



Where to Start with Scholarships

The 5Ws of Scholarships

WHY Apply for a Scholarship?

There are two very good things about getting a scholarship:

- It will help you to pay for your postsecondary education.
- It is a mark of distinction, an honour that demonstrates your merit in some regard. Scholarships look good on your resume.

WHO Should Apply for a Scholarship?

- There are an incredible number of scholarships available.
- A significant number of them have very specific eligibility criteria and don't require extremely high marks.
- There is a good chance that you are eligible for more scholarships than you are aware of.
- So it is definitely worth it for every student to follow the 4 step application process.

WHAT Kinds of Scholarships Are There?

- Academic
 - Awarded solely on the basis of performance in a subject, or some combination of subjects.
 - Nearly all universities offer this kind of scholarship to entering students and many universities award them automatically to any student who surpasses a certain cut-off average (say, for example, 89.99%).
- Merit
 - This type of scholarship goes to people who demonstrate both very high academic ability and exemplary personal characteristics.
 - The definitions of academically able and exemplary character vary from one scholarship to another. In general, the larger the award is, the higher the standards are for each component.
- Athletic
 - Most universities provide some form of reward for outstanding athletic achievement.
 - In general, athletic scholarships to US universities are far more generous than exist for Canadian ones.
- Financial need
 - When a scholarship is determined solely on the basis of this criterion it is called a bursary, and again, many universities offer them.
 - More frequently, financial need can be a consideration that helps to determine who is awarded one of the other kinds of scholarship listed above.
 - In some cases, it isn't a consideration at all. In others it's a very important one.

WHEN Do I Start and **WHERE** Do I Look For Scholarships?

- Now use the Four Step Process (next page).

Four Step Process

Step 1 - Use Search Engines

This is probably the most important step, as it is likely to yield the largest number of results, and the data you get is easy to use (i.e. it's sortable, hotlinked and concise, AND it refers ONLY to scholarships you actually are qualified for).

There are two major Canadian search engines:

- Student Awards: www.studentawards.com/
- Scholarships Canada: www.scholarshipscanada.com/

These search engines are better for Canadian post-secondary studies than U.S.-based search engines. They have tens of thousands of scholarships in their databases. Create an account. It's free! Fill out the registration form in detail. The more information you provide in the form, the better a job they can do of matching you with the right scholarships.

There are two major U.S. engines:

- Peterson's: www.petersons.com/college-search/scholarship-search.aspx
- Princeton Review: www.princetonreview.com/

Although Peterson's claims to have over a million scholarships in its database, this does not mean a U.S. search engine will do a better job for Canadian schools. However, for those seriously considering U.S. or international education, these search engines are obviously worthwhile.

Step 2 - Check for School-Based Awards

All schools offer various entrance scholarships of all 4 types; some offer more money than others.

- Some are automatic consideration, but others require application. Check the websites of each school carefully

In general, it is more important to find the right school than to go for the best scholarships. HOWEVER, IF you are at or near the top of the honour roll, it might be worth your while to look at the extremely valuable scholarships they offer to the best of the best.

Many universities have special scholarships targeting students with certain characteristics (e.g. a specific cultural/ethnic background, or a disability etc.)

- If you possess one of these special characteristics, your chances of obtaining a scholarship from the school that targets it are obviously enhanced.
- Finding these scholarships, however, would be an onerous job. Fortunately, the vast majority of universities publish all their scholarship information to the Student Awards and

Scholarships Canada search engines and you therefore do not have to worry too much about missing one of these.

- If there is a scholarship at a certain school for a special characteristic that you possess, you should already have found out about it through step 1.

Step 3 - Check Your Connections

Many, many scholarships go unawarded year after year because they are so narrow in focus and are not known to the search engines.

- Any organization that you or your extended family are associated with could have one of these. Enquire. Ask your family and contacts to enquire on your behalf.
- This step is a bit more time consuming than the first two and will yield few, if any, results.
- Any scholarship you do find using this method will have very few other applicants and therefore you will have a really good chance of receiving it.

Step 4 - Apply to Education Matters/Rutherford

The Rutherford Scholarship is given to any Alberta resident who is either a citizen or a landed immigrant whose marks in grades 10, 11, and/or 12 are in excess of 75% on five selected subjects.

- This scholarship is applied for in grade 12 and the deadline for the committee's receipt of the application is May 1. Forms are available online or in the Student Services office.
- Education Matters is the organization that coordinates a number of scholarships exclusive to students attending CBE.
- Every spring they put out a package of information on the various scholarships students can apply for.
- For this year, at this time, you will need to look at this package in order to determine which of their scholarships you are and are not eligible for.

Scholarship Tips

1. Complete the application in full. Follow all directions and submit all required documentation. If a question does not apply to you, note that, do not leave it blank.
2. Get involved in extracurricular and community activities. Volunteer at your church, hospital, youth group, etc. Join a team at school. Become a part of the school theatre production. These all help to make your application stand out.
3. Apply only if you are eligible! If you do not meet all of the eligibility criteria, you will not be considered.
4. Give concrete examples of community involvement, school involvement as well as leadership activities. Be sure to note the time frame during which you participated in each activity.
5. Neatness matters! If possible, make a copy of the application and use it as a working draft. Print legibly, or type if possible. Spelling and grammar are important.
6. Develop a portfolio of your accomplishments to date. Give a list of your accomplishments to the people who are writing letters of recommendations for you to assist them.
7. Thank those who have written letters of recommendation for you. These people go out of their way to help you, and they deserve a thank you.
8. Request help if needed.
9. Deadlines are important. Application will not be accepted if they are received after the posted deadline.
10. Keep a copy of all of the applications and documentation. Many scholarships ask for similar criteria and you can use some of the documentation more than once. You should also keep a copy of all application you fill out, for your own record.
11. Remember, your awards application represents you. Submit the best application you can.