Frequently Asked Questions
Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries and Scholarship Awards

2014/2015
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1. When are the application deadline dates?

Regular deadlines are:

- Oil & Gas Trades & Technology (OGTT) General – April 30 & November 30 annually.
- Oil & Gas Trades & Technology (OGTT) Apprenticeship & Incentive – Open all year
- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) – May 1st annually
- Fine Arts – May 1st annually
- Aboriginal Health Careers – June 1st & November 1st annually
- Post-Secondary Education – June 1st & November 1st annually
- Legal Studies for Aboriginal People (LSAP) Pre-law – May 15th annually
- Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth Canadian Youth (FAAY) – Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (FAAY) – June 1st annually, please use the PSE application (no need to apply to both).

Additional deadlines:

On occasion Indspire is able to offer special bursaries outside of the regular deadline dates, therefore students are encouraged to visit the Indspire website frequently for additional bursary/scholarship opportunities that may come available outside the regular annual deadlines.

Did you know Indspire has distributed almost $65-million through close to 20,000 bursaries and scholarships to Indigenous youth.
2. Which application do I use?

Each application supports different studies. It is important to select the correct application. Examples are provided below on what studies are supported by the various applications. This list is not limited to the following:

**OGTT**

Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia Apprentices studying college and technical trades (not degree programs) such as but not limited to: Electrician, Gasfitter, Heavy Duty Mechanic, Heavy Equipment Operator, Heavy Equipment Technician, Instrument Technician, Insulator, Machinist, Mechanic, Millwright, Pipe fitter – Construction, Process Operator, Valve Technician, Welder, Camp and Catering, Renewable Energy, and others.

Alberta, Ontario and BC Apprentices studying *technologies* such as: Chemical Technologist, Control, Corrosion, Environmental Technologist, Inspection, Instrumentation-Electrical, Board, Systems, Voltage, Petroleum Engineering Technologist, Power Engineering, Managing Boiler, and others.

Full time studies at an accredited training institute or College in Alberta, BC or Ontario, in a program leading to a job in the Oil & Gas sector.

**OFIFC**

For studies in post-secondary or training and development programs. These programs may be less than two years in length. Note: This bursary is for mature Indigenous women with dependent children residing and going to school in an urban setting in Ontario. This award can be one award at $10,000, or two at $5,000.

**Fine Arts**

For studies:

- In graduate level Fine Arts studies outside of Canada; **OR**
- As a full-time student in undergraduate or graduate programs that are a minimum of one academic year at an accredited Canadian university or technical college, in fields that include: Dance, Literary Arts, Media Arts, Visual Arts, Music, Theatre, Stage Management, Sound Engineering;

**Aboriginal Health Careers**

For studies in health careers, such as: nursing, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, lab technology, physiotherapy, dieticians, nutrition, health administration, veterinarian medicine, kinesiology, and public health policy. Programs must be full-time and at least two years in length. Programs that are a year must apply to PSE.
Post-Secondary Education

For studies in business, commerce, science, law, engineering, information technology, education, social work, social sciences, and technical studies. Programs must be full-time certificate or diploma, undergraduate, or graduate degree programs from an accredited university or college and at least one year in length. Studies outside of Canada are considered only at the graduate level.

Legal Studies for Aboriginal People (LSAP) Pre-law

For Non Status First Nation and Métis students who are enrolled in a summer pre-law program. This a $1000 bursary award and $2500 tuition payable to the post-secondary education intuition.

FAAY – Post-Secondary Education

Bursaries awarded to post-secondary level students. Applicants must be enrolled in full-time studies.

3. Who is eligible to apply?

All Canadian Indigenous individuals who are either First Nation (as recognized by the Federal Government) Inuit or Métis.

4. Who assesses my application?

Applications are reviewed by a Jury of First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit and Métis professionals and employees in the respective occupations. Each application deadline has different Jury members. Fair representation based on gender, geographic location and First Nations, Inuit & Métis affiliation is considered when inviting Jurors to the process.

5. What criterion is used when my application is assessed?

To be successful and receive an Award, your application must meet a minimum score, in the following areas:

- Demonstrated financial need and contribution to education costs (Section 5 & 6 of the application).
- Evidence of involvement and contribution to the/a Indigenous community (Section 7: Letter of Introduction).
- Evidence of suitability and commitment to the chosen field of study (Letter of Introduction & Marks).
- Demonstrated academic merit and performance (Marks).

Fine Arts have one additional area assessed by Jury.
- Talent and skill level demonstrated in work sample.
6. What type of financial award does Indspire offer?

Indspire provides funding to students to remove or lessen financial barriers to success. Through the Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries and Scholarship Awards program, students can apply for financial awards from one of the programs listed above in point 2. The award is a supplement to any other award(s) funding/income, you receive.

7. Can I re-apply for an Indspire Bursary or Scholarship?

Students can only receive one bursary and scholarship award per year, you can apply for each academic year. Some students receive awards every academic year until they complete their program.

If a student is not successful for the June 1st deadline, they are encouraged to reapply for the November 1st application deadline. Students may contact the Education staff to find out what areas of their application they can improve in order to be considered again for Jury assessment.

Students who are successful in receiving a bursary from the June 1st deadline are not eligible to apply to the November 1st deadline. The June 1st and November 1st application deadlines are the same academic year.

8. What is a Bursary?

A bursary is a monetary award agreed upon and awarded by a Jury to applicants who meet the established criteria and show they have a financial need. Every applicant is assessed individually. Bursary awards do not have to be repaid and there is no set amount.

The amount of a bursary varies according to the assessed financial need of applicants, the number of applicants, and the availability of funds for allocation.

The OFIFC bursary amounts are pre-determined. There is a total of $10,000 available to be dispersed annually that is awarded either as one $10,000 bursary award or two $5,000 bursary awards.

9. What is a Scholarship?

A scholarship is a monetary award agreed upon and awarded by a Jury to applicants who meet the established criteria and who demonstrate academic merit with marks. Scholarships do not have to be repaid.

There are two types of scholarships offered by Indspire.

1. A $1000 scholarship award is available to applicants of the Aboriginal Health Careers Program who demonstrate academic merit with marks of 80% or higher. Applicants must also provide evidence of involvement and contribution to the Indigenous community and suitability and commitment to health careers. In this program an applicant may receive only one scholarship per fiscal period.
2. A $500 scholarship award is available to applicants in the OGTT Program who demonstrate academic merit with marks of 70% or higher.

10. What is an Incentive Award?

An Incentive Award is a monetary award available to eligible OGTT applicants and FAAY students in grades 9-12. Incentive awards do not have to be repaid. There are three different Incentive Awards.

1. OGTT - $500 upon proof of successful completion of each period or year of the program/apprenticeship.
2. OGTT - $1000 upon proof of successful completion of the program.

11. How do I apply?

First, from the list below determine which of the Indspire applications your course of study fits into:
- Oil & Gas Trades & Technology (OGTT)
- OFIFC
- Fine Arts
- Aboriginal Health Careers
- Post-Secondary Education (PSE)
- Legal Studies for Aboriginal People (LSAP)
- FAAY

Next, go to the Indspire website (www.indspire.ca) use the electronic form to apply on-line. It is also helpful to print the application guideline as it will give you guidance on how to complete the Application Form and what supporting documents you must submit.

In the event that the deadline falls on a weekend, the deadline will be the Friday before the due date.

12. If I apply will I receive a bursary or scholarship?

NO. Submitting an application does not guarantee that an applicant will receive funding. Not all applications reviewed by Jury are allocated an award. Incomplete applications are not reviewed by Jury. Very few applicants receive the full amount of their request; therefore do not rely solely on Indspire awards.

13. Where do I find an application for the Legal Studies for Aboriginal People (LSAP) program?

Those in a pre-law summer program are to use the application form that is posted on the Indspire website. Completed applications are due May 15th annually.

If you are in a three-year law program in Canada you are to apply using the Post-Secondary Education application which is due June 1st annually.
14. How do I apply for a Canadian Medical Foundation bursary?

The Canadian Medical Foundation is a supporter of First Nation, Inuit & Métis medical students who are full-time at a Canadian medical school. There is not a separate application. Eligible applicants are to apply using the electronic on-line application form which is due June 1st or November 1st annually.
15. What are supporting documents and why are they required?

Indspire is a non-profit charitable organization who receives funds from supporters to allocate to First Nation, Inuit and Métis students. Indspire is accountable to supporters of the Bursary & Scholarship programs and they periodically conduct audits on the funds they have provided to Indspire. Indspire must demonstrate the money has been provided to students who meet the eligibility criteria. The supporting documents provide the necessary verification for the audits.

The following is a list of supporting documents that must be submitted with the Application Form by the application deadline.

1. One current Building Brighter Futures: Bursaries and Scholarship Awards Application Form fully completed.
2. Proof of First Nation (status or non-status), Inuit or Métis status (not applicable to successful award recipients from 2013-2014 who received a cheque).
4. Marks (unofficial) from your present or most recent academic program. Work Sample (applicable to Fine Arts applicants only).
5. Band Funding Letter: a copy of the official confirmation letter from your organization’s education office stating whether you are being sponsored for the current academic year, or not being sponsored. If you do receive Band funding, the letter must provide a breakdown of the amounts you receive for tuition, book, and living allowance as it will reflect the amounts in your budget.
6. A current Resume (OGTT applicants only).
7. Letter of Recommendation/Employer Recommendation Form (OGTT applicants only).

Applications must have all required documents submitted at the time of application.

16. What is accepted as proof of First Nation, Inuit or Métis status?

Applicants 18 and over must have their own valid status, Inuit or Métis card.

First Nation applicants must submit a photocopy of the front and back of their valid certificate of Indian status card issued by the Federal Government (Indian Affairs or designated office). Alternatively, an official letter (on First Nation letterhead, dated, signed) from the First Nation Band office can be provided that identifies that person is a registered band member of that First Nation.

Non-Status First Nation* applicants must submit a photocopy of the front and back of the valid Federal Government card issued to parents or grandparents along with the long-form birth certificate(s) or baptism certificate(s) that clearly shows the relationship to person on the band card.

Applicants who are members of a Non-Status First Nation must provide a letter from their registry office stating that the Federal Government has designated and recognizes their nation as a Non-Status First Nation.

Métis applicants must submit a photocopy of the front and back of the valid Métis card issued to them by their Métis organization that is recognized by the provincial/territorial and or federal government and or surrounding Indigenous communities. Applicants age 18 and over must have their own Métis
In the case where an applicant is awaiting issuance of their own Métis card, they can submit a photocopy of the card issued to parents along with the long-form birth certificate(s) or baptism certificate(s) that clearly shows the relationship to person on the Métis card. An official letter (on organization letterhead, dated, signed) from the Métis organization can be provided that identifies that person on the card is a registered member in good standing with that Métis organization. Documentation must also be provided to show that the applicant has made an application to become a member of their Métis organization.

**Inuit** applicants must submit a photocopy of the front and back of their valid card issued by their Inuit organization. Alternatively, an official letter (on organization letterhead, dated, signed) from the Inuit organization can be provided that identifies that person is a registered member with that Inuit organization.

**17. What information should be included in Letter of Introduction?**

Please note, the letter of introduction is part of the on line application and it is not necessary to submit a separate letter. If you are not applying on line, your letter should (minimum of 1000 and maximum of 1500) be double spaced, typed and attached to your completed application.

1. Where were you born, where did you grow up, who is your family and community?
2. Describe how you participate/volunteer in the Indigenous community; past, present and/or future. Give examples, culture, traditions, celebrations, events, at your schools Institution, nationally, regional or other.
3. What are your hopes and dreams/plans after your completion of your academic schooling, eg. Continue on educational path, find a job, community going back to, etc.
4. What led you to choose your current field of study? What skills and knowledge have you acquired that has helped you remain committed to your studies?
5. What challenges and successes have you experienced during your course of studies?
6. Are there any special circumstances the Jury should be aware of?

**18. Why is a Letter of Introduction important?**

The Letter of Introduction is a crucial part of the assessment. The content is clearly outlined in the application form and guidelines. You are highly encouraged to take the time and effort to produce a comprehensive and thorough Letter of Introduction. Quotes are taken from the Letter of Introduction and used in promotional material of supporters and Indspire. Remember, members of the Jury change for each Jury review so do not assume that they will know what you wrote in a previous Letter of Introduction. Write each application from the perspective that they do not know anything about you.

**19. Why do I need to submit marks?**

When assessing applications, the Jury uses marks to assess demonstrated academic merit and performance. Unofficial or web print out of marks are only allowed for the assessment process – **applications submitted without any marks will not be assessed**.
20. What is a Band Funding Letter?

Band Funding Letter is a copy of the official confirmation letter from your organization’s education office stating whether you are being sponsored for the current academic year, or not being sponsored.

21. Why do I need to submit a current resume? (OGTT Only)

This applies to OGTT students only. The resume goes to Jury with your application package and is used to show education and work history.

22. What is a Letter of Recommendation Form? (OGTT Only)

Letter of Recommendation (applicable to OGTT applicants only) – applicants taking certificate, diploma or applied degree programs provide a letter of recommendation from an Elder, teacher, principal, employer, or community leader related to your field of work.

The letter should indicate:

1. How you know the applicant:
2. The length of time you have known the applicant,
3. Why you would recommend the applicant for a bursary/scholarship award; and
4. Why you think the applicant will do well in this field of study.

23. What is a Work Sample? (Fine Arts Only)

A Work Sample (applicable to Fine Arts applicants only) – maximum 2 minutes of audio (CD or DVD format); or 10 slides/digital photos of art; or CD of design work. You are strongly encouraged to submit current work samples that provide clear evidence of your skill levels.

- Theatre performance work samples must include solo monologues in head and shoulder close-up shots.
- Music performance (vocal or instrumental) work samples should be on DVD or CD to allow jurors to see the music being performed; instrumental performance work samples must include solo work that will allow juries to determine technical skill levels.
- Dance performance work samples must include solo work that will allow juries to determine technical skill levels.
- Visual art samples – must be slides/digital photos. They must be labeled and accompanied by a slide or photo list.

Note: Work samples are not returned.

24. What is accepted as proof of enrolment as a full-time student?

The easiest method of confirming enrolment is through a letter from the Registrar’s office that clearly states you are registered as a full-time student from September 2014 to April 2015 (or applicable timeframe).
Another accepted method to confirm full-time enrolment is to provide a printout of your school web-account and class schedule. Usually together this will show that you have paid your tuition and are enrolled in a full-time course load. If you choose this method of confirmation the printout must show your name and institution name clearly on each piece of documentation.

25. Will I receive my documentation back?

NO. Indspire does not return any documents or work samples to applicants. This also applies to late applications.

26. When will I know if I am successful in receiving an award?

Applicants are updated by email periodically throughout the application process so it is imperative that applicants provide a current email address.

Successful applicants will be notified by email as follows:
- April 30th Oil & Gas Trades & Technology - last week of June
- May 1st OFIFC - last week of August
- May 1st Fine Arts - last week of August May 15th
- Legal Studies for Aboriginal People - last week of May
- June 1st Aboriginal Health Careers - last week of August
- June 1st Post-Secondary Education - last week of August
- November 1st Aboriginal Health Careers - last week of February
- November 1st Post-Secondary Education - last week of February
- November 30th Oil & Gas Trades & Technology - last week of February

All applicants will receive written notification within the same timeframe(s) listed above. All applicants, successful or otherwise, will receive written notification of the Jury decision regarding their individual application.

27. How much will I receive?

Amounts vary. Juries review each application individually. The amount of a bursary varies according to the assessed financial need of applicants, the number of applicants, and the availability of funds for allocation.

There is an exception for the OFIFC Bursary Award which is a pre-determined amount of one $10,000 award or two $5000 awards, LSAP which is a $1000 bursary award and $2500 tuition payable to the post-secondary education intuition.

28. If I receive funds from my Band Office, Territorial or Métis organization am I still eligible to apply?
Bursaries are based on financial need, therefore if you receive funding from another source and still show a financial need, YES you are eligible to apply. The Application Form has a budget section to be completed that will help you determine your financial need.

29. How do I account for a student loan?

Indspire does not consider loans as income because a loan must be paid back. Loans to help with education costs should not be included as income in the budget section of the Application Form. It is important to note that you have access to or are using student loans, bank loans, student lines of credit, etc. as it will help Jury to see that you are contributing to your costs.

30. What if my circumstances change?

If circumstances change it is important to contact the Education Department as soon as you are aware. The Education staff will advise you on how this change impacts your application and/or Jury’s decision.

31. Can my award be deferred?

NO. Awards cannot be deferred. Awards allocated by Jury must be used for the program of study and the academic year specified on the Application Form.

32. Appeals – Can I appeal a decision of the Jury?

NO. Decisions of the Jury are final and cannot be appealed. If you did not receive an award you can apply to the next application deadline for your field of study if you meet the application requirements.

33. Can I receive part of my award now and part later?

NO. Awards are released in full. Indspire does not release half or part of the award for the fall term and the second half or part in the winter term. Jury determines the amount of the award based on the entire application period and the award is conditional upon Indspire receiving documentation supporting what was indicated in the application. Only after all supporting documentation is received is the award released.

34. Why do I get a T4A and when will I receive it?

Awards are deemed as income by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and must be reported as such. You will receive a T4A form from Indspire in the amount of your award. If your award cheque was mailed between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014 your T4A will be issued on February 28, 2015 and mailed to the address on file. Similarly, if your award cheque was mailed between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 your T4A will be issued on February 28, 2016.
35. **How do I get in touch with Indspire?**

You can call us toll free at: 1.855.463.7747 x020
You can email us at: education@indspire.ca

36. **Where do I send my supporting documentation?**

Supporting documentation are to be submitted to education@indspire.ca or by mail to Indspire
Post-Secondary Education Department
Box 5, Suite 100, 50 Generations Drive,
Ohsweken, Ontario
N0A 1M0