



FINANCIAL AID AT CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

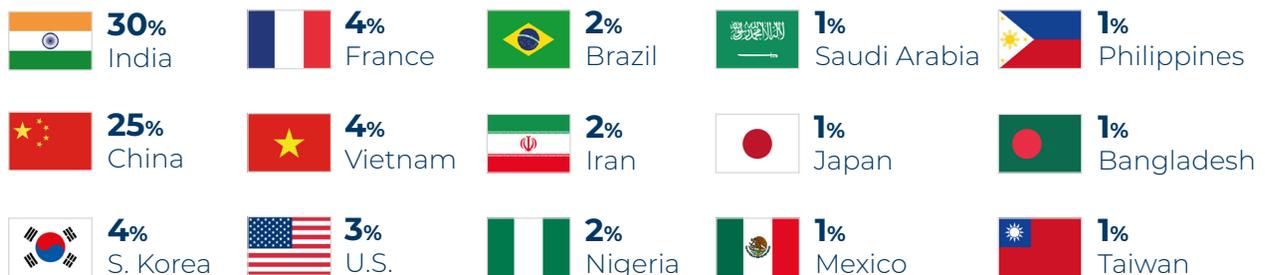
E-GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
An Overview of Funding Sources for International Students	2
Financial Planning	3
Financial Aid Options	4
Funding by Level of Education	5
How to Search for Financial Aid	6
How to Apply for Financial Aid.....	8
Conclusion.....	8
Resources.....	9



In 2018, Canada hosted **572,415 international students**



Source: CBIE

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, Canada hosted **572,415 international students**, a total that represents a 16 percent increase over the number of international students in Canada in 2017. According to the **Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE)**, the majority of international students came from India (30 percent), China (25 percent), Vietnam (4 percent), South Korea (4 percent), and France (4 percent). As Canada becomes an increasingly popular study abroad destination, more international students are seeking financial aid to fully or partially fund their education in the country.

What sources of financial aid are available to international students who want to study in Canada? This e-guide explores the options and also examines how international students can best estimate and plan for the costs of studying abroad.

AN OVERVIEW OF FUNDING SOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The majority of universities and degree-granting colleges in Canada are publicly funded. As a result, tuition fees are lower than in some other countries, such as the United States. (In fact, even Canada's private universities receive some public funds.)

All public institutions in Canada offer some form of funding assistance to select international students, usually in the form of scholarships and bursaries. They tend to offer more financial support in specific programs of study, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

However, most financial aid options at Canadian universities and colleges are intended for Canadian students, leaving international students with limited resources available to them. Moreover, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) expects international students to finance their studies on their own.

Average Cost of Tuition for International Students

(2018–2019 School Year)

\$27,159 CDN

Undergraduate



\$16,497 CDN

Postgraduate

Source: Statistics Canada

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Before applying to Canadian schools, research the estimated costs of studying there. These costs will most likely include tuition, housing, health care, and transportation. The following resources will help you estimate your study abroad expenses:

- **University of Toronto's Financial Planning Calculator:** This tool estimates education costs according to your specific degree program and status. Nonpublic universities might have different tuition fees, but public university costs do not vary too widely across Canada, making this calculator useful—especially if you plan to study in the province of Ontario.
- **University of Manitoba's Financial Information for International Students:** This resource for international students provides a useful breakdown of the costs you can expect to pay while studying abroad.
- **University of Waterloo's Budget Calculator:** Using this interactive tuition calculator, you can estimate your tuition, costs for books and supplies, and living expenses.
- **University of British Columbia's First-Year Cost Calculator:** The University of British Columbia offers a variety of financial planning resources for first-year students, including a budget-planning worksheet and this cost calculator.
- **Durham College's Budget Calculator:** This interactive form lets you estimate total expenses for the academic year. Because college diploma and certificate programs tend to be shorter than university degree programs, colleges are the more affordable higher education option.

In addition, most colleges and universities provide financial planning resources on their websites, usually on the tuition page or a dedicated finances page. Make use of these online tools, or contact the school's student services or financial support office for assistance in estimating your total costs.

FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS



The financial aid options available to international students who want to study in Canada include scholarships, bursaries, awards, grants, fellowships, and loans. Descriptions of each are below:

- **Scholarships** are a form of financial assistance offered to students based on academic excellence, athletics, volunteer experience, community involvement, or other criteria. Scholarships are also awarded based on specific areas of research, particularly for graduate students. Many scholarships require an application form, especially for high-value awards, but some are automatically offered to eligible students (see entrance scholarships.) Scholarships do not need to be repaid, and some are renewable for multiple years.
- **Entrance scholarships** are merit-based awards given to first-time university or college students entering an undergraduate degree program. To be eligible, international students must meet the school's academic and English- or French-language proficiency requirements. Many universities and colleges automatically offer entrance scholarships. Eligibility criteria usually include a minimum GPA and full-time enrollment. Students do not need to pay back entrance scholarships.
- **Bursaries** are monetary awards that are granted based on financial need. Federal and provincial governments, as well as some organizations, offer bursary funds based on academic merit. Colleges and universities also have internal bursaries that are available to international students. To apply, students typically file an application form and submit a need assessment to verify their finances. Like scholarships, bursaries do not need to be repaid.

- **Grants** are a form of monetary assistance that helps students pay for post-secondary education. They do not require repayment. Students typically apply for grants and loans in one application through their selected province.
- **Fellowships** are available to international students who are seeking to study and conduct research in Canada. International scholars can find fellowships in a wide variety of disciplines. Schools, organizations, and the Canadian federal and provincial governments offer graduate fellowships. Fellows are awarded a stipend that does not require repayment. The following fellowships are open to international students:
 - **Fellowship in Global Journalism at the University of Toronto**
 - **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships**
 - **Visiting Fellowships in Canadian Government Laboratories Program**
 - **Fulbright-Carlos Rico Award for North American Studies**
 - **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships**
 - **Jeanne Sauvé Foundation Public Leadership Program**
- **Loans** are available through private lending institutions, banks, and the federal government. If you are unable to secure traditional financial aid, you might want to consider student loans. However, it is important to note that international students in Canada on a student visa are not eligible for bank loans or government student loans. International students who apply for permanent resident status might become eligible for loans once they receive permanent resident status. Protected persons and convention refugees who have a protected persons status document and a Social Insurance Number are also eligible to apply for a Canada Student Loan.

International students can investigate loan options available through **Paras Education Services**. **MPOWER Financing**, a lender that provides fixed interest rate loans and scholarships for international students, is another resource. They offer loans that do not require a cosigner, collateral, or credit history. For those who have received permanent resident status, a good place to begin the loan search is the **Canada Student Loans website**. Remember that borrowers must repay loans with interest after completing their program of study.

FUNDING BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Funding for international students is more widely available at higher levels of education. However, many international students at the graduate and undergraduate levels must self-fund their education. Undergraduate programs offer the least aid.

The financial aid landscape is different at the doctoral level. Some universities, such as Brock University in Ontario, have eliminated tuition altogether for doctoral students. Others, such as McMaster University, also in Ontario, provide international master's and doctoral students with fellowships and grants that exceed the cost of tuition.

Many universities across Canada have actively lobbied to secure financial aid for international graduate and doctoral students. For example, the provinces of Alberta and Ontario charge international doctoral students domestic tuition fees.



HOW TO SEARCH FOR FINANCIAL AID

Home Country

Because financial aid for international students is limited in Canada, particularly at the undergraduate level, try searching for it in your home country first. Your home country's department or ministry of education is a good place to start. If aid from your home country is not available, broaden your search to include the Canadian government and organizations.

Canadian Provincial and Territorial Government Aid

Explore provincial and territorial government sites, hyperlinked below, to see the financial aid options available:

- [Alberta](#)
- [British Columbia](#)
- [Manitoba](#)
- [New Brunswick](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador](#)
- [Northwest Territories](#)
- [Nunavut](#)
- [Nova Scotia](#)
- [Ontario](#)
- [Prince Edward Island](#)
- [Quebec](#)
- [Saskatchewan](#)
- [Yukon](#)

The more populous provinces, such as Ontario and British Columbia, tend to have more financial aid options for international students. For example, the **Ontario Trillium Scholarships Program** provides monetary awards to international doctoral students who want to study at a university in the province. Check the websites of the participating Ontario universities for more information about this program.

Merit-based **Ontario Graduate Scholarships** are offered to full-time graduate or doctoral students attending a participating school. Funded by Ontario's provincial government, this program awards 3,000 scholarships each year to students of all nationalities.

However, smaller provinces and territories might have funding only for Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

To find out about other scholarship options, contact the **respective ministry responsible for education**.

Canadian Federal Government Aid

The Canadian government extends several scholarships to non-Canadians. Stay abreast of these funding options by looking up the following:

- **Global Affairs Canada Scholarships**
- **International Scholarships Newsroom**
- **Dick Martin Scholarship Award**

Organizations

Many organizations offer funding for students who intend to pursue studies in a specific field. Others grant scholarships based on financial need or an excellent academic record. The following organizations provide scholarships to international students who want to study in Canada:

- The **Canadian Nurses Foundation** offers several scholarships and bursaries to Canadian and international students who demonstrate a potential for nursing leadership.
- The **Trudeau Foundation** offers doctoral scholarships for student researchers who aspire to become engaged leaders in their communities.
- The **Student Refugee Program**, managed by the World University Service of Canada, is a resettlement program that provides opportunities for refugees to continue their post-secondary studies in Canada. This program is unique in that it combines resettlement with higher education opportunities.
- **EduCanada** maintains a database of scholarships for Canadian and international students.
- **Universities Canada** provides a list of scholarships and scholarship partners.
- **ScholarshipsCanada.com** lists scholarships and bursaries students can apply for.
- **StudentAwards.com** lets students sign up to get information about scholarships, bursaries, and other awards delivered straight to their email inbox.

Scholarships for Women

Canada is dedicated to promoting equality and empowering women. The following scholarships are specifically for women who want to study in Canada:

- **FINCAD** awards the FINCAD Women in Finance Scholarship to women intending to study finance at the graduate level.
- The **P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship** is for women who want to pursue a graduate degree from a university in the U.S. or Canada.

HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

After you have identified the financial aid program you want to apply to, review its application guidelines to make sure that the deadline has not passed. Check to see if there is a language or other requirement that you must fulfill to be eligible for consideration.

Although application guidelines vary by program, as a rule, it is best to apply early. Give yourself enough time to gather all your supporting documentation. You will probably need to collect letters of recommendation or write a personal essay or letter of intent. Keep in mind that late or incomplete applications are typically not considered.

Some scholarship programs require the host institution to apply on your behalf. In these instances, let your professors or student advisor at your home institution know that you are interested in a specific scholarship so they can prepare and submit your application.

CONCLUSION

There are many advantages to studying in Canada besides the country's excellent higher education institutions: affordable tuition, the ability to work and study at the same time, and a clear path to permanent residence for international students. Moreover, several provinces, such as British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick, offer universal public health care to international students. Alberta, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Nunavut extend health care to international students who are in or have completed their second year of studies.

Because only limited financial aid is available to international students, it is best to begin your search for funding in your country of citizenship or permanent residence. Then expand your search to include Canadian scholarships, bursaries, grants, and fellowships. If you cannot secure traditional financial aid to study in Canada, you might need to rely on government or private loans; however, remember that loans must be repaid with interest.

Keep in mind that applying for financial aid will likely be a long process. Remember to be patient, apply early to all options that you qualify for, and follow the financial aid application instructions closely.

RESOURCES

- **Financial Aid Options for International Students at Canadian Universities**
- **Studying in Canada: Resources and Links for Students**
- **Canadian Bureau for International Education**
- **International Council for Canadian Studies**
- **Finding Canadian Education Programs and Scholarships**
- **Government of Canada**
- **Financial Aid for Canadian Students**
- **CanLearn**
- **Applying for a Canadian Scholarship as an International Student**

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