



AEU FEDERAL SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIP

Helping students facing hardship stay engaged and finish school well



Overview of Scholarship

The AEU Federal Secondary Scholarship is a Public Education Foundation initiative supporting students in public secondary schools across Australia. Funded by the Australian Education Union – Federal, it helps students who are facing hardship to stay engaged in learning and to meet the everyday costs of schooling, from uniforms and subject fees to a device that works. Two scholarships are awarded each year.

Is this scholarship for you? It is open to students attending a public secondary school anywhere in Australia who are Australian citizens or permanent residents, who are facing hardship that could limit their opportunities without support, and who expect to still be at school for both years of the scholarship. If this one is not the right fit, complete the [Eligibility Quiz](#) on PEF-Apply to see every scholarship that may suit you.

About the Australian Education Union

The Australian Education Union – Federal represents principals, teachers and allied educators working in schools, TAFE institutes, corrections education, adult migrant education services and early childhood centres across the country. The union is a long-standing advocate for a quality public education that is accessible to all Australians.



Eligibility Criteria

To apply, students should be:

- Currently attending a public secondary school anywhere in Australia
- Enrolled in Years 8 to 11 in 2027 at a public secondary school anywhere in Australia, and expecting to remain enrolled for both years of the scholarship
- An Australian citizen or holder of Australian permanent resident status
- Expecting to remain enrolled at a public secondary school for both years of the scholarship
- Facing financial, social, geographic or systemic barriers that could limit access to opportunity without support
- Showing a genuine desire to continue through school and pursue further study, training or employment
- Supported by their school as a student who will engage positively with the scholarship
- Not already holding a Public Education Foundation scholarship, as a scholar may hold only one at a time



Selection Process

Applications are reviewed by an independent panel of reviewers convened by the Public Education Foundation, assessed against the eligibility criteria. A representative of the Australian Education Union – Federal is invited to join the panel each year.

Panels meet between September and November. The panel's recommendations go to the PEF Board, which approves the final list of scholars by the end of November, and applicants are notified in December. Once an applicant is recommended for this scholarship they cease to be available for other PEF scholarships.

Successful students are then onboarded, a code of conduct is agreed, and funds are distributed.

Funding/Assistance

- \$3,000 total (\$1,500 per year across two years of secondary education)
- Two scholarships are awarded each year
- Funds are paid by electronic transfer, in full-year instalments, at the start of each school year
- Continued payments depend on confirmed enrolment
- Any unspent funds do not roll over to the next school year

Acceptable Use of Scholarship Funds

Approved expenses must support the student's education, learning experience, wellbeing or access to enrichment opportunities. Acceptable uses include:

- Digital learning and equipment – laptops, tablets, software, internet access
- Compulsory school expenses – subject fees, textbooks, study materials, uniforms
- Enrichment – camps, excursions, workshops, conferences, competitions
- Learning environment – desk, chair, lighting, headphones
- Tuition support – tutoring, specialist learning support

PEF Scholarship Funds Usage Guidelines will be provided to each scholarship recipient and their school.



Application Form

As part of the application and induction process, the following are typically confirmed:

- Confirmation of current enrolment at an Australian public secondary school
- Citizenship or permanent residency status
- Evidence of the barriers or hardship affecting the student's progress through school
- School support and endorsement of the student's engagement and involvement
- A supporting statement from the Principal addressing the eligibility criteria
- Student induction, including agreement to the program code of conduct



How to Apply

Not sure which scholarships you're eligible for? Complete the Eligibility Quiz to see all scholarships that may apply to you. Apply online via [PEF-Apply](#). You will need to sign up before you can access the application form. Make sure all sections are complete before you submit.

Submitting Your Application

- Applications open: June 2026
- Applications close: September 2026

You can save your application in progress and return to it at any time before the closing date. Once you click Submit, your application is sent to the Public Education Foundation and will be reviewed during the Panel assessment period. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in December.



Further Information and Contact Details

For further information, please contact the Public Education Foundation Scholarships team:

- Email: scholarships@publiceducationfoundation.org.au
- Phone: 02 7814 2806