

Southern Highlands Education and Apprenticeship Fund (SHEAF)

SHEAF

Welcome to our new initiative - the **Southern Highlands Education & Apprenticeship Fund (SHEAF)**. SHEAF has been created to support young people (aged 16-25) from our region as they pursue their education, training and career aspirations. For many young people, the cost of taking the next step, whether heading to university or starting an apprenticeship, can create significant barriers. SHEAF helps ease that pressure by providing practical financial support, allowing recipients to focus on learning, building skills and reaching their potential.

By supporting young people to pursue university studies, vocational training and apprenticeships, we are helping build the skilled professionals and tradespeople our community needs to thrive and grow. Through SHEAF, we are investing not only in individual students but in the **long-term health and prosperity of our region**.

Introducing the 2026 SHEAF grants

The **SHEAF financial grants** available in 2026 are:

- **McLean University Scholarship**– \$12,000 p/year (for three years)
- **Apprenticeship Grants**– grant applications between \$500 – \$5,000 (one off payment)

SHEAF is open to eligible young people aged 16–25 who live in the Southern Highlands and are considering university study or an apprenticeship pathway (the institution of study does not need to be Southern Highlands based). More information on SHEAF grants, the eligibility criteria and the application process can be found [here](#)

In addition a requirement of, the McLean University Scholarship and an optional extra for the Apprenticeship Grants is the recipients will be paired with a **mentor from the SHCF Board**, providing ongoing guidance and support. Mentors will meet with their mentees at least once per quarter, offering valuable advice and helping students navigate the challenges of their educational journey as well as building confidence and community connection.

SOME FURTHER QUESTIONS ANSWERED

#1 – What can I spend a SHEAF grant on?

You can spend it on any reasonable living expense to do with your tertiary education. It can't be spent on the course or education itself.

#2 – How do I report on what I've spent?

You will need to keep receipts for all of your costs/expenses under the grant and provide the receipts as part of your grant reporting (acquittal) process.

#3 – How many grants will you award?

We will award one McLean University Scholarship in 2026 for a three-year degree in 2027-2029.

We will award multiple Apprenticeship Grants (one-off payments) annually, depending on the application and greatest need.

Are You Eligible?

* indicates a required field

Southern Highlands Education and Apprenticeship Fund

Who can apply?

We invite **young people aged 16-25** who are considering further education (or students already enrolled who meet eligibility requirements) to apply for a SHEAF scholarship or grant.

SHEAF is built on a simple but powerful idea: **as a community, we invest in the future of our young people and their aspirations.**

Candidates will need to meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate financial need or hardship
- Demonstrate eligibility for their chosen course or pathway (for those yet to begin their studies)
- Provide evidence of course acceptance
- Live in the Southern Highlands (however, the institution of study does not need to be within the Southern Highlands)

SHEAF applications will open on July 30 and close on **September 30, 2026**. Applicants will be notified as to whether their application was successful at the end of **October** with announcements made in **November**.

Before completing this application form, you should have read the program guidelines: [SHEAF](#)

Incomplete applications and/or applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

This section of the application form is designed to help you, and us, understand if you are eligible for this grant. It is important that you complete these questions before any others to ensure you do not waste your time applying for an unsuitable grant.

If you have any questions in regards to these eligibility criteria, please contact Vanessa at **office@shcf.org.au**

If you do contact us throughout the application process, please quote the application number below.

Application Number

This field is read only.

What Are You Applying For?

Select what you are applying for:

Confirmation of Eligibility

Before proceeding, please confirm the following:

- You have read and understood the program guidelines
- You are a resident of the Southern Highlands
- You are a young person aged 16 - 25 at commencement of their study/currently studying
- Have / will complete Year 10 for apprenticeships and Year 12 for University entrance
- Have evidence of acceptance at a University and/or other tertiary institution in the next year
- This must be an approved curriculum course at an Australian educational institution that is recognised by Australian educational authorities
- Have confirmation of acceptance as an apprentice within the next year
- Have demonstrated financial need or hardship and face financial disadvantage and/or have other extenuating circumstances when seeking to reach your educational and vocational goals

You must confirm that all statements above are true and correct. *

☐ Yes

About You

* indicates a required field

Privacy Notice

We pledge to respect and uphold your rights to privacy protection under the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (APPs) as established under the *Privacy Act 1988* and amended by the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*. To view our privacy statement, go to [Privacy Policy - Southern Highlands Community Foundation](#).

Your Details

Applicant *

Title First Name Last Name

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Make sure you provide the same name that is listed in official documentation.

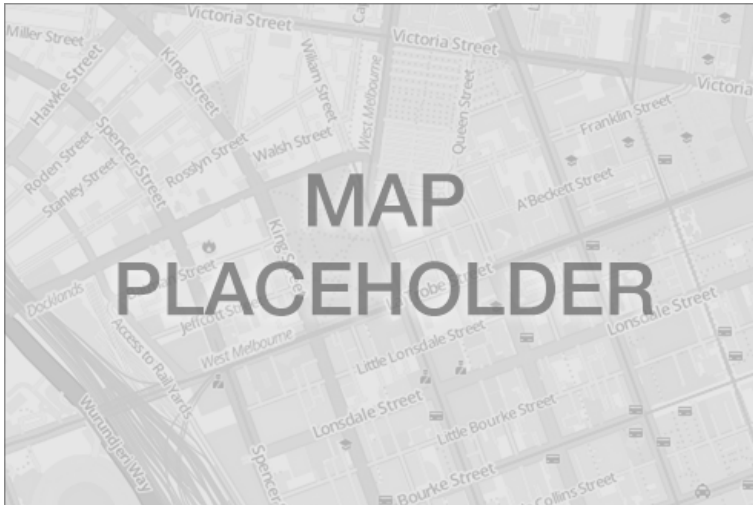
Date of Birth *

Must be a date.

Gender *

Your primary address

Address



Your postal address

Address

Your phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Your email address *

Must be an email address.

Demonstrate Financial Need

I confirm that I or my family are experiencing financial need or hardship and face financial disadvantage and/or have other extenuating circumstances when seeking to reach my educational and vocational goals *

Please explain how your circumstances would make it challenging to undertake tertiary/vocational education? *

Upload a reference letter from your school / University / tafe / educational institution or workplace *

Attach a file:

Let's Learn About You

What High School are you attending / did you attend? *

Are you still attending school? *

What level of school did you / will you complete? *

What year did you complete or will you complete your final year of High School? *

Did you receive a scholarship or bursary whilst at High School? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Are you currently employed? *

Please tell us a little bit about you (Help us get to know you - What do you enjoy doing in your free time? What are some achievements you are proud of? Do you play sport? Are you involved in any community organisations?) *

Please outline why this scholarship or grant would help you achieve your educational goals *

Tell us about your family

*** indicates a required field**

Details

Your Current Living Circumstances *

Do any of these circumstances apply to you?

- ☐ Single Parent Household
- ☐ Single Parent Income
- ☐ First person in your immediate family to attend University / Tafe

Parent / Guardian #1

Highest Level of Education Achieved *

Current Employment Status *

Parent / Guardian #2

Highest Level of Education Achieved

Current Employment Status

How many siblings do you have?

University Scholarship Details

* indicates a required field

The McLean University Scholarship

A \$12,000 per year scholarship for three years, helping cover essential living expenses such as accommodation, travel and technology. This scholarship cannot go towards your HECS payments.

Your University enrolment status *

Tell us what university degree you are enrolled in or hope to enrol in *

Word count:

Must be no more than 25 words.

Provide information about the course you wish to attend.

What University do you study at / hope to study at?

Your University Degree

Please provide a short summary of your planned degree and what you hope to do when you have finished your degree? *

Provide detail about the course and the tertiary institution or organisation. Let us know what you hope to achieve by doing the course.

A little more about you

Why is going to university important to you?

Proof of Enrolment

Please provide evidence of your University acceptance *

The University Scholarship will be awarded once University places have been awarded for 2027. Receipt of the scholarship will be contingent on acceptance and enrolment in a university course. We recognise that applicants may not have this acceptance yet and still encourage you to apply in this round and notify us once acceptance has been received.

Please upload evidence of acceptance / letters of support (if available/relevant)

Attach a file:

A maximum of 5 files can be attached

Timing

How many years is your degree? *

Anticipated end date *

Anticipated start date *

Your University Scholarship Finances

*** indicates a required field**

University Financial Planning

Do you plan to work while you attend University? *

Where do you plan to live while you study? *

Do you plan to receive government financial assistance while you study? *

Do you plan to apply for other scholarships? *

Tell us how you plan to spend your Scholarship funds

You don't need to confirm your plan but we would like to get a sense of where you would spend your funds. Don't forget to think about costs of accommodation, travel, books, uniforms, equipment, materials and IT requirements.

You will need to keep receipts for all of your costs/expenses and provide the receipts as part of your scholarship reporting (acquittal) process.

Expenditure	\$

Budget Totals

Total Expenditure Amount

This number/amount is calculated.

Apprenticeship Grants

* indicates a required field

Apprenticeship Grants

Rather than being used for tuition fees, **SHEAF Apprenticeship grants are intended to support accommodation, travel/living expenses or establishment costs** taking some of the pressure off, so that you can focus on your studies.

One-off grants of **\$500-\$5,000** are available to assist apprentices with practical costs including tools, equipment, course materials, books, accommodation, travel and IT needs.

Your Apprenticeship enrolment status *

What Apprenticeship Are You Enrolled In? *

Are You Currently Employed / Will Be In Your Apprenticeship? *

Name of Apprenticeship Organisation

Name *

Organisation Name

ABN *

The ABN provided will be used to look up the following information. Click Lookup above to check that you have entered the ABN correctly.

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	
Entity Name	
ABN Status	
Entity Type	
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	
DGR Endorsed	
ATO Charity Type	More information
ACNC Registration	
Tax Concessions	
Main Business Location	

Must be an ABN.

Organisation Details

Address *

Address

Boss / Manager Name

Boss / Manager Email *

Must be an email address.

Boss / Manager Phone Number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Website

Must be a URL.

Evidence of your Apprenticeship offer

Tell us about your Apprenticeship Offer *

Tell us what the Apprenticeship involves and why you want to undertake this offer. Where do you think undertaking this apprenticeship will lead you ?

Please upload a letter of offer or other documentaton that shows you have been officially offered a placement as an apprentice

Attach a file:

Timing of your Apprenticeship

Anticipated Starting Date

Must be a date.

Anticipated End date

Must be a date.

TAFE enrolment

Are you enrolled/ will enrol in a course at TAFE? *

What course will you be studying?

Where is the TAFE located?

Please provide evidence of the course you have enrolled in and your acceptance to that course

Attach a file:

Your Apprenticeship Grant funding request

* indicates a required field

How much are you seeking for your Apprenticeship Grant??

Amount requested *

Must be a dollar amount.

Please provide a Budget breakdown of your expected costs

Our one-off grants range from **\$500-\$5,000** to assist apprentices with practical costs including tools, equipment, travel and IT needs.

We ask about expected costs to encourage you to think about how you are going to best try to achieve your goals. To get accurate costs you will need to do a little research like speaking to a TAFE, or maybe to a student who has gone before you. If you are planning on moving away, you will need to research the costs of where you will live and what is included – remember, living costs can vary depending on where you live.

Please provide a breakdown of all the costs you think you will incur in order to undertake your apprenticeship. The total you can request is \$5000.

You will need to keep receipts for all of your costs/expenses under the grant and provide the receipts as part of your grant reporting (acquittal) process.

Costs	\$

Budget Totals

Total Amount

This number/amount is calculated.

Certification and Feedback

* indicates a required field

Certification

This section must be completed by the applicant or by an appropriately authorised person on behalf of the applicant (may be different to the contact person listed earlier in this application form).

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the statements made within this application are true and correct, and I understand that if the applicant organisation is approved for this grant, we will be required to accept the terms and conditions of the grant as outlined in the letter of approval.

I agree *

☐ Yes

Name of submitting person *

Title First Name Last Name

Must be a senior staff member, trustee or appropriately authorised volunteer

Phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

We may contact you to verify that this application is authorised by the applicant organisation

Email *

Must be an email address.

Applicant Feedback

You are nearing the end of the application process. Before you review your application and click the **SUBMIT** button please take a few moments to provide some feedback.

Please indicate how you found the online application process.

☐ Very easy ☐ Easy ☐ Neutral ☐ Difficult ☐ Very difficult

How many minutes in total did it take you to complete this application?

Estimate in minutes i.e. 1 hour = 60

Please provide us with your suggestions about any improvements and/or additions to the application process/form that you think we need to consider.