

The Alternative Guide to Postgraduate FUNDING

2010
2011

Win GRANTS from CHARITY

BY LUKE BLAXILL & SHUZHI ZHOU

Winner of Major University Prizes

over 50,000 copies sold!

Written by *Real Students* who won over 50 charity grants

The ONLY guide to unlocking the power of CHARITIES for Students

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enquiries@gradfunding.co.uk

The Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding

by Luke Blaxill

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PRIZES

GradFunding and the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding won the King's College London Graduate School prize, winning £2,000.

They also took first prize in the Lion's Den Business Competition, winning £4,000 funding to further develop the Alternative Guide.

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1

The Purpose of this Guide

Your roadmap to the world of Alternative Graduate Funding

How to fund postgraduate study is a crucial question for the vast majority of students. Securing scholarships, bursaries, or grants to cover your fees, maintenance, and research costs during your Masters or PhD can be extremely challenging, especially if you have been rejected, or are ineligible to apply to a research council or some other scheme which offers substantial financial support. The purpose of this guide is to explore the alternatives available through the voluntary sector - i.e. from charities, trusts, foundations and professional bodies - which will consider funding postgraduate students' fees, maintenance, research, travel, and conference expenses. There are thousands of bodies out there that give out millions of pounds in grants every year. However, very few students know they exist, or have much of an idea how to apply to them strongly. Why? Simply because there is so little guidance currently available. This book - independently published by students who won over 50 charity awards - is already causing this to change.

You can apply to these charities and trusts if you have an anticipated deficit in your funding package either for the current academic year, or for one in the future. A deficit is simply where your anticipated income is exceeded by your anticipated expenditure. So if you are struggling to self-finance your PhD or Masters, fund your research or travel expenses, or budget for your fourth year of PhD study, there are almost certainly bodies out there who will

be prepared to help you whatever your subject, nationality, age, or academic record. Whether you are looking for a few hundred pounds to pay for a research trip, or are trying to raise thousands to finance a whole PhD or Masters, you will gain a great deal by looking at what charities and trusts can offer you. The trouble is knowing where and how to begin. This guide is intended to solve that problem- it will not only show you how to find charities, but take you through winning techniques which will give your applications the best possible chance.

Generally, there are two types of grants you can win from the voluntary sector. The first type is general support for your fees and maintenance, and this is the main emphasis of this guide. These grants will be useful for any student who does not enjoy 'full funding' at research council rates (i.e. payment of fees and a stipend of £1,000 or so a month). The second type is to support travel, research expenses, and conference attendance which you can apply to whether you have full funding or not. Ultimately, finding and securing either type of grant involves similar techniques, and the guidance provided in the coming chapters applies to both.

"Build up a portfolio of modest awards from a number of bodies"

On a more cautionary note, it is important to remember that although the voluntary sector is an extensive and underrated source of student funding, it does have its limitations. Charities seldom have the resources of big government bodies like research councils, and individual awards are unlikely to exceed £2000 each. I would advise students who wish to use charities and trusts to self-fund an entire PhD or Masters that it is unlikely that you will gain all the support you need to cover the full costs of fees and living which (depending where you live) are usually around £12,000-15,000 per year. What *is* possible - with determination, perseverance, and creativ-

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ity – is to build up a portfolio of modest awards from a number of bodies, and you may well raise a good portion of what you need. If you supplement this with part-time work, you can finance postgraduate study successfully without a full scholarship.

The contents of this guide are self-explanatory. In section 2, I begin by outlining public funding sources like research councils and discussing how you can maximise your chances. In section 3, I introduce the diverse world of voluntary sector funding before offering advice on finding and approaching these bodies in sections 4 and 5. Section 6 describes how to make a strong application, and sections 7 and 8 illustrate this further by showing example personal statements, and an example financial statement. In sections 9 and 10, I briefly examine two other important allies in balancing your budget- effective cost-cutting and part-time work. Section 11 provides a list of postal addresses and URLs. In addition to many useful general links, I include a selected list of around 150 individually sourced charities and trusts which make awards to postgraduate students. This will get you off to a great start when you hunt for funders.

Note: *Throughout the guide, the details and websites of bodies shown in italics are listed in section 11.*

2

Public Sources of Funding

The obvious first port of call

Although this guide is principally concerned with the voluntary sector, it is useful to briefly go through what funding is publicly available. The principal funders of postgraduate study for Home or EU students are the research councils. There are seven in the UK: the *Arts and Humanities Research Council* (AHRC), the *Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council* (BBSRC), the *Economic and Social Research Council* (ESRC), the *Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council* (EPSRC), the *Medical Research Council* (MRC), the *Natural Environment Research Council* (NERC), and the *Science and Technology Facilities Council* (STFC).

These bodies all award scholarships which provide full funding, covering your fees and maintenance, and include a budget for research expenses and travel. A small number of the largest educational charities - for example the *Wellcome Trust*, *Nuffield Foundation* and *Leverhulme Trust* – also occasionally award scholarships at the same (or better) rates. In the Sciences, some large companies, often in medicine or industry, also sometimes fully finance Masters and PhDs on certain topics in which they have an interest.

There are three types of scholarship available. The first – which in general is limited to the AHRC and ESRC - is an **open or proposal based competition** where students submit a studentship application directly to the research council itself. The second is a **quota or block grant-**

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based system where a university department secures awards in advance and distributes them itself. This is the case with the ESRC, AHRC, and many of the Science research councils. The third type consists of **dedicated PhD studentships attached to projects** under named supervisors at particular universities. These have always been commonplace in the Hard Sciences, but are becoming increasingly more usual in the Social Sciences and Humanities. The competition for awards from any research council is likely to be fierce, especially for the AHRC and ESRC who have reported success rates of only around 25% nationally in recent years.

Considering making an Application

The first thing you should do if you are considering applying for an award is to see what is available at your university department. Because decisions are being made by your university, a strong dialogue between you, your department, and your supervisor or prospective supervisor is absolutely vital. There will be a good deal of general information and advice available through your

university's website on how to make your application, but you will gain most through close communication with the people who matter. Once you have asked around, you ought to have a far better idea of your likely chances of success, and whether you should go to the effort of putting in an application.

The strength of the competition and the ever altering and evolving strategic priorities of your department or research council mean that success can appear somewhat random, and may not necessarily correspond to your academic track record. Much will depend on how 'fashionable' your subject is at the moment- it's simply the reality of academic research that certain topics are 'hotter' at certain times than others, and this will undoubtedly affect how likely you are to win a full scholarship. The research record of your supervisor, and how many PhD students he or she already has, may also be factors. All of this means that candidates with good first-class degrees are often rejected, while candidates with 2:1s are sometimes successful. Therefore, it's probably worth considering an application if you hold at least a reasonable 2:1.

"Try not to despair if you're rejected. The voluntary sector is still an option"

Also, try not to despair if you are rejected despite an excellent CV; it is bitterly disappointing but it happens to lots of people every year. The fact that you have a good CV and have been rejected in spite of it will stand you in very good stead if you approach the voluntary sector.

Top Tips

The first thing to remember when you apply for a research council studentship by the open or quota-based competitions is that it is in your supervisor's or prospective supervisor's interest that you win one. Postgraduate stu-

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dents bring prestige and (potentially) research grants to supervisors and departments. They will be prepared to give you quite a lot of help with your application. Don't bombard them, but do have a chat on you will argue your case, and send them draft statements to read over.

If you're applying directly to a quota or an open competition studentship, it is important to bear in mind that although you can only apply once for funding from each research council per year, you are often allowed to reapply in subsequent years in the middle of your PhD or part-time masters, even if you were rejected previously. So it is possible to become fully-funded after one or more years of self-financing. This is an important consideration, but it would be a risk to begin a course unfunded and be reliant on securing a studentship later on. If you decide to do this a backup plan is strongly advisable in case your funding does not emerge.

If your area of research is on the 'borderline' of the remits of two research councils (as is sometimes the case, for example, with the AHRC and the ESRC in subjects such as Law, War Studies, and History) you may be able to apply to both in the same year with slightly differently presented applications, thus doubling your chances. If you intend to try this, make sure you discuss it thoroughly with the departments involved.

Career Development Loans (CDLs)

Some subjects - those which are classed as vocational - are eligible for a CDL of £300-£10,000, which can cover fees and maintenance. Your loan is interest-free while you study, but will start to be charged when you graduate. If you consider a CDL, a tip is to take out the maximum amount possible, and put it in a high interest bank account while you study. You aren't paying interest on the loan, but it can still generate interest for you!

3

Alternative Funding Sources

An introduction to the Voluntary Sector

Historically, Britain has a strong tradition of philanthropy, and there are many thousands of charities, trusts, and foundations which are active today. These voluntary bodies vary considerably in size and resources- from huge multi-million pound organisations like Oxfam to small trust funds run by a few volunteers at weekends from a farmhouse. A large number of them distribute funds for education, and some of those are prepared to consider student applicants. These are the bodies for you.

A number of the better known voluntary bodies may be listed on your university's funding page, but the majority are fairly obscure, difficult to find, and based on quite specific and occasionally somewhat eccentric eligibility criteria. Many are pots of 'old money' and make grants by interpreting the wishes of their often long-deceased patrons. In practical terms, this may involve you showing that you are of a certain religion, have resided in a certain part of the country, or have a family link to a particular trade. Some charities look to allocate funds to applicants of certain nationality, others are exclusive to particular age groups, and some are only available to women. The bottom line is that charities are completely different from public funding sources, and you must treat them entirely differently to have a good chance.

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A glance at section 11 of this guide will show you just how diverse charities are. The *Vegetarian Charity*, for example, will only support students with histories of vegetarianism or veganism, and the *Leverhulme Trades Charities Trust* will only make awards to the sons and daughters of grocers, chemists, or commercial travellers. Overall, although there are also a reasonable number of more general bodies which will consider any student, a good many of your potential funders will be fairly specific to you, your background, and the nature of your studies. Your list of potential target bodies will therefore probably be quite different from someone else's, and this is why it's essential that you do your own research.

One of the biggest difference between charities and conventional scholarships is that charities are generally not particularly interested in your subject of research. They are usually not set up with students specifically in mind, and are primarily concerned with helping eligible people who are facing hardship realise their potential in life- especially in relation to training or education. What 'hardship' means is nothing dramatic or extreme: it simply refers to an applicant facing financial difficulties. In the case of a postgraduate student, hardship will mean that they face a deficit or an anticipated deficit in their funding package in a given academic year. If you're reading this guide, that almost certainly applies to you.

Individual awards are unlikely to exceed £2,000, and most will be £1,000 or less. However, few bodies make contributions of less than £500. The trick is to secure backing from multiple sources and thereby accumulate a more sizeable sum. This might sound like a great deal of work, but once you have assembled an application to one charity, you will probably be able to re-use substantial parts of it in your applications to others. Once you've done a couple of applications, others are quite quick!

4

Hunting for Alternative Funding Sources

Searching on the internet, in the library, and asking for advice

Finding the charities and trusts that will consider granting you financial support is probably the most challenging aspect of voluntary sector graduate fundraising. There are tens of thousands of active charitable bodies in the UK, but only a tiny minority will be applicable to you. Given that there are no definitive (or even particularly comprehensive) charity search engines, add to that the fact that many bodies have no website or email address, and you might be forgiven for thinking that you were hunting for a proverbial needle in a haystack. Finding bodies is certainly a challenge, but you will soon get somewhere if you adopt a systematic and targeted hunting strategy- you'd be surprised by what you can find with a few internet searches. That said, you must be prepared to spend a good number of hours searching if you are to achieve the best results.

Your mission, initially, should be to produce a long list of the postal (and email, if possible) addresses of potential funders. Section 11 of this guide provides an excellent starting point. However, if you want to raise larger amounts of money, it is essential you spread the net much wider and hunt yourself. In general, do not discount a charity unless you can see that it is inappropriate, or

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obviously rules you out, because many are quite flexible on how they distribute their funds and occasionally will make exceptions to their own rules. One condition you must be especially mindful of, however, is whether a charity says that it makes awards to individuals, because the majority only grant money to organisations or other charities, and are thus not a viable option.

Looking online

The first place to look is on the internet. This will require many hours of tedious trawling, but persevere. Googling is all very well, but you are unlikely to find anything much beyond the obvious low-lying fruit. You will get a lot further with funding databases and lists. Your university's funding webpage is a good starting point. Regardless of how much you find here, it's also well worth checking out the equivalent pages of other universities because some are quite extensive. Always make sure, however, that any new funders you do find are not limited only to students from that institution.

"The internet is a great place to start searching - if you know where to look"

Next, pay a visit to *Scholarship Search.* This site contains a great deal of information, but tends to omit a lot of potentially useful leads if you use the search feature. Instead, I would recommend simply browsing the lists of 'Hardship Funds' and 'Graduate Funds' and any other categories that look promising. You will have to sift through a great deal of useless text to derive anything useful. It is also worth looking at four other similar sites: *postgraduatestudentships.co.uk, Researchprofessional.com*, *studentcashpoint.co.uk,* and especially *unigrants.co.uk.* These have good searching facilities, but always try to make your search queries as broad as possible to avoid missing anything out.

You should then check out the *Research and Development Funding database*, in particular the 'long shots' section on the search feature. Simply click 'search' without specifying any criteria and you will get a long list. Although this will be heavily biased towards medical charities, the list includes a good number of more general bodies, and most likely you will find a few possible funders.

You should also consult some more general charity search engines as well. Perhaps the most useful for postgraduates is *turn2us* which focuses on bodies which make grants to individuals to help with things like living expenses, rent, bills, and childcare. Many of the bodies listed are benevolent societies which will support those with a family link to a particular trade or profession from doctors, bankers, builders, engineers, or lecturers. Whatever your background, it's highly likely you'll find one or two of these societies for you. There are even charities listed here connected with utilities companies which may help you pay particular bills- for example the *Anglia Water Trust* and the *EDF Energy Trust.*

You should also consult *FunderFinder* if you have access to it. It's a subscription-based charity search engine which may be available at your university's careers office. It's not aimed specifically at students, but is worth a look.

Looking in the Library

The second important place to look is your local library (i.e. a good library close to where you live and in the same local authority). There will be several enormous tomes – in particular the *Grants Register* and the *Directory of Grant Making Trusts* – which will probably be stacked together on the same shelf. These books are like telephone directories for charities- a fuller list of the different ones available can be found in Section 11. Each book will have a dedicated section for educational

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grants or educational charities and this will contain many hundreds of bodies, including many which are not listed anywhere online. It is often easy in this day and age to view the internet as definitive, but in this area it could not be further from the truth. Many charities are quite 'traditional' in the way they operate, and the more obscure ones do not have any online presence. This will doubtless change in the future, but for the time being it is essential to investigate these library directories if you want to extend your hunt beyond the better known bodies.

It will probably take you a couple of days of solid reading to trawl through all of the useful books, but persevere. This may be quite a valuable exercise if you are an overseas student, as these books also list a very large number of charities and trusts from outside of the UK which are only available to students of a certain nationality. Always make sure the versions of the book you are reading are for this year, because information on deadlines and application procedures is very ephemeral and subject to change from one year to the next. Note down any useful sounding bodies, along with their contact details. By now your list of potential funders ought to be getting quite long!

Your final port of call at the library should be to ask a librarian to show you any local books about charities. These contain information which will apply only to residents of your local authority. Local charities and trusts will probably be the most obscure and little-known of any you will encounter and may well sound rather old-fashioned or slightly bizarre. However, you may discover a body that has almost been forgotten, and has few competing demands on its funds. As a rule, these small local charities tend to have somewhat looser eligibility criterias and protocols than the larger national ones, and may well consider anybody so long as they are local. If you have a second address (perhaps with your parents or guardians) you could try looking at these local books in a library there as well.

"For research expenses, travel grants, and conference attendance, Learned Societies may be your most promising initial port of call"

Learned Societies and Associations

Each scholarly discipline will be represented by learned societies, for example the Royal Historical Society, Royal Geographical Society, the Biochemical Society, and the Society for Neuroscience. They are easy to find, and you can gain a lot just by Googling for the words 'society' or 'association' with the name of your subject and 'funding'. These learned societies are principally concerned with the general promotion and support of their discipline at a graduate and post-doctoral level. Many of them hold research seminars, organise conferences, and maintain libraries or collections. If you're looking to fund extra research expenses, international research travel or conference attendance, these societies may well be your most promising initial port of call. Some societies will only support eligible members, so, you may have to pay a small fee to join (often at a special student rate). It's also worth

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remembering that many of them give prizes for the best student paper delivered at their seminars or conferences, or the best student contribution to any journals they administer.

Although there are a number of learned societies and independent associations which regularly make grants to students, most smaller ones do not, and probably have never considered the idea. It's a long shot, but you could try interesting them in your actual research- for example local historical societies (if you study History), political parties or think-tanks (Political Science), barristers' chambers (Law) or museums and collections (many disciplines) may be persuaded to grant you some support if you make a persuasive enough case. It will require some creativity to track down an independent association which may be interested in your research and then argue your case to them. These bodies (unlike charities) will want to gain something from you in return, so your communications must reflect that. Very often these smaller learned associations or societies will keep a library or research collection of some kind, and if you offer to give them a copy of your thesis when it is finished (and an entry in your 'special thanks' section) they may well become interested. Often these bodies don't have much money they are prepared to give away, but it is always worth making your case with a polite, persuasive letter.

For research trips, it is also worth remembering that museums, collections, and the conferences themselves often run internal competitions for bursaries to support attendance or visits, so it is always worth asking them. This funding may be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, so planning ahead is advantageous.

Seeking Advice

Finally, it is well-worth simply asking around for advice on where to find funding. The first place to try should be your department- probably the administrator. They may have knowledge of certain subject-specific bodies which have funded their graduates in the past. Many academic departments have long-established links with subject-specific learned societies, and may know quite a bit about any student funding they might offer. Another good place to try is your university's careers service. They may also have a few charity directories available, such as the *Grants Register*.

"Get advice from
▪ Your department
▪ EGAS
▪ Your Council
▪ On forums"

You should also talk to the *Educational Grants Advisory Service*. They have been around for some time and have a good knowledge of educational grant making bodies out there. In my experience, a written request to them or a phone call may be more fruitful than simply searching their online database.

It is also an excellent idea to contact the education division of your local council to ask if they have any funds for postgraduate study. Councils occasionally act as the trustees of charities, and often have information about philanthropic local community groups.

It is also well worth checking and posting on the forums at sites like thestudentroom.co.uk and prospects.co.uk, both of which often feature topics on graduate funding. You may well pick up some more good recommendations from other students.

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5

Initially Approaching Funding Bodies

Making sure you're eligible to apply



Once you have basic information on potential funders - hopefully a fairly long list of contact details - the next step is to see how many you are actually eligible to apply to. Many charities, as we have seen, have very specific eligibility criteria which are not listed upfront, so expect many promising-sounding bodies to fall by the wayside when you investigate them further. But with luck, you will get a few positive and friendly responses, and from these, you can begin to make some applications. Once you have even got this far, your chances of eventually securing an award are reasonable.

"Make your initial communications brief, simple, and business like"

It is advisable to approach a promising-looking body with a brief initial letter, stating your name, your course, year of study, nationality, some brief details about your research (if appropriate), and what exactly you need funding for. This letter is **not** the place to forward any major arguments- save them for the personal statement when you actually apply! Simply say that you are looking to overcome a deficit in your funding package for your postgraduate course. Ask them if they think you are eligible, and if so, to send you application forms or instructions on how to apply. If you have an email address for your charity, you can use that, but if not, post a letter and include a stamped self-addressed envelope for them to reply. Snail mail might be slower and more expensive, but letters in the post are often treated more seriously than emails, which are easy to simply delete or forget about. If you do use email, but do not receive a reply within a week or so, you should then try a letter in the post.

The letters are best produced en masse, using a neat and professional-looking template where you simply change a few words each time you write to a different body. Some examples are provided overleaf. Post them, and await results. Some charities will respond in a few days, others in a few weeks, but if you haven't heard anything within a month, you probably never will.

Example Enquiry Letters

The type of enquiry letter you need to write will depend on your circumstances, although they all will have a large amount in common. Here are four examples from students from a variety of backgrounds to give you an idea of how to lay your letter out:

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EXAMPLE 1: Prospective Masters Student

Note how the candidate makes his decision to embark on a Masters appear set in stone, and how, even in a short letter, he gives the impression of having planned out his funding package.

HUGH CLARK
BA (Hons.)

46 Astraliopolis House,
Druid Lane,
Cambridge CB24 5QW

telephone: 0904 234 8906
mobile : 07998 484248
email : hugh.clark@gmail.com

Russell and Sinead Charitable Settlement

13/07/10

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am starting a Master's Course in Architecture at the University of Swanage at the end of September. I need this qualification in order to realise my ambition of working in Construction, ideally in Project Management . I'm from the Republic of Ireland, and am 22 years old.

I have already raised most of the money I need to fund the course, but I am still looking to overcome a small deficit in my funding package to ensure I am able to complete it. From my research, I believe I may be eligible to apply to you for financial support. I would be very grateful if you could send me information on:

1.) Your eligibility criteria
2.) Deadlines
3.) How I might go about applying, including an application form (if applicable)

I have enclosed a self addressed envelope, although you are welcome to email or telephone me if you feel that is more appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Clark

Hugh Clark

EXAMPLE 2: Current Masters Student

This student's letter is broadly similar, although the tone can be slightly more forceful as she has already started her course. Note that it is good to mention your career goal, even if in reality you still aren't sure!

LENA HAYNES
BA (Hons.)

12 Greeting Hill,
Bootle,
SC5R 7QW

telephone: 0504 294 8206
mobile : 07955 489048
email : lena.haynes@milton.ac.uk

Lamb Endowment Trust

13/11/10

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a current Masters student studying Media Studies at the University of Milton. I'm 21 years old, am British, and my goal is to work in Television, ideally in Production. This MA is an essential entrance qualification.

Although I have raised most of the money I need to fund the course, I am looking to overcome a small deficit in my funding package to ensure I am able to complete it. From my research, I believe I may be eligible to apply to you for financial support. I would be very grateful if you could send me information on:

1.) Your eligibility criteria
2.) Deadlines
3.) How I might go about applying, including an application form (if applicable)

I have enclosed a self addressed envelope, although you are welcome to email or telephone me if you feel that is more appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Lena Haynes

Lena Haynes

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EXAMPLE 3: Prospective Postgraduate Research Student

The student does not go into the detail of her research in this letter, as this is unnecessary at this stage. Include only basic information on what the research is about, and how it will get you a job.

SIHUA LING
BA (Hons.), MA

14 One-Eyed Lane.
Lyminster,
L4 2TJ
telephone: 0254 266 8821
mobile : 075578 564296
email : sihua.ling@hotmail.com

Brewers' and Distillers' Benevolent Fund

18/07/10

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am starting a PhD in Linguistics at the University of Arundel at the end of September. My goal is to lecture Linguistics and go into computer-based corpus linguistics research, for which my PhD is essential. I'm a British National and am 25 years old.

I have already raised most of the money I need to fund the course, but I am still looking to overcome a small deficit in my funding package to ensure I am able to complete it. From my research, I believe I may be eligible to apply to you for financial support. I would be very grateful if you could send me information on:

1.) Your eligibility criteria
2.) Deadlines
3.) How I might go about applying, including an application form (if applicable)

I have enclosed a self addressed envelope, although you are welcome to email or telephone me if you feel that is more appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Sihua Ling

Sihua Ling

EXAMPLE 4: Current Postgraduate Research Student

This student has already embarked on a PhD, and so he can say that he has already come a long way - having invested a lot of time and money - and that he needs a grant to help him 'get over the line'.

MEDION PERIVAL
BA (Hons.), MA

46 Destonia Street,
Worksop,
WS3 8YT

telephone: 0954 284 8988
mobile : 07298 464246
email : medion.perival@bassetlaw.ac.uk

New Harmony Foundation

09/03/11

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a current PhD student researching War Studies at the University of Bassetlaw, and am currently in the final year of my course, and aim to finish in 6 months. My goal is to lecture History and War Studies and work at the cutting edge of research, for which my PhD is an essential qualification. I'm from the USA, and am 28 years old, and have lived in Britain for two and a half years.

Although I have funded the vast majority of my course successfully so far, I require a small amount of support to help me complete the PhD's final stages and 'get me over the line'. From my research, I believe I may be eligible to apply to you for financial support. I would be very grateful if you could send me information on:

1.) Your eligibility criteria
2.) Deadlines
3.) How I might go about applying, including an application form (if applicable)

I have enclosed a self addressed envelope, although you are welcome to email or telephone me if you feel that is more appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Medion Perival

Medion Perival

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6

Making your Application

How to win your grant



Hopefully, you will now have heard back from some bodies and been invited to apply. You will have received instructions on what to do, and probably have been given a form. Now you must prepare the application to give yourself the best chance of success. It is worth stressing once again that bodies have different primary focuses- be they awards for high achievers, support for students in financial difficulty, or funding for research, travel, and conference expenses. It is important to gauge the priorities of the body, and make your application as relevant to them as you are able.

Always fill in each section very carefully, and pay special attention to all the instructions they give you. Unless they say otherwise, you can assume that it is permissible to attach extra sheets to your application. You can use-

fully include your CV, an additional information sheet to expand on any sections of the form where there is insufficient space for your answer, and a personal statement for support if there is not a section for it on the form. Most charities will also either ask you to provide a financial statement, or have included space for one on the form.

Writing your Personal Statement

The personal statement is the most important part of your application, and it should be between 500-750 words in length. In it, you need to make your case convincingly and tell your potential funder why you are a deserving applicant. In particular, you need to show why you have a deficit of funds. The reason for this will vary from person to person, but it will be far more convincing if it is due to some factor beyond your control, even if this is simply something general like the rising cost of education, the recession, or not being able to make enough to support yourself through poorly-paid part-time work. It might equally be that your research costs ended up being higher than you anticipated, and that you need to raise money to finance an essential trip, project, or conference visit that you weren't aware of at the beginning of your course. Show that borrowing money is problematic because you either have a student loan still outstanding and (as is the case in the humanities and some social sciences) are not eligible for a Career Development Loan because the government does not consider your subject to be vocational. If you have been rejected for a research council scholarship despite excellent grades, now is the time to point this out.

If you are looking to raise money before your course has started, you must be especially careful in the way you present this statement. Avoid arguments which sound like you are thinking about doing a graduate course and are looking for money to pay for it – a charity's response

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may simply be to tell you not to do it. It is better simply to say that you're going to be doing a PhD or a Masters and have a deficit in your funding package for the coming year. Although both descriptions are entirely accurate and truthful, the first sounds vague and flaky whereas the second sounds confident and well-planned. On the other hand, if you are seeking funding at a late point in your course (perhaps in the last year of your PhD) be sure to flag this up and present yourself as a student who has done most of the hard work but just needs helping over the finish line. See page 32 for more in-depth advice on funding fourth year PhD study.

A difficult thing to gauge is how much you should talk about your own research. It is important to remember that charities are usually not run by academics but well-informed and intelligent members of the public, and you must take this into account when you describe your studies. Generally, if it is a non-educational charity, a paragraph ought to be sufficient. Describe your research simply, avoid jargon, and highlight the parts which are of the most 'general interest', just as you would if you were describing it to a fellow graduate from a different discipline. If you can envisage any potential wider societal benefit or scholarly contribution from your work beyond your field, be sure to mention it. If your target body is an educational trust, you can safely include a longer description of your research. In this case, you may wish to include a summary on a separate piece of paper- this enables them to read about it if they are interested, but avoids it cluttering up the main statement. Do not go into too much detail or technicality, however, and keep it to 500 words or less.

Show that this course of study is really what you want to do, and how it is essential for your future career plans, rather than just an indulgence. Many bodies will want to believe that they are helping you advance your career, so

"A clearly-presented and itemised summary of anticipated income and expenditure is essential"

it is important to stress this. Talk about what you plan to do after your course, and how your PhD or Masters will help give you the experience and training necessary to allow you to fulfil that dream.

Show also that you have sought out part-time work, are living frugally, and have made applications to other bodies– and list them on your Finance Sheet in a table, as shown in the example statement in section 8. Understandably, charities appreciate evidence that you are not simply extending your cap to them, but are doing all you can to be thrifty and innovative in coping with your situation. If you get support from one charity, make use of that in your applications to others. Charities often dislike being the only funder of something, and many may be emboldened by the presence of other sponsors. As a rule, the more bodies you get to support you, the easier it will be to persuade others to do the same. Even if you won funding from charities in previous academic years, it is still worth pointing this out because you will look like an applicant who has a good track record of receiving grants and who has an overall plan for funding their studies. They won't think you are greedy, but will see you as sensible, innovative, and forward-planning.

Writing your Financial Statement

All charities will ask you to provide a financial statement for the academic year for which you are applying. They will ask you how much money you've got ('anticipated income') and how much that you think you'll need ('anticipated expenditure') for that year, and then ask you to request an amount based on your shortfall. They will want you to itemise your budgets- usually in terms of payment from work, grants, savings, and other sources (for income) and in terms of fees, rent, subsistence, travel, research, and other costs (for expenditure). In

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general, it is quite reasonable for a single person with no children to budget for costs (inclusive of fees) of around £12,000-14,000 per year- and slightly more if you live somewhere that is known to be expensive like London. Obviously, if your living costs seem too high, or if your budget includes a large amount of non-essential expenditure (on leisure activities, for example) charities are likely to simply reject you. If - when you have completed the statement for both income and expenditure - you have a large deficit remaining (i.e. above £2000-£3000) they will want to see you have made applications to other bodies, and that you have at least thought of how to fund subsequent years, to be convinced.

Note that if you are including savings in your anticipated income, that it is perfectly permissible to allocate them across multiple years of your course and give a per-year amount, just as you would for payment for a job. This is important, because you might easily have enough to fund a single year, but you have got to make it last three. Be honest at all times, but try to present your financial statements prudently, in a way that shows your studies to be a seaworthy ship which is struggling through troubled waters, not one which is almost certainly going to sink. Finally, when you request an amount of money, you should always write – next to it or in your statement - that any award the charity might make, even if it is less than your requested amount, would be an invaluable contribution. For further guidance on financial statements, take a look at the model example in section 8.

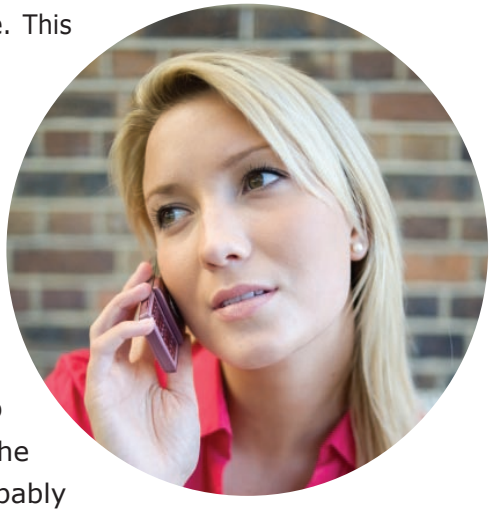
References

Most bodies will want one reference, very occasionally two. These must usually be from established academics with PhDs, but might conceivably be from ex-employers. It obviously helps enormously if your referee is familiar with your studies and is sympathetic to your situation.

They may have to write you quite a few references, so give them clear instructions, and plenty of time to attend to paperwork. Make sure they understand exactly what the reference is for, and appreciate how important it is.

Presenting your application

You must take care to be diligent and pedantic. Make sure there are no typos, and everything is assembled neatly together in an A4 envelope. If you have been given an application form, it is often an excellent idea – especially if your handwriting is not perfect – to scan it as an image file, then use software to complete the form in type. This will immediately differentiate your form from others.



When you post it, use special or recorded delivery. This will ensure it is not lost, and looks more professional.

Maintaining good relations with bodies

If you get a chance, speak to a representative of the body on the phone. If you can develop rapport, even over something trivial like the minutiae of application procedure, you will probably improve your chances.

If, during the time your application is being reviewed, you hear positively from another body, you should write to tell them. Rather than concluding you no longer need money, many charities will be impressed by this and be more likely to make you an award.

If you win a grant, write to the charity to thank them for their generosity. Also, at the end of the year, write to them and tell them briefly how your studies are going, and show them their money has been well spent. This is not only courteous, but will help you when it comes to renewing awards in subsequent years.

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Renewing awards in subsequent years

Some charities may make an award that you can claim for each year of your course. Most, though, will make you a one-off award and invite you to reapply. Although it is not guaranteed, if you have gained an award once, your chances of gaining it again in the next academic year with a similar application are extremely good.

Research, travel, and conference expenses

Writing an application to fund research, travel, or conference expenses requires a slightly different approach, although most of the above advice is still applicable. Unlike postgraduates hunting for grants to support fees and maintenance, students looking for research, travel, and conference awards are often already in possession of full studentships, and are simply looking for an extra £100-£1000 to cover the costs of conference attendance, domestic or international research trips, or perhaps some equipment or training. Whatever your overall funding situation, you will still be applying in order to overcome a deficit in your funding package. Apply well in advance, as retroactive applications are unlikely to be considered.

Unfortunately, it is the case that a good number of charities and trusts simply will not fund research, travel, and conference expenses, so it's doubly important to make sure you're eligible before you apply. For those that do, such funding may be regarded as a relatively low priority because at first glance it seems less 'essential' than support for fees and maintenance. In reality of cause, these costs are indeed often vital- perhaps to collect essential research material, to implement a part of your methodology, or to present your work at a premier conference. You will therefore need to hammer home exactly why this extra cost is so crucial for your course and your future rather than just something you're doing because it might be nice. Be very clear about the benefits.

In terms of a financial statement, make sure your estimates of costs are authoritative and well-evidenced because many charities unfamiliar with what you are doing may not understand how much certain things cost, and are highly unlikely to fund something they don't fully comprehend. Once again, charities will be looking for evidence that you have applied to other sources, so always make sure you flag up anything you can that will show them there are other potential funders.

As we've discussed, amongst the best sources of funding for research, travel, and conference expenses are learned societies and professional bodies rather than charities. One potential difficulty with these bodies is that their competitions are sometimes open to both postgraduates and more experienced post-doctoral research fellows. Although many of these bodies will reserve a number of awards for postgraduates, or positively discriminate in their favour, you may be competing against applicants who almost certainly have more research experience than you do. Given this, you should (as far as possible) stress the overall potential benefit that attending this conference or completing this research may deliver to both yourself and to your wider research community. If you are young, and have not done a great deal of research or given many papers before, play this up, because all bodies will be more likely to be generous to what they regard as an up-and-coming young researcher.

One very obvious thing you can do to improve your chances with learned societies is also simply to attend their meetings, talks and receptions, and join them (if you can). This will be a lot easier to do if you're based close to London or another big city, but if you're a regular attendee at the Institute of Historical Research seminars, or the lectures of the Royal Geographical Society (for example), you can use this opportunity to network

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with the other members and make yourself known, perhaps by asking questions at lectures or seminars and by attending social events. You can then easily show a commitment to the society in your application form, and it may even be that your assessors will know who you are, which will always be an advantage.

Fourth year PhD Study

In the past, PhDs normally took three years. Nowadays, with ever more complex projects being attempted in all disciplines, four year PhDs are becoming increasingly common. Some of the science research councils now offer support for four-year PhDs as standard, but the majority of studentships remain fixed at three. This means most PhD students, fully-funded or not, are likely to run into difficulty in their final year. Fortunately, charities are generally sympathetic to this problem, and there are a number of bodies (e.g. the *Alfred Borne Trust* and the *Gilchrist Educational Trust*) which specifically exist to help with the competition of postgraduate courses. Indeed, there are often subject-specific awards which will provide full-funding for final-year PhDs. Overall, it's usually easier to persuade charities to sponsor you to get



"Many charities and trusts are particularly sympathetic to PhD Students completing their Theses'"

you 'over the finish line' at the end of your PhD than it is when you're at the beginning or halfway through.

When writing your application, the most crucial thing is your justification for going into a fourth year. Charities will want to know why, when others have completed their PhDs in three years, it has taken you four. Reasons for this will vary, but often it's simply that nowadays, PhDs often take four years due to their complexity. However, be careful in how you present this argument. Don't be too technical, but try to show why your PhD was particularly ambitious, and that other researchers pursuing similar projects have also taken four years.

An even stronger argument is to show why the last three years were less than straightforward for you. If you've not held a studentship, this is an excellent reason in itself. Quite obviously, a student without full-funding will probably have had to work under a great deal more financial difficulty, and will have spent a large amount of time doing part-time work and/or fundraising, both of which will have had negative effects on his or her PhD's progress.

The final thing to bear in mind is that some charities state upfront that they do not fund students during writing-up periods. Rather than automatically discounting these bodies, you can (if it is the case, of cause!) show them that your fourth year will actually contain some important extra research, so is not purely a writing-up year. Also, if you're going into your fourth year and have spent any time registered part-time, these periods will only count for half of what they would were you full-time. So a student who has spent two years full-time and one year part-time will actually be the equivalent of two and a half (1+1+1/2) years through his or her course at the beginning of his or her fourth year of studying.

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Rejection

Rejection from a charity is always disappointing, but rather than simply removing it from your list of potential funders, there may be things you can find out which will improve your chances considerably if you re-approach them. You may be able to reapply quickly- perhaps in time for their next meeting of trustees in a few months.

First, try to find out the reason for rejection. Write them a polite email or a letter to ask why they've come to this decision, and whether it would be worth you reapplying in the future. Never complain, or argue with any decision, even if you feel the charity has made an obvious mistake. You will gain nothing, and almost certainly put them off sponsoring you in the future.

Assuming there is not an obvious reason they turned you down (e.g. you were ineligible to apply) then they may be reluctant to say very much, or anything. In that case, accept that you won't get direct feedback on this application, but instead ask whether they might consider sponsoring you in the future if you reapply, especially if you also gain funding from other bodies. If the answer to this is 'yes' then the chances are that you were unsuccessful because they viewed your application as a risky investment- perhaps because you did not have any other backers. This means that if you can gain other funders, you will have a much better chance if you reapply.

Finding out why they rejected you is actually only part of the reason for getting in touch. The other is simply that by asking for feedback, you demonstrate determination and persistence, and become a name they recognise in a small office. If they agree that you should apply again, you will have gained a big advantage. Persistence doesn't always work, but it's amazing what it can achieve! Just always be polite.

7

Example Statements

Here are example personal statements from three applicants, along with feedback from a charity trustee. While there is no 'master formula' for writing statements, these examples will give you a clearer idea of good tone and style. The first example (Opal) is a 'model' statement, whereas the other two demonstrate common pitfalls.



EXAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT 1: Opal

"I am applying to you to overcome a deficit in my funding package for the coming academic year. I believe I am a strong and deserving applicant- I have a 2:1 in History and Politics from the University of Stowmarket, and a Masters in Historical Studies (graded 'Merit') from the University of Humberside. My career goal has always been to lecture History, and I am about to begin the second year of my PhD at Prince's College London- a qualification which will enable me to fulfil that dream. Unfortunately, I do not hold a scholarship- I was rejected by my research council despite them describing my application as 'excellent' and my university has been unable to help. However, with my savings (which I have spent the last two years building up through work), my part-time job, and some modest awards from charities and trusts, I believe I can generate enough income to pay my course fees and maintenance. I have already been awarded grants totalling £3,000 for the next academic year from the Vaughan Memorial Trust and the Empire Foundation, and have applied to several other bodies, as indicated in my Financial Statement."

"I believe that my PhD is on an important subject. I am investigating political language in the Victorian and Edwardian era- in particular the orations of party

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candidates at the grassroots. In particular, I am looking to analyse the ways in which these politicians presented themselves, their parties, and their policies- through language. In a nutshell, I am looking to understand the origins of 'spin'- a concept that we take for granted in our analysis of politics today. I recently delivered a well-attended paper on my work to Prince's College London History Seminar, and the Humberside Politics Association has requested a copy of my thesis for its library (when it is completed) and have invited me to give a lecture to its members titled 'The origins of spin in Politics'."

"I knew my PhD was going to be financially challenging, but the recent recession has made things unexpectedly difficult. The company which I previously worked for (for two days a week, as an administrator) has been forced to shed its part-time staff, and I have found it close to impossible to find similar work elsewhere as employers seem to be reluctant to take on new staff in the current conditions. I have taken another job (as a waitress in a café) but it - and other similar jobs - do not pay enough for me to support myself in London and study at the same time. I am already £15,000 in debt to the Student Loans Company, and am ineligible for a Career Development Loan because the Government do not class History as vocational. I am from a poor background and my family is unable to help me. If I cannot overcome my deficit for this year, I will be forced to take another job (probably in a bar) which I am afraid will jeopardise my PhD and stall its progress."

"I am living frugally and believe I am doing all that I can to make my PhD financially viable. An award from your trust would give me a degree of financial security and would allow me to continue to make good progress with my studies. I appreciate that any award you make may not be able to cover all of my deficit, but any support would be invaluable."

Yours Sincerely,

Opal Worthing

Statement 1: The Trustee's Opinion

"This candidate does not have a first-class academic record, but delivers a very strong statement. She shows that:

- *She is well prepared, and her plan is well thought out. She is doing part-time work, has applied for other awards, and has a backup plan if we were to reject her application. She gives the impression of thinking about funding in an organised and systematic way, and shows us that this application is part of an overarching master plan, not an isolated and ad hoc appeal for help.*

- *Her subject is clearly described using everyday language, in a way nonspecialists can understand. She also makes what would at first glance seem to be academic and obscure research (old political speeches) seem relevant and potentially useful to modern society.*

- *Her reasons for financial difficulty sound as though they could not have been reasonably anticipated. She presents them in a dignified, understated way, and is clearly trying her best to overcome them.*

- *The tone is modest and reasonable, yet confident and determined. Every opportunity is taken to persuade us that our money will not be wasted."*

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EXAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT 2: Lawrence

"I have a strong academic record: I hold a first class BA from the London School of Neuroscience, a starred first class MPhil from Teignbridge with distinction, have two publications, have won several prizes, and completed a research assistantship. I believe I was extremely unlucky not to receive full scholarship from the BBSRC- Professor Bob Evans (my supervisor) described it as an 'outrage'. Many other applicants with vastly weaker CVs were successful. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to suggest I was one of the unluckiest students in the country to not receive a PhD bursary."

"My PhD is an ambitious multidisciplinary project which combines integrative neuroscience with zoology. I investigate the neurological pathways of marmosets, looking for Adrenaline staining to the cerebral cortex and the hypothalamus to attempt to ascertain whether the findings of Steel et al. (2003) might have a broader species application than previously believed. When I started my PhD in 2007 at Blaenau Gwent University I did so with very little in the way of savings. I worked extremely hard at a café and performing part-time teaching but the pay is poor and I can scarcely pay the bills. The rents in the area I live are very high so I have to get some help or I shall be forced to leave my home."

"My family is extremely poor, and I was brought up in a single-parent family on a council estate in poverty. Unlike some of my peers, I did not have the privilege of a private education, and I was only able to attend the London School of Neuroscience as a result of winning the prestigious Shayle and Hart scholarship for students from poor backgrounds."

"I would use any award you might make me to help to pay the bills. I believe my PhD research will be very beneficial to the scholarly world, and I may publish it one day. As you can see from my financial statement, I am in urgent need of assistance, so please help me. I look forward to your response."

Lawrence Grey

Statement 2: The Trustee's Opinion

"His academic record is extremely strong, However, the statement is let down by its presentation and argumentation:

- *The way he describes his research is obscure, esoteric, and overly academic. An informed member of the general public will not understand what his research is, or why it might be useful. We do not know who 'Professor Bob Evans' or 'Steel et al.' even are. This sounds as though it is designed for a research council, not a charity.*

- *There is no specific reason why the money is needed, other than pointing to the general costs of his course which he could and should have anticipated before embarking on it. There is no clear indication of what he would do with the money, and he does little to reassure us that it would not be wasted.*

- *Drawing attention to his initial disadvantages in life has some relevance, but he overdoes it.*

- *A sense of entitlement runs through the statement. The candidate is basing his application entirely on the strength of his CV and his previous 'bad luck' in not securing funding elsewhere.*

- *There is no sense of an overall plan. We do not know how big his shortfall is, where else he is applying, or what he will do if he is not able to raise what he needs.*

- *There is no sense of what career he wishes to pursue, or why this qualification will help him pursue it. "*

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EXAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT 3: Julian

"I am applying to you because I am struggling on my course. I am trying to do an MA and its vert expensive. I asked the university funding centre and they didn't want to give me any money. I don't know what to do so I'm writing to you for help."

"I decided I wanted to do an MA because my lecturer advised me to. He said that the scholarly neglect of the study of Saxon Burial Mounds is outrageous and urgently needs to be rectified. I got a first in my BA thesis so I consider myself to be an excellent applicant. The customs of the Saxons, in particular the Raedwald tribe, are fascinating, especially since the discovery of the tomb of the King of Wessex at Sutton in 1988. Smith et al. (1989) entirely failed to appreciate the nuances of the king's parade helmet- in particular the metal working techniques usedd on it. I hope that my thesis will mean that people more properly understand the customs of the Saxon Kings."

"I was going to apply to the AHRC, but I missed the deadline because they brought it forwards two weeks and didn't tell me. I want to start my MA now so I hope that you are able to grant me some funds so I can do it. I did have some money saved but unfortunately I was involved in an accident and lost a lot of it."

Julian Dodds

Statement 3: The Trustee's Opinion

"This statement is almost a model of how you should not write a statement to a charity:

- *There are several spelling mistakes.*

- *The research is described in a distant, academic way. It is not clear why the scholarly community, let alone the general public, should be concerned about the intricacies of metal working techniques on a Saxon helmet. He needs to present this a lot better.*

- *This application does not sound as though it is part of any overarching plan, but looks as though it has been put together quickly and without much thought.*

- *The applicant draws attention to his own weaknesses. He missed a research council deadline which is his own responsibility to find out about.*

- *He says he lost money due to an accident. This might be a persuasive reason why circumstances beyond his control caused him to be in financial difficulty. Unfortunately, he does not explain it.*

- *He shows a lack of originality and drive. He is doing this project not to help him forward a career-plan, but because it was suggested by a lecturer.*

- *There is no sense of what he wants the money for, where else he has applied, or that the money would not simply be wasted."*

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8

Model Financial Statement

Current Funding for Academic Year 2010-11

This year, I am applying, or have applied to, the following:

BODY	DATE OF DECISION	AMOUNT	SUCCESSFUL?
Vaughan Memorial Trust	Done	£1,000	Yes
Empire Foundation	Done	£2,000	Yes
Baccarat Trust	Done	£500	No
Sir Campbell Fund for Excellence	Done	£1,000	No
Red Roses Charity	Jan '10	£500	?
Runefaust Support Group	Jan '10	£800	?
Drake Foundation for Woman Graduates	Feb '10	£1,000	?
The Irani Catholic Foundation	Mar '10	£500	?
Annette Burns Fund for Political Journalism	Mar'10	£250	?
The Krell Travel Fund	Apr '10	£400	?
Prince's College London Bursary	Apr '10	£2,000	?

Projected Income and Expenditure for Academic Year 2010-11

EXPENSES	INCOME
£3,200 (Course fees to Prince's College London) £6,200 (Rent: I live in Hammersmith) £500 (Utility Charges: light, heat, water) £400 (Telephone: landline and mobile) £1,750 (Food) £300 (Clothing) £300 (Household Miscellaneous: TV licence, internet, contents insurance) £300 (Books for study) £800 (Travel into university) £400 (Essential research trips) £100 (Photocopying and Printing)	£2,900 (Working as a Waitress) £3,000 Charities and Trusts (see above) £3,100 Savings
Total Expenses £14,250	**Total Income** £9,000

Amount Requested

I would like to request a sum of £1500- the maximum your trust permits, although I appreciate that any award made may be at a lower level.

**Note that all persons and organisations in sections 7 and 8 are entirely fictitious.*

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9

Supplementing your Income

The right part-time job is an enormous help

A part-time job can be an extremely useful, if time-consuming way of supplementing your income if you are self-funding. Any awards from charities and trusts are tax-free, and will not take up any of your personal non-taxable allowance (about £6,000, and rising to £7,475 for the next financial year). If you can, it is a very good idea to take advantage of this allowance and earn some extra money. Note also that it is not compulsory to pay National Insurance if you are a full-time student and earning less than £110 per week- ask your employer to fill in a P38S form (available from the Inland Revenue).

Finding the right part-time job is always difficult, and could be the subject of another guide in its own right. Checking the Guardian jobs section and Jobs.ac.uk is a good way of finding part-time academic vacancies like library work, research, or teaching. *Researchprofessional.com* is also well worth a look.

Check out the jobs at your university, and the student union. You may be able to secure work as a teaching assistant, and graduate tutorials and research assistant-ships are a possibility, depending on their availability. Also, university departments may offer work such as data inputting and other administrative tasks, so these are worth looking at, as are recruitment agencies.

10

Keeping Costs Down

Being frugal and taking advantage of as many discounts as you can.

Although a full scholarship is currently made at the equivalent of about £15,500-18,000 a year (if you include the payment of fees), the true cost of studying is probably rather less than that – it can be done for as little as £11,000-13,000 a year depending where you live.

The first thing to get right is accommodation. If you are renting, picking an area with lower rents is sensible. Rental markets vary greatly from place to place, and in many localities, you will be able to live close to university for a reasonable price. In others, especially in cities, you may have to live further away from campus to obtain good value. If you don't have much knowledge on the area you're moving to, finding out more about it from the internet, from your university's accommodation

"Take advantage of council tax exemption, student discounts, and get accommodation right"



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office, and from local estate agents is very sensible.
You are entitled to council tax exemption if you are full-time, so it is important to claim this. Also, take advantage of a Young Persons Railcard, which you can get regardless of age as a student. If you are living in London, you can also use this railcard to lower the cap on your Oystercard by a third- much better value than the student Oystercard. See section 11 for more details.

If you are reliant on savings, bear in mind that you can reclaim the 20% tax which is automatically taken off your annual interest- if your overall net earnings from work plus savings dividends fall within your tax-free allowance. You can actually reclaim the tax in this manner for up to five years previously. If you paid the old 10% tax rate (but did not move beyond it) on your earnings in any of those previous years, then you will still be entitled to a rebate for half of the tax taken off your interest. Fill out one Inland Revenue R40 form for each financial year for which you claim.

The rest is mainly down to lifestyle choice, which is not within the remit of this guide, but it is probably advisable to cut down on any particularly expensive habits and generally try to make your money go as far as possible. Many shops have student discounts which they do not advertise upfront, so it is always worth asking if they are available before you pay.

11

Useful Links, Addresses & Publications

A starter-list of all the essentials

This section supplies a useful list of books and internet sites. It goes on to provide a 'starter list' of charities and trusts which all make awards to students, along with their contact details. These ought to provide you with an excellent start when you begin to hunt for funders.

BOOKS

Grants Register (Palgrave Macmillian)
Educational Grants Directory (Directory of Social Change)
The Directory of Grants Making Trusts (Charities Aid Foundation)
Charities Digest (Waterlow Professional Publishing)
Charity Choice (Waterlow Professional Publishing)

INTERNET SITES

Research Councils

The Arts and Humanities Research Council
http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/

The Economic and Social Research Council
http://www.esrc.ac.uk/

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/

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The Medical Research Council
http://www.mrc.ac.uk/

The Natural Environment Research Council
http://www.nerc.ac.uk/

The Science and Technology Facilities Council
http://www.scitech.ac.uk/

Overseas Research Students Award Scheme
http://www.orsas.ac.uk/

Research Councils UK
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk

Large Academic Charities offering full Studentships

The Wellcome Trust
http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/

The Leverhulme Trust
http://www.leverhulme.org.uk/

The Nuffield Foundation
http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/

Carnegie Trust
http://www.carnegie-trust.org/

Funding Guide Sites

Educational Grants Advisory Service
http://www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=1037

Prospects Student Funding Guides
http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Funding_my_further_study/p!edLff

Turn2us Guide on Grants and Funding
http://www.turn2us.org.uk/information__resources.aspx

Unigrants
http://www.unigrants.co.uk/

Student Funding Databases

Scholarship Search
http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk/

Postgraduate Studentships
http://www.postgraduatestudentships.co.uk

Research and Development Funding (esp. 'long shots' section)
http://rdfunding.org.uk/

ResearchProfessional (Jobs and Funding opportunities)
http://www.researchprofessional.com/

Student Cash Point
http://www.studentcashpoint.co.uk/

Charity Search Engines

Charity Commission
http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/

Charity Choice
http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/

Charities Direct
http://www.charitiesdirect.com/charities/

Charities Directory
http://www.charitiesdirectory.com/

Charity Portal
http://www.charityportal.org.uk/

Funder Finder
http://www.funderfinder.org.uk/

Grantsnet
http://www.grantsnet.co.uk/

Grants Online
http://www.grantsonline.org.uk/

Guidestar
http://www.guidestar.org.uk/

HM Revenues & Customs Charity Search
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/charities-search.htm

Smartchange
http://www.smartchange.org/

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The Charities Aid Foundation
http://www.cafonline.org/Default.aspx

Turn2us
http://www.turn2us.org.uk/
This is probably the best charity search engine for graduates.

Will to charity
http://www.willtocharity.co.uk/

Part-time Work

Jobs in Research
http://www.jobs.ac.uk/

Guardian Jobs
http://jobs.guardian.co.uk/

ResearchProfessional (Jobs and funding opportunities)
http://www.researchprofessional.com/

University of London Careers Service
http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/

Miscellaneous

Find a PhD
http://www.findaphd.com/

Find a Masters
http://www.findamasters.com

Oystercard Young Persons 34% Discount Deal
http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tickets/faresandtickets/singlefares/6769.aspx
This is a little-known but excellent deal which will probably save you several hundred pounds a year.

Inland Revenue R40 reclaiment form
(for tax paid on savings dividends)
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/r40.pdf

A form which enables you to claim back the tax paid on the interest gained each year from savings accounts- can be retroactively applied for up to five financial years. Only works if your net earnings for the year in question fall within the tax free allowance or were within the old 10% tax band (which was in operation before the financial year starting April 2009).

Charities & Trusts

NOTE: Deadlines for applications are omitted. These change on a regular basis, so please contact the trust for up-to-date information.

Access to Learning Fund
Contact your university Funding Office

This is a government hardship fund for postgraduate and undergraduate students experiencing unexpected or unforeseen financial difficulty. Grants (£100- £3,500) are awarded on the basis of need. Note that notional figures will be used for your living expenses, and your income, rather than the actual ones. It is advisable to apply earlier in the year for this award, as its funds may become exhausted.

Africa Education Trust (and Kenneth Kirkwood Fund)
http://www.africaeducationaltrust.org/

Assists African students in the UK. Students can apply for small emergency grants or to the Kenneth Kirkwood Fund. Especially interested in assisting with financial difficulties during the final months of a course.

Aga Khan Foundation
http://www.akdn.org/akf_scholarships.asp

Grants made to students of excellent potential and track record. Usually made to support Masters study (although will consider PhD applicants) and made on a 50% grant 50% loan basis. Funds also available to support travel and research expenses.

Alfred Bourne Trust
The British and Foreign School Society, Croudace House, Godstone Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6RE.

Small grants for those struggling in their final year. Only contactable through letter with a Self-Addressed-Envelope.

All Saints Educational Trust
http://www.aset.org.uk/

Makes awards to students who are planning a career as a teacher. Sympathetic to students undertaking PGCEs, and religious studies. A history of practising any faith is an advantage.

Altrusa Careers Trust
PO Box 6160, Orkney, KW16 3WY

Open to UK women who wish to further their career prospects or to retrain after bringing up a family. A loan of up to £500 is available. PhD students not eligible.

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Alumni Bursaries
Contact your Departmental Office or Graduate School for details

Some university departments operate a scheme where postgraduates who did their first degree at that institution are eligible to apply for a scholarship that will cover 20% of their fees. Available for both full-time and part-time courses.

Anglian Water Trust Fund
http://www.awtf.org.uk/

Provides grants for people in need whose main home is within the Anglian or Hartlepool Water regions.

Anglo-Jewish Association
http://www.anglojewish.co.uk/

Grants of £500 a year for Jewish students studying at a UK university. Applications based on hardship and academic merit.

Anguish's Educational Foundation
1 Woolgate Court, St. Benedicts Street, Norwich, NR2 4AP.
Email: david.walker@nch-charities.co.uk

Grants for young people resident in the City of Norwich.

Ann Beaumont's Educational Foundation
Sue Self, 104B High Street, Hadleigh, Suffolk IP7 5EL.

Grants for research expenses and travel. Applicants must be under the age of 25 with a home address within the parish of Hadleigh, Suffolk.

The Ann Driver Trust
Administrator, Ann Driver Trust, PO Box 2761, London, W1A 5HD

Grants for study of the arts, especially music. Block grants are given to different institutions, changing each year. Probably best in the first instance to ask your department or the Trust whether grants are available at your institution.

Ann Johnson's Educational Foundation
Ravenscroft, Stock Road, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8PW

For students under the age of 25 who currently reside in, or who previously attended school or college in: Broomfield, Chelmsford, Chignal, Great Baddow, Margaretting, Springfield, Stock or Writtle.

Bakers Benevolent Society
The Mill House, 23 Bakers Lane, Epping, Essex, CM16 5DQ

If you, your parent, or spouse is (or was) involved in the baking trade, you may be elligable for a grant.

BBC Performing Arts Fund
http://www.bbc.co.uk/performingartsfund/

Gives bursaries for music and the performing arts.

Bernard Butler Trust Fund
http://www.bernardbutlertrust.org/application.php

Grants usually of at least £1,000 to students studying engineering, or who can show that they will help promote the subject in some way.

Biochemical Society
http://www.biochemistry.org/

Grants awarded for research expenses, travel, and conferences for postgraduates studying molecular and cellular biosciences.

Broadlands Home Trust
The Secretary, The Broadlands Home Trust, 2 Winchester Close, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1DR

Grants for women under 22 for educational purposes.

The British & Foreign School Society Berridge Bursary Fund
J Kidd, Maybrook House, Godstone Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6RE

Grants for students of home economics, food and nutrition or dietetics.
Write for an application form.

British Foundation for Women Graduates
http://ffwg.org.uk/

Female applicants only. Grants not exceeding £4,000.

British Pharmacological Society
http://www.bps.ac.uk/

Grants awarded for research expenses, travel, and conferences for postgraduates studying pharmacology. Must be society members.

Builders Benevolent Institution
Secretary, Builders Benevolent Institution, Construction House, 51 St Mary's Road, Tonbridge, TN9 2LE

If you, your parent, or spouse is (or was) involved in building, especially as a master builder, you may be eligible for a grant.

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The Busenhart Morgan-Evans Foundation
Busenhart Morgan-Evans Foundation, Brambletye, 455 Woodham Lane, Woodham Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 3QQ.

For musicians. Provides grants for equipment, instruments and course fees. Applications made through the college, but best to contact the charity in the first instance for application instructions/form.

Cancer Research UK
http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/

Grants for students involved in any aspect of the study of cancer. Also offer a number of full PhD scholarships.

Carnegie Trust
http://www.carnegie-trust.org/

Carnegie Scholarships available to graduates of a Scottish University who hold first class honours. May be held at any UK university. Awards are for fees and a full stipend equivalent to a research council award.

The Castle Baynard Educational Foundation
Catherine McGuiness, Clerk, c/o Member's Room, Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ.

Grants based on need. For students with a connection to the City of London or the former county of Middlesex. For research expenses or travel. Trustees meet in March, June, September and December.

The Chizel Educational Trust
Haydn House, 309-329 Haydn Road, Nottingham, NG5 1HG

Educational grants towards equipment, instruments, books, travel, bursaries and maintenance for people under 25 and resident in the UK.

Christ Church of England Educational Foundation
admin@christchurchsouthwark.org.uk. Christ Church, 27 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8NY

Applicants under the age of 25 years, living in London SE1 area. Grants for fees, maintenance, and research costs.

The Clothworkers' Charity for Education
The Clothworkers' Foundation, Clothworkers' Hall, Dunster Court, Mincing Lane, London EC3R 7AH. http://www.clothworkers.co.uk/

Postgraduate students under the age of 25 who live in or are studying in Greater London, or whose parents live in Greater London. Typical grants £250-£2,000, towards fees and maintenance.

Commercial Travellers Benevolent Institution
http://www.ctbi.org/

If you, your parent, or spouse works (or worked for at least 5 years) as a commercial traveller (i.e. a travelling salesmen) then you may be eligible for a grant.

Company of Actuaries Charitable Trust Fund
G H Lockwood, 34 Howe Drive, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, HP9 2BD, 01494 673451.

Grants for those working towards actuarial qualifications or careers.
Typical grants £600. Trustees meet in October, January, April and July.

The Countess of Munster Musical Trust
http://www.munstertrust.org.uk/

Major musical charity which will support young musicians, i.e. instrumentalists, singers, conductors and composers of exceptional ability. Instrumentalists, conductors and composers must be 18-25, and singers 18-28. British and Commonwealth students considered.

Cross Trust
http://www.thecrosstrust.org.uk/

For students of Scottish descent (you, or one of your parents, must have been born in Scotland) under the age of 30.

The David Finnie and Alan Emery Charitable Trust
J. Buck, 4 De Grosmont Close, Abergavenny, Monmouth, NP7 9JN.

Grants for those who have exhausted all other funding possibilities. Apply by April or October.

Diabetes UK
http://www.diabetes.org.uk/

Grants for students involved in any aspect of the study of diabetes. Also offers a number of full PhD scholarships.

The Douglas Bomford Trust
http://www.dbt.org.uk/

Grants for EU students who are studying the engineering or science of agricultural industries.

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EDF Energy Trust
http://www.edfenergytrust.org.uk/

Grants for customers of EDF Energy including the brands formerly known as London Energy, SWEB Energy and Seeboard Energy. For the payment of bills.

Experimental Psychology Society
http://www.eps.ac.uk/

Grants awarded for research expenses for society members for the research of Psychology or cognitive functions.

Fenton Trust
http://www.fentonartstrust.org.uk/

Supports final year postgraduates in the visual and performing arts.

George Heim Memorial Trust
Paul Heim, Wearne Wyche, Picts Hill, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9AA

Provides grants of up to £1,000 for students under age of 30.

Gilchrist Educational Trust
http://www.gilchristgrants.org.uk/

Applicants must be in their last year of study. Average grant value is about £850. Funds also available to support travel.

The Hellenic Foundation
S J Fafalios, Hon. Secretary, St Paul's House, Warwick Lane, London, EC4P 4BN

Grants for education, research, music and dance for students studying the culture, tradition and heritage of Greece.

Henry Dixon's Foundation for Apprenticing
Charities Administrator, Drapers' Company, Drapers' Hall, London, EC2N 2DQ.
http://www.thedrapers.co.uk

Grants for music, textiles or art. Applicants under the age of 25. Block grants usually awarded to universities, but will consider other applicants.

The Hilda Martindale Educational Trust
Miss J L Hurn, c/o The Registry, Royal Holloway, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX. 01784 434455

Grants for British women towards the cost of vocational postgraduate courses. Grants up to £1,000 towards books, fees, living expenses, travel or childcare.

Horizons Education Fund
http://www.yourhorizons.com

Aims to support lone parents who have the motivation, determination and ability to improve their employment prospects through a vocational postgraduate course. Grants of £500-£1,500. UK residents only.

Humanitarian Trust
27 St James's Place London SW1A 1NR

Makes small supplementary awards to students in the final year of their course. Must be able to demonstrate substantial financial support from another source(s).
Only contactable by SAE.

The Institute of Actuaries Research and Education Fund
Institute of Actuaries, Staple Inn Hall, 13 Staple Inn, London, WC1V 7QJ

Grants for overseas students studying actuarial science or related subjects.

The Institution of Gas Engineers Benevolent Fund
Gordon Davies, Charnwood Wing, Holywell Park, Ashby Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3GR

Grants for UK and overseas students wishing to study engineering or gas.

The Isabel Blackman Foundation
Stonehenge, 13 Laton Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 2ES

Students of Education and Health who have a connection with the Hastings district.

The John Oldacre Foundation
Hazleton House, Hazleton, Cheltenham, Gloucester, GL5 4EB

Postgraduate students researching the agricultural sciences, specifically the UK agriculture industry. Grants towards research and travel expenditure. Block grants normally given to institutions, so ask at your department in the first instance.

John Wates Charitable Trust
Nicholas Smith, 40 Kings Road, Chelsea, London, SW3 4UD,

Postgraduates studying music and singing who live in London or the South East. Grants range from £500-£1,000 for fees and maintenance.

The Kathleen Trust
Currey & Co, 21 Buckingham Gate, London, SW1 E6LS

Grants to young musicians and singers. Loans to buy instruments and equipment, and grants to pay course fees.

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The Lawlor Foundation
Mrs. Virginia Lawlor, Chair, 37 Downshire Hill London NW3 INU.
Tel: 020 7317 8103.

Grants to Irish students who live in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland. Grants of £100-£500 for fees, maintenance, research expenses. Grants for up to three years.

The Lionel Bart Foundation
J. Cohen, 55 Drury Lane, London, WC2B 5SQ. Email: jcohen@clintons.co.uk

For Drama postgraduate students. Grants of £1,000-£3,000 for fees.

Lawrence Atwell's Charity
http://www.skinnershall.co.uk/charities/lawrence-atwell-charity.htm

Grants for students from poor backgrounds. Must be 26 years of age or under, and be pursuing a course of study which is vocational and essential to future career plans.

Leathersellers' Company
http://www.leathersellers.co.uk/

Exhibitions (grants) awarded on the basis of academic record and financial need. Full-time applicants only.

Leverhulme Trades Charities Trust
http://www.leverhulme-trade.org.uk/

These awards are for those who can demonstrate a family link (i.e. parents or spouse) with the grocers' trade, chemists or pharmacists, or commercial travellers. The awards are around £5,000 per annum, and can be annually renewed.

London Mathematical Society
http://www.lms.ac.uk/

Grants for research, travel, and conference expenses for mathematics.

Lynne Grundy Memorial Trust
http://www.lynnegrundytrust.org.uk/

Open to students in the disciplines of Old English/ Anglo-Saxon or Humanities Computing. Awards (up to £500) for research expenses. Based on academic record and financial need.

The Martin Smith Foundation
The Martin Smith Foundation, PO Box 22507, London, W8 7ZF

Grants to postgraduates studying ecology, environment, natural resources, music or the performing arts. Typical grant is £2,500.

McGlashan Charitable Trust
PO Box no. 16057, Glasgow G12 9XX

Grants to support postgraduate study. Applicants must either be studying or working in Scotland, or have been born in Scotland.

The Merchant Company
http://www.mcoe.org.uk

Gives grants to students under 30 studying in Edinburgh.

Mid-Yorkshire Social Work Fund
http://www.family-action.org.uk/section.aspx?id=1037

For students studying at Yorkshire universities: Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds, and York. Grants of £500 to support certain courses at each university. Check with the charity.

Misys Charitable Foundation
The Trustees, 125 Kensington High Street, London, W8 5SF

Grants for study of IT. Institutions have to recommend a candidate.

Newby Trust
http://www.newby-trust.org.uk/

This trust make grants to specific institutions, on a rotating basis- check website for details. Awards based on academic record and financial need.

Newcomen Collett Foundation
http://www.newcomencollett.org.uk/individuals.html

Grants for Postgraduates living in the London borough of Southwark for at least 2 years.

The Noon Foundation
The Trustees, 25 Queen Anne's Gate, St James Park, London. SW1H 9BU.
Email: secretary@noongroup.co.uk

Gives educational grants to students from Pakistan.

P & M Lovell Charitable Settlement
100 Temple Street, Bristol, BS1 6AG. Tel: 0117 905 4000.

Gives small one-off grants to students in need, generally of £100-£200.

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Physiological Society
http://www.physoc.org/

Grants awarded for research expenses, travel, and conferences for postgraduates involved in the scientific study of humans and animals.

The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust
http://www.qest.org.uk/

Individuals taking vocational postgraduate courses in crafts such as jewellery making, upholstery, book binding etc. Grants up to £15,000.

Retail Trust
Marshall Estate, Hammers Lane, London, NW7 4EE

You may be eligible for a grant if you, your spouse, or your parents have worked in the retail, wholesale, manufacturing or distribution trades for at least two years or is retired and worked in the trades for at least ten years.

The Richard Newitt Fund
C. Gilbert, Kleinwort Benson Trustees, PO Box 191, 10 Fenchurch St, London, EC3M 3LB

Grants to students aged 24 – 45 who intend to live and work in Britain.
Not normally given for 1st year of course.

The Roger and Sarah Bancroft Clark Charitable Trust
Lynette Copper, 40 High Street, Somerset, BA16 0YA

Offers small grants for fees and maintenance to UK and overseas students.

Rootstein Hopkins Foundation
The secretary, PO Box 14720, London, W3 7ZG. Tel: 020 8746 2136.

Grants for British people studying or working in the fine arts, particularly painting and drawing. Applicant must have been resident in Britain for at least 3 years.

The Royal Bath & West of England Society
Jane Guise, The Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6QN

Grants for any aspect of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, conservation or any form of food production or marketing. Up to £10,000 is available for each scholarship.

Royal Bibliographical Society
http://www.bibsoc.org.uk/grants.htm

Must demonstrate a degree of bibliographical research (on, for example, book history, textual transmission, publishing, printing, bookbinding, book ownership and book collecting). A small number of grants, for research expenses of up to £1,000.

Royal Geographical Society
http://www.rgs.org/

Awards for research expenses and travel for the study of Geography.

Royal Historical Society
http://www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/postgraduates.htm

Grants of up to £500 for student research expenses for the study of History.

Royal Society of Medicine
http://www.rsm.ac.uk/academ/awards/index.php

The RSM awards a large number of prizes, fellowships and bursaries to trainees and registrars in a wide variety of topics. See website for a full list.

Ruby and Will George Trust
http://www.therwgtrust.co.uk/

Grants (up to £2000) awarded for assistance with fees or maintenance, on the basis of academic record and financial need. Must be able to demonstrate a family link with commerce (i.e. the purchase and sale of goods and services).

The Savoy Educational Trust
Margaret Georgiou, 1 Savoy Hill, London, WC2R 0BJ

Grants of £500 towards fees, or domestic and international travel, especially connected with hospitality. Trustees meet in March, July, October and December.

SC Witting Trust
*Administrator, S C Witting Trust, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2*BJ

Small grants for university students, ordinarily resident in England, Germany or Poland.

Scarr-Hall Memorial Trust
C Kane. DPC, Vernon Road, Stoke on Trent, Staffs, ST4 2QY. Tel: 01782 744144

Grants to students in the UK of up to £500.

Sidney Perry Foundation
The Secretary, The Sidney Perry Foundation, PO BOX 2924, Faringdon, SN7 7YJ

Grants of £300-£700. Awards based on academic record and financial need. Only contactable through letter with a Self-Addressed-Envelope.

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Sir John Cass's Foundation
Richard Foley; 31 Jewry Street, London EC3N 2EY. Tel: 020 7480 5884.

Grants for students under 25 who have been a permanent resident of inner London for 3 years, on postgraduate courses leading to professional qualifications (such as legal practice certificate or bar finals).

Sir John Plumb Charitable Trust
Dr Joachim Whaley, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, CB2 1TA.

Grants of up to £500 for the publication of History, or research leading to that publication. Applicants must be under 30.

Sir John Sumner's Trust
Ian Henderson, Secretary, No. 1 Colmore Square, Birmingham. B4 6AA

Grants to nursing, medical and veterinary students who are in need. Grants are given quarterly and can be up to £400 per year.

Sir Mark and Lady Turner Charitable Settlement
PO Box 191, 10 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M 3LB. Tel: 020 7475 5086.

Grants of up to £300 for fees and research expenses. Preference given to those who live in north London and Hampshire. Deadlines are the end of April or October.

Society of Antiquaries of London
http:// www.sal.org.uk

Grants of up to £2,000 for archaeological subjects. Deadlines in December and March.

Society for Endocrinology
http://www.endocrinology.org/

Travel, research, and conference awards for study of hormones.

The Society for Promoting the Training of Women
http://www.sptw.org/

Loans for women seeking to improve career prospects. Loans of up to £1,000, interest free. Does not fund applicants resident in the UK less than three years.

The Society for Theatre Research
Secretary, The Society for Theatre Research, The Theatre Museum, 1e Tavistock Street, London, WC2E 7PR. http://www.str.org.uk.

Grants for the history of arts including: British theatre, opera, dance, and the performing arts. Grants range from £200 to £1,000 and go towards travel and research costs.

The South Square Trust
Clerk to the Trusties, PO Box 67, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 9ZR

Grants for the studying of applied or fine arts. Music and the performing arts are also considered. Grants of at least £500.

Southdown Trust
Canbury School, Kingston Hill, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 7LN

Grants to support individuals up to 26 years of age.

The Stirlingshire Educational Trust
68 Post Street, Stirling FK8 2LJ. Tel: 01786 474956 (Tues and Thurs only)

Grants for those born in Stirlingshire, or who have lived there for at least five years. Grants of £150-£500 towards research expenses and fees.

St. Clemant Dane Educational Foundation
The St. Clemant Dane Educational Foundation, St. Clement Danes C of E Primary School. Drury Lane, London, WC2B 5SU.

Grants awarded for assistance with fees or maintenance, on the basis of academic record and need. Applicants must be under the age of 25. Send a letter with a SAE.

St Olave's Foundation Fund
http://www.stolavesfoundation.co.uk/individuals/index.html

For students who have lived in the London borough of Southwark for at least 2 years.

Stapley Trust
http://www.stapleytrust.org/

Applicants must be over 24 on 1st October of the proposed year of study, and hold a first or 2:1. Awards made on merit and hardship, usually at £300-£1000.

The Studley College Trust
http://www.studleytrust.co.uk/

Grants of up to £2,000 for British nationals up to 30 years old for vocational postgraduate courses in horticulture, forestry, and rural industries.

UKeiG Information Group
http://www.ukeig.org.uk/awards/student_bursary.html

For courses involving a degree of information handling and management. You need to be nominated by your department, and supported by a letter. The decision is based primarily on the level of hardship of applicants. One award per year, of £2,500.

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University of London Central Research Fund
http://www.lon.ac.uk/crf

Grants for research expenses. Up to £7,000 for students of the sciences and up to £2,000 for the Humanities.

Vacher's Endowment
Grants Officer, Vacher's Endowment, United Westminster Almshouse Foundation, Palmer's House, 42 Rochester Row, London, SW1P 1BU

Grants may be available for those who live or have lived in Greater London.

Vegetarian Charity
http://www.vegetariancharity.org.uk/

Grants available for vegetarian and vegan students of 25 years of age or younger. Grants based on hardship.

Wine and Spirits Trades Benevolent Society
http://www.thebenevolent.org.uk/

Offers assistance to people living in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, who have worked directly or indirectly in the buying, selling, producing, administration or distributing side of the alcoholic drinks industry. Their spouses are also eligible.

Wingate Foundation
http://www.wingatefoundation.org.uk/

Substantial awards for students in the final year of their course. Based on record and financial need. Applicants who can demonstrate interdisciplinarity in their research are especially welcome to apply.

Women's Careers Foundation
Mrs B Hayward, Secretary, 2 Watchoak, Blackham, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 9TP. Tel: 01892 740602

Grants (£250-£400) and loans for women studying to advance their careers.

Worshipful Society of Apothecaries General Charity Ltd
The Clerk, Apothecaries Hall, Black Friars Lane, London. clerk@apothecaries.org.

Provides small grants to medical & pharmaceutical students in need who are in their penultimate or final year.

The William Barry Trust
The William Barry Trust, 56 Avenue Close, London, NW8 6DA

Grants for students aiming to work in artistic or craft based occupations. Grants of £1000 towards course fees or maintenance.

Sir William Boreman Charitable Trust
http://www.thedrapers.co.uk/Charities/boremans.shtml

Grants to students resident in the London borough of Greenwich or Lewisham who are under 25. Must be a UK National, and have a family income in the region of £25,000 per annum or less.

For British women of 21 years of age or over. Tenable at any UK university.

The Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers
http://www.wcsim.co.uk/

Grants to postgraduates with outstanding ability in science and mathematics with an interest in branches of engineering connected with instrumentation and measurement. Students must be at: Cambridge, City, Glasgow Caledonian, Imperial, Oxford, Teeside, UCL, Manchester, or Warwick.

Yorkshire Ladies' Council of Education
http://www.ylce.org.uk/

Grants of up to £500 to support fees for British women of 21 years of age or over. Tenable at any UK university.

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Frequently Asked Questions



1 ***I'm an International Student. Won't this put me at a disadvantage? Don't many charities only grant funding to UK students?***

It's true that a minority of charities will grant funds only to British citizens. However, most are interested in you simply being resident in the UK, or perhaps in you having lived in the UK for a short period of time.

Although this may close some doors for you, others will open. Many bodies award money only to students of certain nationalities- usually ones based overseas. A good place to look for these is in the *Grants Register* and other

directory type books. If you're from a Commonwealth country, or the USA, you may find you actually have more options than a home student!

2 ***I'm a Masters Student. Will charities fund me, or are they more likely to fund Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) like PhD researchers?***

This is one of the most common misconceptions we've encountered. Many people assume that charities will be only interested in PGR students doing 'academic' subjects like PhDs and MPhils. In practice, charities actually do not place huge importance on your subject of study. Instead, they often simply want to know that your course will get you a job. This is sometimes easier for a Masters student doing something more vocational than it is for a PGR student!

3 ***I'm on a short Masters course and am only studying for another 6 months. Is it worth bothering to apply to charity?***

Absolutely. Time is a factor that can dissuade Masters students from applying. But remember that charities are not at all like research councils or universities- they have several deadlines a year (usually 4, 6, or 12) where the trustees meet. People who apply to charity often need money quickly, so charities need to be fast. In most cases they will send a response (and hopefully a cheque!) within a week of their meeting of trustees.

Overall, applications can be made at almost any time, and are usually resolved quickly: perfect for quick fundraising even if you only have a few months of your course left.

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4 ***I'm a prospective student. I have a conditional place on my course, but I've not started yet. Are the odds of gaining funding worse for me than for a student already on their course?***

It is generally harder to convince a charity that you are in financial difficulty if you haven't already started a course. They might simply advise you not to take the course, but to work for a while so you can afford it.

However, you can probably avoid this response if you are careful in how you present your case. The two best pieces of advice are: 1.) Make it sound like your decision to do the course is set in stone, and 2.) make it sound like an essential qualification that you need to obtain to embark on your chosen career, rather than something optional. See the sample letters in section 5.

5 ***I'm studying for a vocational course such as teacher's training. Will charities consider sponsoring me?***

Absolutely. In many ways, you'll be at an advantage because charities will see a clear vocational goal in your course. Plus public service professions like teaching may well enjoy an extra degree of sympathy.

6 ***I've not got great qualifications. Will this disadvantage me?***

Not really. Generally, charities are looking for evidence of need, sound planning, and a persuasive argument above grades. Remember, most people who apply to charities are members of the general public who are unlikely to even have a bachelor's degree. If you are considering postgraduate study, the chances are that your CV will be quite substantially better than those of the vast majority of other applicants.

7 ***My university isn't high on the league tables and isn't very well known. In practice, do charities discriminate against these institutions?***

Not in the least. Charities are there to help people in need. They are not academic bodies- many people they help have not even been to university. They are thus not at all concerned with league tables!

8 ***My university is a small specialist music/art/drama/agricultural college. Won't this make it harder for me to get funding from charity?***

No, it will probably make it easier. You can easily argue that public funding opportunities for your subject are comparatively poor, and you need other options. If you are studying art or music, then you also have an advantage. Everyone loves art and music, but everyone also knows that it is hard for young practitioners to make their way in the world. Indeed, there are many charities set up specifically for the visual and performing arts.

9 ***What resources/help can my university give to me in finding voluntary sector funding?***

There are usually some resources which can help in finding bodies, although there are not currently any other dedicated books or websites which contain any guidance other than the one you are holding. Your university will probably have a careers or funding adviser, and probably a careers library where you can find many of the books mentioned in section 11.

They also may have a licence to *Funderfinder,* which is another useful general charity database. More substantially, there may be staff with whom you can discuss your application and gain further advice, particularly for scholarships which are administered by your university, and possibly local charities.

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10 ***I've read that charities are heavily oversubscribed and have little money. Is the money really there?***

Yes- this is another misconception. The voluntary sector gave out over £4.5 Billion last year, increasing despite the recession. Charities are there to help people in hard times, and in difficult situations. As funding for research councils and universities is cut, the voluntary sector can and will play an increasing role in the financing of undergraduate and postgraduate study in the future.

This isn't just a theoretical argument- it's something we know to be true. The authors of this Guide are real students who have used charities successfully, not paid researchers who have not. The authors raised £45,000 in 3 years from over 50 separate awards. Since the publication of the first edition of the *Alternative Guide* last year, we've been contacted by dozens of students who have won awards from places they previously had no idea even existed. Charities *are* a major source of postgraduate funding in Britain, but have simply not yet been properly appreciated or utilised.

11 ***Funding from the voluntary sector sounds like a great deal of effort for only small returns. Is the effort really worth it?***

The idea of sending off dozens of letters, and completing numerous application forms to assemble a package of small awards might seem a laborious method of funding your course. However, much of what you write in one application can be reused in others, and it's usually possible to renew awards in subsequent years with very similar applications if you need to. So although a lot of initial effort is required, it becomes easier the more you do. It's not hugely more difficult to make four applications than it is to make one!



12 ***I'm a part-time student. How will this effect my chances?***

There are a few charities which only make awards to full-time students. However, being part-time can be used to your advantage. You may be part-time because you are working, and you can therefore say that you are taking as many measures as you can to make your course financially viable. Charities will be more impressed with a thrifty and resourceful student who is studying part-time to enable him or her to work than a student with a star-studded CV who is doing nothing, and is simply asking for money. If you are studying part-time to care for dependents, this will also play to your advantage.

13 ***Do you do workshops or training courses?***

Yes we do. *GradFunding* facilitates a workshop titled 'Postgraduate Funding: considering the alternatives', and we will facilitate groups of up to 30 on an intensive 3-hour course. We also facilitate one hour lectures. If you might be interested in commissioning us, please email enquiries@gradfunding.co.uk to get a quotation.

Acknowledgments

This guide began in 2008 as a brief essay for my department at King's College London on how struggling postgraduates could gain some assistance through the voluntary sector. Since then, it has sold over 50,000 copies as *The Alternative Guide*. There are many individuals and organisations to which I am greatly indebted, and I would like to offer a few words of thanks:

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Luke Blaxill,
King's College London 2010

FIND FUNDING FROM PLACES YOU NEVER KNEW EXISTED!

Struggling to fund
Postgraduate Study?

Need help paying fees
and financing living expenses?

Looking for an alternative to Research Councils and loans?

Looking to raise money quickly?

Looking to fund research, travel, or conferences?



If the answer is **YES** to any of these, this guide is for you. It shows you how to access a hugely underrated funding resource: charities. They can be obscure and hard to find, but they have money- and there are thousands of them. So whether it's the Leatherseller's Company, the Vegetarian Charity, or the Leverhulme Trades Charities Trust, there are bodies out there for you! You just need to know where to find them, and how to craft a strong application. This award winning Guide has not been written by paid researchers, but by two **real students** who have won over 50 charity awards. It will give you all the tools and guidance you need to access this major but neglected source of postgraduate funding.

IN THIS GUIDE

- **How to find the right charities for you**
- ***How to craft a winning application***
- **Model personal and financial statements**
- ***Details of over 150 sources of funding***

The authors are Luke Blaxill and Shuzhi Zhou, PhD students at King's College London. Between them, they have won more than 50 awards from charity and raised over £45,000 to support their studies. They use this experience to help others do the same. Hundreds already have - you can too.

The Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding is the only guidebook currently available that deals with student funding from charities. It has sold over 50,000 copies, been licensed at dozens of universities, and has won two major prizes: the King's College London Graduate School Prize and the Lion's Den Business Competition seed fund award.