

2021–2022 BCA Scholarship Program

Blind Citizens Australia, (BCA) is strongly committed to ensuring people who are blind or vision impaired have opportunities to develop skills which equip them to contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of Australian communities. BCA has received funding through the Commonwealth's [Information, Linkages and Capacity-building program](#) and the [Jeffrey Blyth Foundation](#) to award educational scholarships to BCA members.

Objectives

The scholarships program has two key objectives:

- To increase the opportunities available to people who are blind or vision impaired to participate in tertiary/further education, by offering financial assistance.
- To raise the awareness of main-stream education providers of the valuable contributions and unique perspectives people who are blind or vision impaired make to education and training.

Scholarship Value

For 2020-2022, BCA is offering 5 scholarships supported by the of up to \$5,000 each semester for the three semesters: Semester 2, 2021, Semesters 1 and 2, 2022. Each semester will have a separate application and awarding process, scholarship recipients will be funded for one semester only.

Administration

BCA will:

- manage the administration of the program,
- engage educational organizations to promote the funding opportunities,
- support scholarship recipients' and their schools with accessibility and inclusion expertise, advice and/or resources, and
- explore further options for growing relationships with these educational institutions too.

Application Process

- Application forms will be created, managed and received by BCA
- Applications open May 17 – June 30, 2021 (round 1), November 22, 2021 – February 4, 2022 (round 2), May 17 – June 30, 2022 (round 3)
- Student must include proof of current enrolment into a course with a recognizable qualification outcome, which will be confirmed as part of the application assessment process.
- Student may request funds for specific educational expenses, which may extend beyond only course fees to include adaptive technology, course materials or other expenses directly relevant to support their ability to be successful in their course of study. A detailed expense sheet will be part of the application form.

Assessment Process

- Applications will be assessed by a selection panel that will include BCA representative, JBF representative and an academic who is blind or vision impaired.
- BCA will manage the assessment of the scholarship applications based upon the following criteria:
 - Australian resident

- BCA full member
- Seeking a recognizable qualification outcome
- Course of study is a logical trajectory for the student's skills, interests and goals

Funds disbursement

The scholarships will be paid to the student directly in two instalments:

- 60% will be paid once confirmation of course enrolment is received.
- 40% will be paid upon student's submission of evidence of completed units to BCA.

Expectations of Recipients

- Recipients will participate in at least two activities for the scholarships program. These activities may include, but are not limited to;
- Interviews on BCA's weekly radio program and podcast, "New Horizons"
- Writing articles for BCA's Magazine, Blind Citizens News
- Speaking at BCA virtual and face to face events
- Working with one of BCA's or JBF's committees or representative groups, in an area that relates to the focus of their studies.

Benefits to Recipients

- Financial support for study
- Recognition of personal ambition, promoted and celebrated through organizational channels
- Alumni network of support
- Pathway to BCA leadership and/or committee roles
- Access to BCA programs to support their study and skills development
- BCA support and/or advocacy as appropriate to ensure their study is accessible to them

2021–2022 BCA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The BCA Scholarships are funded by the Australian Department of Social Services through an Information Linkages and Capacity Building grant and the Jeffrey Blyth Foundation.

Scholarship recipient selection is based on the potential of the scholarship to enhance ability to successfully complete the program of study.

Please send a copy of your completed application form, along with any supporting documentation to bca@bca.org.au

Eligibility Criteria

Scholarship recipients are selected on the following criteria:

- Full member of BCA - membership forms available at: <https://www.bca.org.au/members/>
- Australian resident
- Provide evidence of enrolment or acceptance letter for a post-secondary educational program that results in a recognized qualification (Internship and Graduate Program applicants may apply while waiting for confirmation of acceptance; with Scholarship awarded on successful application)

BCA members are eligible to receive only one scholarship within the first 3 rounds of this program (2021 – 2022). Applicants are welcome to reapply if not successful in an earlier round.

Are you eligible for this scholarship program? (drop down)

- Yes
- No

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Do you agree to fulfil these expectations? (drop down)

- Yes
- No

Applicant Details

Full Name

Residential Address

Telephone / Mobile

Email

Date of Birth

Please list your highest education or workplace experience to date

The following information is being collected for demographic purposes and will not affect your scholarship application ranking

What is the first language spoken in your home?

What is your country of birth?

Do you identify as a member of the following groups -

- First Nations Person (tick box yes or no)
- CALD (tick box yes or no)
- LGBTQI+ (tick box yes or no)
- Living in a Regional / Remote area (tick box yes or no)
- A mature age student (tick box yes or no – must select either mature age or school leaver)
- A recent school leaver (tick box yes or no)
- Having multiple disabilities (tick box yes or no)

Course or Program of Study Details

Name of Institution

Website of Institution:

Course Name:

Length of Course:

Course cost:

When will the course commence?

Have you received confirmation of enrolment?

Please email a signed Authority to Release / Exchange Information form to confirm your enrolment to bca@bca.org.au?(drop down)

- Yes
- No

I am studying (Drop down):

- Full time
- Part time
- other

Mode of study (Drop down):

- In person learning
- Distance education/online learning
- other

Scholarship Funds

Amount requested \$

Have you requested funding assistance from elsewhere? Who? How much? When will you know?

What do you intend to use Scholarship funds for? Mark all that apply (tick boxes)

- Course / tuition / education fees for the term of study included in the scholarship application
- Course excursion funds or residential expenses on campus
- Carers allowance contribution not funded by another source
- IT Requirements e.g. computer, hardware / software / programs / peripheral items
- Introductory computer-use training tailored to the specific needs of the individual
- Textbooks, reference material and supplies (such as stationery and art supplies)
- Additional support e.g. tuition, scribe and typing services
- Equipment and items required for the workplace and / or training or skills program
- Travel costs up to cover transport costs to and from place of study / internship / programs
- Professional fees involved in career counselling, planning, resume services / interview coaching, portfolio development
- Other

List what you intend to use the scholarship funds for and their approximate costs

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Open - Ended Questions

1. Please describe your strengths, interests, areas of passions
2. Please describe your aspirations and ambitions
3. Are you currently engaged in work (paid or volunteer)? If so, please provide details.
4. How will this course of study help you to achieve your goals?
5. Why do you think you should be considered for this scholarship?
6. Are there any particular challenges you envisage in engaging in tertiary education?
7. How do you see yourself making a meaningful contribution to the work of BCA throughout and beyond the scholarship period?
8. Please add anything else you would like to include to support your application.

References – to be completed by referees

Referee details

1 –

Full Name

Phone/Mobile

Email

- Please state your relationship with the scholarship applicant, and for how long you have known the applicant.
- Please explain why the scholarship applicant should be awarded this scholarship
- Please describe how the scholarship applicant will use the scholarship
- Please tell us how confident you are that the applicant will successfully complete the chosen course of study, and why.
- Please provide any additional information that can assist the consideration of this scholarship application

2 –

Full Name

Phone/Mobile

Email

- Please state your relationship with the scholarship applicant, and for how long you have known the applicant.
- Please explain why the scholarship applicant should be awarded this scholarship
- Please describe how the scholarship applicant will use the scholarship
- Please tell us how confident you are that the applicant will successfully complete the chosen course of study, and why.
- Please provide any additional information that can assist the consideration of this scholarship application