



Guide to finding funding for university



Introduction



Welcome to this guide on finding additional funding opportunities to help with the costs of University.

The 2018 Student Money Survey revealed that around **70% of students don't even apply** for scholarships, believing that they aren't eligible, and yet, on average we will have at least 10 scholarships on our database at any one time which are open to all students. That means that ***everyone is eligible for something***. It doesn't of course mean that everyone will get something, but you certainly will not if you don't apply.

With over £150 million worth of funding available for UK students, we believe that helping them to understand what is available is the first step in this journey in helping them find additional sources of money.

We hope you find this guide useful but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at info@thescholarship.org.uk

What is the difference between a scholarship, grant and bursary?



You will often find the terms scholarship, grant and bursary used interchangeably and in principle, they are the same thing – money that is given to you which you do not need to pay back. Where the difference often lies is the reasons why they are awarded, but even then, the lines are not clear cut.

Does it matter?

Not really, is the simple answer.

The important thing to look at is the eligibility criteria (the reasons why the award is given) for each award and decide if you are eligible. If you believe that all scholarships are given for academic merit and all bursaries for financial need, you could be missing out on opportunities that do not fit that criteria.

However, in order to give you a better idea about the different types of awards, here is our guide.



Scholarships

Scholarships cover the widest range of awards. They can be given for all sorts of reasons and by many different types of organisations. Some of the reasons are as follows:

- Academic merit
- Financial need
- Sporting achievement
- Musical talent
- Personal circumstances – where you live, what your parents do, your extra-curricular activities/interests, your career aspirations – anything about you really!
- A company wants to promote themselves to students – often all these scholarships will require you to do is submit an essay on a subject related to their business.

Bursaries

Bursaries tend more often to be given for financial need and by organisations which want to support students from low income households or under represented groups.

Grants

Grants are usually given by charitable organisations and can be given for any number of reasons. Usually the charity or trust has been established to support people from specific groups, for example people from a particular area, social or religious background, disabilities or those suffering hardship.

There are literally thousands of charities and trusts in the UK giving grants all with different charitable objectives and you will need to check out the eligibility criteria of each to see whether you are eligible to apply. You can find a list of these in the **Guide to Educational Grants**.



There is a lot of misinformation on the internet about scholarships, but also among students in general about the likelihood and availability of finding additional funding.

So here are some of the myths that many people believe about this type of funding.

Scholarships are only for people who are hard up.

Wrong. Around 68% of the scholarships and grants listed on our database are granted on the basis of something other than financial need.

My university will tell me if I am eligible, so I don't need to worry.

True BUT only to a point. They will tell you about the scholarships they themselves offer, but some are not automatic entry, so you will need to keep an eye out for those you have to actively apply for. Equally, there are also lots of scholarships offered by external organisations such as companies or charitable foundations which are not linked to one particular university and you will definitely have to apply for these, otherwise how will they know about you?

Dispelling the myths



So many people will apply I do not stand a chance.

Wrong. Firstly you will definitely not stand a chance if you don't apply and secondly there have been instances when some scholarships do not even get any applicants because either people do not know about it, or they think they won't stand a chance so don't apply! Do not be one of those people.

The amount of money I will receive is hardly going to make a difference overall.

Wrong again! Some scholarships will pay all your tuition fees and there are also some out there which will pay your full costs of university. However, even those that are worth a smaller amount, such as £500 could buy you those books you can't afford but really need. Every penny will make a difference and at the end of your course you will be that amount less in debt.

You have to be an A* student to get an academic scholarship.

Wrong. Some universities offer academic scholarships to students who achieve As and Bs at A' level and not just A*s. Some universities which don't typically attract the A students will offer scholarships as an incentive to higher achieving students or as a reward for students who may not have expected to achieve those grades.

Where does the money come from?

There are many different types of organisations which provide funding to students. What they provide and their reasons differ according to their own specific objectives.

Here is a list of reasons why different organisations might consider offering funding to students. It is important that you bear this list in mind when you are applying (more about this later) as you will need to understand their objectives so you can show how you meet them.

Charitable reasons

- To help disadvantaged students from low household incomes or from low achieving schools.
- To support students with special circumstances or needs such as:
 - Care leavers
 - First in family to go to university
 - Students with special needs
- To support students who fall within the stated charitable objectives of a specific charity – this can be a huge number of things. There are more than 180,000 registered charities in the UK , all with their own very specific objectives.

Commercial reasons

- To recruit the best graduates
- To encourage fresh talent to a specific industry
- To encourage diversity within a particular industry/sector
- To raise brand awareness among the student community
- To gain publicity for their company
- To achieve specific marketing objectives – such as get more students to sign up to their newsletter/ Facebook or get students sharing their information.

Where does the money come from (continued)

Objective led reasons

- To attract specific groups of students to a university – high achievers, sporting talent, musical talent
- To diversify student intake, encouraging students from minorities or disadvantaged backgrounds.

If you understand the reasons organisations are giving out money, it will help you identify the things about yourself which could make you eligible and then seek out those opportunities.

Types of Scholarships

Types of Scholarships

Now you have understood why organisations give scholarships, grants and bursaries, it will become clear that there are many different types of scholarships.



Academic Excellence Scholarships

Many universities offer scholarships to students who achieve specified grades in their A-levels (or BTEC/IB) to encourage the higher achieving students to choose their university.



Musical Scholarship

If you are good at singing or playing a musical instrument you could get a music scholarship. You do not have to be studying Music but will be expected to perform while at university.



Personal Circumstances

Scholarships that are based on things that are specific to your personal circumstances, such as where you come from, if you are a care leaver, what your parents do or your religion. These might come from local authorities or religious organisations or charities. There is a wide range of different scholarships related to personal circumstances, even for really unusual things such as your surname or if you are a vegetarian. These more unusual ones usually come from small charities which have been set up to support a very specific community of people.



More Types of Scholarships



Financial Need

These are the more traditional type of scholarships, which award money to individuals who are in financial need, and might not be able to go to university without the money. You will need to prove your financial need. These are more often called grants or bursaries.



Sporting Achievement

If you have made outstanding achievements in sport, many universities will offer scholarships to attract the best talent. You will have to compete for the university in your sport.



Even More Types of Scholarships



Company scholarships

Many companies offer scholarships and some include work experience as part of the offer.



Industry Associations

Are using scholarships to encourage new talent to join their profession such as girls in to Engineering.



Your Interests and Hobbies

There are some scholarships which are based on your extra-curricular activities such as showing a commitment to social engagement or improving the lives of others.



AND don't forget there are also scholarships open to all students

Other scholarships

Increasingly there are more scholarships being offered by companies, where all students have to do is submit an essay or video. Many of these will be open to every student from any university.



When looking for funding, don't just think in terms of the course you are studying or the university you go to.

By thinking wider than that, you will find other opportunities related to your career aspirations, personal background and even just the fact that you are a student.

Finding a Scholarship

Finding a Scholarship – Step Two – research, research, research



Searching for funding is not for the faint hearted, but a bit of determination and hard work will pay off.

First stop, The Scholarship Hub

<https://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk>

The Scholarships are organised in such a way that you can filter out different options.

Basis for Selection

The options here are based on the reasons for the award being given, as we have explored above. The “Personal Circumstances” option covers a wide range of reasons, such as where you come from, what your parents do.



Institution

If you know which universities you are interested in you can select those specific ones, but you should also run a search on “No specific university” as this is where you will find those scholarships that are open to all students regardless of the university they attend.

Course

You can select the specific subject you are interested in from the list, or the higher level subject category. For example if you are looking for scholarships for Maths & Physics, you can selection Physical Sciences and this will cover both.

AND... don't forget there are also scholarships open to all students

So you should also run a search on “No specific subject” to see what comes up that is **open to all students regardless of their subject choice.**

You will find a short video [here](#), which shows you how our database works.



Second Step – Guide to Educational Grants

- Draw up a list of charities and trusts for which you might be eligible to apply. This is essential. Applying randomly to all charities will not only waste your time and theirs but will not give you results.
- A lot of these charities will only give small grants and will receive many applicants, so if you are not actually eligible, your application will be rejected immediately.

Do your research and draw up a list of all the possible opportunities you could be eligible for.

Nobody is saying it is easy or a quick job, but if you persevere it could pay off. In the same way you wouldn't apply for one job and expect to get it, it requires a bit of determination.