Scholarship Application Tips

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

Usually graduate students are required to apply to various funding agencies to support their research and studies. Below are some tips to help you with your next scholarship application. This tip sheet provides only general guidance on how to prepare a successful scholarship application. Please thoroughly read the competition information of the specific award(s) you intend to apply for, as application requirements may differ.

Preparing Your Application:

- Read the instructions provided for each specific application to determine if you are eligible.
- Start your application early. Write an outline of all items required for the application.
- Read the competition information thoroughly and follow application instructions carefully.
- Confirm transcript requirements and order new transcripts if necessary.
- Confirm your department's internal application deadline.
- Keep track of deadlines. Be aware of how much time you will need in order to prepare an excellent application.
- Review your research topic eligibility and discuss scholarship applications with your supervisor. Some scholarships are targeted to students at different stages of their programs and/or research topic.
- If possible, review applications or credentials of previous applicants that were successful.
- Determine how your application will be evaluated and reviewed.
- Attend information sessions that may be offered on a specific scholarship competition.
- Proofread your application and have at least one other person proof such. Ask for feedback on your application from your supervisor/peers/Graduate Chair/Coordinator. Ask someone to check your spelling and grammar.

Your Application Should:

- Be complete, clear, concise, error-free (spelling, grammar, etc.), and easy to read; avoid jargon.
- Include a strong academic record.
- Show excellent potential to conduct advanced scholarly research.
- Demonstrate strong communication skills.
- Illustrate the impact/potential impact of your research.
- Use language appropriate for your intended audience.

- Follow the format given in the application guidelines (correct font, text size, margins, and page limits). The consequences of not following the given instructions are that pages will be removed, or your application will be deemed ineligible.
- A page of text should have some white space and a list of items should be categorized.
- Use full page allowances. The application is the place where you need to sell your research to the funding agency. Consider incorporating a picture or diagram that will help the reader understand your research proposal.
- Demonstrate the rationale and genuine passion behind your studies. *Why is your research important and what is the impact of your research?*
- Identify potential weaknesses in your research plan and design. Provide an alternative plan, in case your initial method is not successful. Indicate that you are able to adapt future work depending on the results of initial experiments or assessments.

Other Things to Consider:

- Keep track of your accomplishments. It is suggested to update your CV once a month.
- Don't exaggerate your record; funding agencies will check it for accuracy and academic integrity.
- Look for new scholarship opportunities regularly and add them to your agenda.
- Determine if other sources of funding will be affected (other scholarships, Graduate Assistantships [Teaching/Research], employment, etc.).

Additional University Resources:

- Academic Success Centre: provides professional academic writing support and a range of programs and services. success@ualberta.ca; 780-492-2682
- Centre for Writers: one-on-one writing support (in person and online tutoring). centreforwriters@ualberta.ca; 780-492-2639
- Career Centre: get advice on your resume/CV. yourcareercentre@ualberta.ca; 780-492-4291