



TIPS WHEN APPLYING FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

There is a lot of advice out there about the best way to apply for funding - how to package yourself in your essay, what extracurricular activities to emphasize, etc. The truth is, much of this advice can vary widely, depending on the author - what works for one applicant may not necessarily work for another.

You'll discover that most of the scholarship secrets you'll read about boil down to using your common sense and following directions carefully. Here are some tips that BC Athlete Voice has put together...

Start Your Research Early

The more time you can put into your funding search, the more options you'll have. You'll need time to research opportunities, request information and application materials, and complete your application.

Read Eligibility Requirements Carefully

You only have limited time, so make sure you use it wisely. Ensure that you meet all eligibility criteria at the very start of the process when looking for funding.

Get Organized

Create a separate file for each funding opportunity and file by application date. Keep a calendar of application deadlines and follow-up appointments. Many funding opportunities may require you to provide them with some combination of the following:

- List / Confirmation of Sporting Achievements
- School Transcript
- Personal financial information
- One or more essays
- One or more letters of recommendation
- Proof of eligibility
- An interview

It's a good idea to think of these things ahead of time and keep templates, examples and previous application together so you can quickly access them and not recreate the wheel!

Proofread Your Application Carefully

Use your computer's spelling and grammar check features. Have a parent, teacher, or friend read your application before you send it.

Follow Instructions to the Letter

Organizations often receive a huge amount of applications and the easiest ones to disregard are those that do not follow the requirements. Get your application in early, you'll miss out if you miss deadlines.



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Make Sure Your Application Is Legible

Type or print your application forms and essays, ask someone to help you if you need to. The whole package needs to look professional

Make Copies of Everything You Send

If application materials are lost, having copies on hand will make it much easier to resend your application quickly and these make great starting points when applying for other opportunities.

Double Check your Application

If you're reusing material (such as a cover letter or essay) from another application, be especially careful you haven't left in any incorrect names or blank fields. Don't forget to sign and date your application.

Understand What They Are Looking For

The better understanding you have of the funding opportunity the better you will be able to match your skills and experience to what they are looking for. Each funding opportunity will be different and will look at different aspects of your application. Here are a few ideas on what they may be looking for;

- Level of Sporting Achievement
- Academic standing (class rank)
- Extra curricular activities
- Submitted essay Letters of recommendation
- Financial need
- Work experience
- School and community/civic participation
- Attendance record
- Potential for success
- Higher educational and vocational aspirations
- Written communication skills
- Character strengths (motivation, persistence etc.)
- Demonstrated skills, aptitudes or experience

As mentioned before, different committees look for different things. Some committees might consider your academic records and do not even ask you for your sporting aspirations, while others might only consider your financial needs and not ask you for your level of sporting achievement.

In Summary...

Most athletes seem to believe that the competition amongst people applying for funding opportunities is so fierce that it is only the most brilliant and outstanding athletes who are granted these opportunities; or that there simply aren't any funding opportunities available to them. Due to this misconception, a lot of athletes fail to apply for funding and miss the chance to access much needed financial support. The funding opportunities are out there – you just need to be prepared to work to find and access them. If you have any further questions about accessing funding opportunities contact BC Athlete Voice at info@bcathletevoice.ca or check out www.bcathletevoice.ca