schools you want to attend, e.g. bcit.ca/finaid
- Check univcan.ca for scholarship listings
- Check studentaidbc.ca for scholarship listings
- Register at scholarshipscanada.com and yconic.com
- Aboriginal students: please see bcit.ca/aboriginal/scholarships
- Consider what affiliations you and your family have. Unions, employers, and service clubs may have scholarships for their members' children
- Put together a portfolio of your achievements and keep it up to date
- Many scholarships look for a track record of volunteer service over time, not just in the last six months of Grade 12
- Leadership and initiative in volunteer service are strongly valued
- Customize each scholarship application to the individual criteria
- If the application includes reference letters, make sure your referees tailor their letters to the criteria and understand the format

FINANCIAL AID KEY WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

The most important financial aid websites are your provincial government student assistance website (studentaidbc.ca) and the BCIT student financial aid website: bcit.ca/finaid.

Studentaidbc.ca provides information on government student aid, including loans, grants, and bursaries; online application, guidebooks, eligibility for part-time study grants, adult basic education study grants, special grants for students with disabilities, and funding for aboriginal students.

Here are a few web sites to get your research started. We advise you to use caution when using the Internet as we cannot guarantee the security of the sites or the accuracy of the information provided.

- **servicecanada.gc.ca:** has a wealth of information on financing opportunities. Visit 'Education and Training' under the 'Services by Subject' heading.
- **canlearn.ca:** includes **useful** online tools such budget planner and loan repayment calculator. Use the A-Z index to locate topics quickly
- **educationplanner.ca:** info on how to find a program and how to apply to post-secondary institutes
- **debtfreegrad.com:** not just scholarships, but also good general information about planning to pay for school
- **yourmoney.cba.ca:** good financial planning tips
- check with various financial institutions regarding financial planning and student lines of credit

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