BURSARIES
FOR POSTSECONDARY
STUDIES
IN FRENCH
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Bursaries for Postsecondary Studies in French as a Second Language Program

Deadline for submitting proposals:
October 30, 2020, 5 p.m. (EDT)

This program is administered by

ACUFC
ASSOCIATION DES COLLÈGES ET UNIVERSITÉS
DE LA FRANCOPHONIE CANADIENNE

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Canada

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GLOSSARY

List of Abbreviations

ACUFC	Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne
APOL	Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023
FSL	French as a second language
PCH	Department of Canadian Heritage

Terminology used

FSL Bursary Program	**Bursaries for Postsecondary Studies in French as a Second Language Program**
Postsecondary entities	Postsecondary entities include colleges, universities and university faculties

1. BACKGROUND

Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023

Under the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023 (APOL) – Investing in Our Future,* the Government of Canada made a commitment to promoting a bilingual Canada, in particular by supporting English-speaking Canadians in learning French. As one of its objectives, the Plan intends to increase the national bilingualism rate from 17.9% to 20% by 2036, mainly through raising the bilingualism rate of English speakers outside Quebec from 6.8% to 9%.

Among the federal government initiatives aiming to strengthen and increase nationwide bilingualism, is a yearly bursary program established in 2019 to encourage English-speaking students to pursue their postsecondary studies in their second official language, in this case French, thus contributing to the increase of bilingualism among Anglophones in Canada.

Objectives of the Bursaries for Postsecondary Studies in French as a Second Language Program (2019-2023)

The Bursaries for Postsecondary Studies in French as a Second Language Program ("FSL Bursary Program" or "Program") aims to "encourage English-speaking students to pursue their post-secondary studies at a French-language institution or program; to help them in their efforts to learn, use and improve their French-language skills; and to expand their understanding of Francophone culture. Students with financial challenges or from under-represented populations will receive special consideration."[1]

The *Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne* (ACUFC) was assigned responsibility for implementing this Program by the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH). Under the Program, 850 non-renewable bursaries, each worth 3,000 dollars, will be awarded yearly from 2019 to 2023.

The ultimate goal of this Program is to see growth in bilingualism rates among young Anglophones, thus increasing the national bilingualism rate.

Bursary Distribution Period

This call relates to bursaries for distribution during the 2021-2022 academic year.

[1]Government of Canada. *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023 - Investing in Our Future*. https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/official-languages-bilingualism/official-languages-action-plan/2018-2023.html

2. EXPECTED RESULTS FOR THE PROGRAM[2]

- Implementation of the Bursaries for Postsecondary Studies in French as a Second Language Program is underway within expected timeframes.
- Each year, 850 Anglophone students from across Canada benefitted from the opportunity to pursue their postsecondary studies in French, and to perfect their bilingualism by means of these bursaries.
- Young people contributed to increasing bilingualism among Anglophones in Canada.

Performance Indicators

- An efficient program delivery mechanism is in place and allows for processing bursary applications in a timely manner.
- Number of young people with English as their first official language spoken who benefit from a bursary for postsecondary studies from this Program in order to pursue their studies in French.
- Number of students who received a bursary and who would not have otherwise pursued their studies in French.
- Geographical distribution of recipients (province/territories and regions).
- Demographic profile (age, gender, languages spoken at home, ethnicity, revenues) and number of under-represented youth bursary recipients.
- Number and types of college and university programs in which recipients have enrolled.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR POSTSECONDARY ENTITIES

Under the FSL Bursary Program, postsecondary entities include colleges, universities and university faculties.

To be eligible for the Program, a postsecondary entity must demonstrate its ability to provide Anglophone students with:

1. College degree programs in French of a minimum duration of one year, or university undergraduate study programs in French of a minimum duration of two years;

2. Related support and an environment that allows students to use and improve their language skills in French. Related support can take the form of:
   - Teaching support in French;
   - Additional language courses, if needed;
   - A support service for studies that fosters academic success in French;

[2] Under the contribution agreement between PCH and the ACUFC signed in September 2019.

3. Opportunities to enhance their knowledge of Francophone culture and engage in cultural experiences in French. Increased knowledge of Francophone culture can take the following forms:
    - The active offer of a student life experienced in French, with various clubs and activities where students will have the opportunity to communicate in French;
    - The provision of community activities in French, beyond courses and student life.

The postsecondary entity must demonstrate that, within the targeted program, at least 50% of courses and program-related activities will be offered in French, in addition to cultural activities.

Only postsecondary entities located in Canada are eligible for the FSL Bursary Program.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS

General Eligibility Criteria

It is the responsibility of the postsecondary entity to ensure that students who are eligible for bursaries meet the following compulsory eligibility criteria. These students must:

- Be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada;
- Have English as the first Canadian official language spoken;
- Study full time in a Canadian institution during the current year;
- Have completed their secondary school studies in an English-language institution and graduated from this institution;
- Have reached the postsecondary level of education;
- Be enrolled in the first year of a postsecondary study program in their second Canadian official language, in this case French;
- Be at least 17 years old on the first day of class;
- Demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge of French to be able to study in that language;
- Intend to pursue full-time studies in a college or undergraduate university program in Canada, to take at least 50% of their courses and participate in related activities (placements and training activities in the community) in French.

Additional Eligibility Criteria

In accordance with the APOL, the postsecondary entity will give special consideration to students facing financial challenges and those who come from under-represented groups. The postsecondary entity will evaluate eligible applications based on the three following criteria:

	Criteria	Required proof
1	The student faces financial difficulties and tuition fees are an obstacle to accessing postsecondary education.	The student who indicated that tuition fees are an obstacle must also confirm having applied for a student loan.
2	The student is from the first generation in their family to pursue studies at college or university level.	Self-declaration
3	The students belongs to an under-represented group or a disadvantaged minority.	Self-declaration

In its proposal, the postsecondary entity must demonstrate how it will pay special attention to students who face financial challenges and those who are from under-represented groups.

5. ALLOCATION MECHANISM FOR BURSARIES

The ACUFC is the third party responsible for managing, promoting and implementing the FSL Bursary Program.

The ACUFC is responsible for determining which postsecondary entities are eligible for the Program, as well as the number of bursaries that they will receive for distribution each year.

Postsecondary entities participating in the Program will be in charge of assessing student applications and awarding study bursaries.

Yearly Call for Proposals

The allocation mechanism for bursaries consists in a yearly call for proposals to postsecondary entities. Postsecondary entities must submit a new proposal every year, for consideration. Neither approval of a postsecondary entity for the Program nor the number of bursaries it receives is guaranteed from year to year.

Two-Stage Evaluation of Proposals

As a first step, the ACUFC will verify whether postsecondary entities that have submitted a proposal meet the established eligibility criteria. If so, the ACUFC will then evaluate the number of bursaries requested.

Bursary Distribution Based on Three Criteria

The distribution of bursaries will be carried out according to a formula based on:

- The number of immersion high school graduates per province/territory
- The bilingualism rate and the bilingualism retention rate per province/territory
- The number of bursaries requested by postsecondary entities

a) Number of immersion graduates

The Program's key objective is to incite a greater number of Anglophone students to pursue their postsecondary studies in French, with the ultimate aim of increasing the national bilingualism rate. Grade 12 students enrolled in immersion programs in Canada are one of the main clienteles targeted by this Program.

b) Bilingualism rate and bilingualism retention rate

The ultimate goal of this Program is to see growth in bilingualism rates among young Anglophones, thus increasing the national bilingualism rate. The number of bursaries awarded will take into account the bilingualism rate and the bilingualism retention rate in provinces and territories.[3]

c) Number of bursaries requested by postsecondary entities

The number of bursaries allocated to postsecondary entities will take into account the number of bursaries requested by these entities.

Confirmation of Results with Postsecondary Entities

The Program management team (ACUFC) will evaluate the proposals received, determine which postsecondary entities will receive bursaries as well as the number of bursaries they will be awarded, and will inform them of these results.

Negotiation and Signature of Funding Agreements

The ACUFC will negotiate a funding agreement with each postsecondary entity participating in the Program, and prepare the agreement, which will be signed by both parties.

Distribution of Funds to Postsecondary Entities

Once the funding agreement is signed, the ACUFC will transfer funds before March 31, 2021, for bursaries allocated to the postsecondary entity.

Allocation of Bursaries to Students

Following receipt of their funds from the ACUFC, postsecondary entities will have until the end of the winter session (April) of the following financial year to award bursaries to recipients.

- If the ACUFC transfers funds to postsecondary entities before March 31, 2021, these entities will have until April 2022 to grant bursaries.

[3] According to Statistics Canada, the bilingualism retention rate corresponds to the proportion of English-French bilingual people in 2006 who were still bilingual in 2016.

Redistribution of Bursaries

To ensure that the greatest number of bursaries possible is adequately distributed, the ACUFC will ask postsecondary entities to evaluate their genuine needs regarding bursaries on one or more specific dates (e.g., on June 30th and August 31st of each year). Postsecondary entities having a surplus of bursaries may have their remaining bursaries redistributed by the ACUFC to those entities that are experiencing a deficit in the number of bursaries.

6. PROMOTION OF THE PROGRAM

As the national manager for the FSL Bursary Program, the ACUFC promotes an approach focused on the crucial role played by postsecondary entities participating in the Program. The ACUFC will ensure national cohesion throughout the Program by implementing the overall strategy and communication framework it has developed. The postsecondary entities and collaborators with whom the ACUFC has signed agreements will be invited to:

- Integrate the FSL Bursary Program into their promotional strategies among their clienteles;
- Use the tools developed by the ACUFC;
- Share success stories and constraints related to these tools, with a view to introduce future improvements.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF POSTSECONDARY ENTITIES

Postsecondary entities participating in the FSL Bursary Program will be responsible for:

- Responding to the calls for proposals for participation in the Program;
- Providing programs and related activities (placements, training activities in the community aiming to enhance knowledge of Francophone culture) in French;
- Offering related support fostering academic assistance for Anglophone students in a vibrant and rewarding Francophone cultural environment;
- Processing applications within a reasonable timeline;
- Ensuring that processing of applications is achieved in an impartial way;
- Assessing applications received and selecting bursary recipients, in accordance with eligibility and evaluation criteria set out by the Program;
- Assessing and ensuring that students' knowledge of French is sufficient for them to study in that language;
- Promoting the Program;
- Awarding selected recipients a bursary in the amount of 3,000 dollars, at the latest by the end of the winter session (April) of the financial year following receipt of funds from the ACUFC;

- Collecting data and reporting to the ACUFC:
  - Postsecondary entities will need to gather data about bursary candidates and recipients, and submit to the ACUFC:
    - Progress reports;
    - Financial reports;
    - A final report, including Program outcomes.
  - Furthermore, postsecondary entities will need to conduct a yearly survey among recipients, in order to evaluate:
    - Their experience with the bursary application process;
    - The positive impact of the bursary among funding recipients.

9. TIMETABLE

MAIN STEPS	DATE
Launching of call for proposals	Week of September 28, 2020
Webinar in French about the call for proposals	October 14, 2020, 11:30 a.m. (EDT)
Webinar in English about the call for proposals	October 15, 2020, 11:30 a.m. (EDT)
Deadline for submitting proposals on the webpage acufc.ca/flsbursaries	**October 30, 2020, 5 p.m. (EDT)**
Follow-up and evaluation of proposals	November 2020
Signing of funding agreements	November 2020
Transfer of funds from the ACUFC to postsecondary entities	No later than March 31, 2021
Bursary awarded to recipients by postsecondary entities	No later than April 2022

10. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applicants must complete the online form available on the Program webpage: acufc.ca/FSLBursaries.

Please submit your duly completed proposal in the space provided to this end on the webpage, before **October 30, 2020, 5 p.m. (EDT).** Incomplete or late proposals will be rejected.

Technical Assistance

Should you experience any technical problems with the proposal submission form, please write to: boursesfls@acufc.ca.

Proposal Follow-Up

The ACUFC will send an acknowledgement of receipt for all proposals received.

The ACUFC will inform postsecondary entities in writing regarding the results of their proposal review. Decisions are final and without appeal.

11. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Please send all requests for information to boursesfls@acufc.ca.

12. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. The ACUFC is not required to justify the approval or rejection of a proposal. The ACUFC assumes no obligation whatsoever toward postsecondary entities.
2. Selected proposals will serve as general guidance for the development of a funding agreement by the ACUFC. The proposed agreement may contain changes to the proposal initially submitted and may be subject to further discussions before its signature by both parties.
3. Any postsecondary entity receiving annual contributions of $250,000 and above as part of this program will be required to provide either annual audited financial statements with appropriate supporting documents or an audited financial statement.
4. The ACUFC will accept proposals in French and in English as part of this call for proposals. Bursaries provided under this Program must not replace other bursaries or scholarships to students related to bilingualism or French as a second language, as the case may be, provided by each postsecondary entity.