

Finding Financial Assistance

There are lots of organizations that are ready to give you free money for your education, but you need to apply for it. Applying for financial assistance benefits you in so many ways. Instead of spending your energy worrying about how you'll pay your bills, you can put school first and focus on successfully completing your education and training. Scholarship and awards look great on a resume too. Educational institutions and employers will be impressed that your achievements have been formally recognized and rewarded.

The list below outlines the types of financial assistance you can get to help pay for your education.

Types of Financial Assistance

Scholarships and Awards

- Scholarships are a type of financial aid that do not require repayment and are usually awarded to students who demonstrate a strong potential for achievement.
- Awards are given to an individual who has demonstrated strong potential, but they may not be offered every year. Contact the award giving organization and find out what you need to do to apply, like filling out an application or writing an essay.
- A good place to start for scholarships, awards as well as grants, is to contact your local Indian and Northern Affairs Canada office or education resource centre.

Bursaries

- Money given to students who demonstrate financial need and satisfactory academic performance. Bursaries do not have to be repaid by the student.
- To find out about specific bursaries you can use the bursary search tool that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provides or the aboriginal bursary system (www.ainc-inac.gc.ca), which provides a search tool specific to any discipline you're interested in.

Grants

- Financial aid that does not have to be repaid and is awarded to students based on financial need.

Government Funded Programs

- Funding offered by provincial or federal governments through programs set up to aid those in financial need. These programs usually offer not just one, but several bursaries or grants.

Band Funding

- Many Aboriginal communities have funding available for funding the education and training of their members. Contact your local education authority for more information.

Organizations That Offer Funding

Some organizations offer annual educational funding through established scholarship or bursary programs. Check out these ones:

- Métis National Council (www.metisnation.ca)
- Assembly of First Nations (www.afn.ca)
- Inuit Tapiritt Kanatami (www.tapirisat.ca)
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (www.ainc-inac.gc.ca)
- The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (www.naaf.ca)

Contact Information and Useful Links

The following list outlines links to many financial assistance programs. These scholarships, bursaries, grants, and programs are in place for you.

- The Aboriginal Portal lists several bursaries and scholarships as well as a list of other Aboriginal organizations (www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca).
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Aboriginal bursary system and the Aboriginal bursary search (www.ainc-inac.gc.ca).
- Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society (www.cmos.ca)
- CASTS Scholarship Committee (www.casts.ca)
- Canadian Awards Programs, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (www.cig-acsg.ca)
- Canadian Land Reclamation Association (www.clra.ca)

Remember to check out the financial assistance information in EnviroCareers. There are many organizations that have money to give you to fund your education. Use the Internet too; it's a great research tool. Simply go to a search engine like Google and type in key words such as "grants" or "bursaries." You'll get a whole bunch of links to sites that will provide you with lots of information. Be prepared to spend some time looking for the information that's really going to help you. Clicking on the links above is the best place to start.