

Canon Collins Thekgo Bursary 2019

Guidelines for Applicants

Canon Collins invites applications for the Thekgo Bursary. In 2019, in response to the new funding of Higher Education by the South African government, the Canon Collins Thekgo Bursary has been restructured from providing registration fee for first year students to providing bursaries that alleviate undergraduate students' debt. Students who have completed their undergraduate/Honours studies, but their degree certificates/academic records have been withheld due to outstanding debt owed to the university, can apply for debt relief of up to R10,000 in the following disciplines:

- Arts (Visual Arts/Fine Arts, History of Art, Digital Arts, Drama/Performance Studies, Film and Television Studies, Music)
- Languages and Literature
- Media Studies
- Gender Studies
- Education

Each year, the Canon Collins Thekgo Bursary focuses on public universities in one of South Africa's provinces. For the 2019 academic year, Thekgo invites applications from completed undergraduate students (from the above disciplines) **who have already missed at least one graduation** due to outstanding debt with a university in **KwaZulu-Natal Province only** up to an amount of R10 000.

Eligible universities for 2019 are:

- Durban University of Technology
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of Zululand
- Mangosuthu University of Technology

General Information

The Canon Collins Thekgo Fund is a non-profit initiative established in 2007 by a group of professionals keen to promote access to higher education. The stipend is funded by personal contributions from like-minded supporters and donations by the Rotary Club Weinheim e.V. and is run by the Canon Collins office in the UK and on a voluntary basis by a committee consisting of the founding members.

The debt relief initiative was set up in response to the troubling South African reality that students often miss out on job opportunities or further studies due to withheld academic records, owing to outstanding debt with their university. The financial aid scheme affords successful applicants support in payment of debt up to R10,000 (paid directly to the university to clear the student's fees), enabling them to receive the degree document and continue their career.

Are you eligible?

Any student, of any African nationality, who has a strong academic record and is financially challenged, who has successfully completed undergraduate/Honours studies at a public South African public university in the selected province in the above focus disciplines, and is not able to cover outstanding tuition fees of up to R10, 000 with their university, is eligible to apply. The bursary must be used to pay up to R10,000 thereby wiping out the student's debt with the university and allowing the student to get their degree certificate and academic transcript.

To be considered for the 2019 round of Thekgo Bursary, applicants must:

1. Have completed undergraduate studies (three year or four year Bachelor or Honours degree) in a degree programme within Thekgo's focus disciplines in the Humanities, listed above, at a public university in Kwazulu-Natal province in South Africa.
2. Have outstanding tuition fee debt for the undergraduate programme at their university not exceeding R10,000 (the final amount awarded will be dependent on the outstanding fees statement of individual applicants, and will be paid directly to the university). An up-to-date fee statement must be submitted with the application. Applicants owing amounts that exceed R10,000 will unfortunately not be considered as the bursary's mission is the immediate release of withheld academic records/degree certificates.
3. Have missed one graduation already and was not able to receive the degree due to outstanding debt not exceeding R10,000 owed to the university.
4. Provide an academic record demonstrating strong academic merit during undergraduate studies.
5. Provide a reference letter from an academic based in their department supporting their merit and confirming that the applicant has successfully completed all their courses for the degree.
6. Demonstrate financial need and provide relevant documentation to substantiate this – via a pay slip and 3-month bank statement and/or statement of oath made in front of a law official (which can be done at local police stations).
7. The applicant must provide proof of payment of at least 10% of outstanding debt having been paid within three months of the application deadline.
8. Students are required to email a copy of their degree certificate and academic statement to thekgo@canoncollins.org.uk within one month of the outstanding debt having been paid by Thekgo Bursary.
9. No non-graduating student will be considered, nor final year students who have not missed a graduation as yet.

10. Only undergraduate students (including Honours) who have completed their studies are eligible for debt relief. No MA or PhD degrees are covered by Thekgo financial assistance.
11. Thekgo will not cover any NFSAS or bursary/scholarship debts. Only outstanding tuition fees are covered.

Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be processed or answered.

Application Process

Download the application form from our website when we are open for applications. Save a copy on your computer, and fill it in. You must return the form to the Canon Collins office by email to thekgo@canoncollins.org.uk along with your supporting documents. Please remember, we only get to 'know' of you and your achievements via this application form, so make a concerted effort to present yourself well through your considered answers and supporting documentation.

In addition to the application form you must submit the following supporting documentation:

1. Recent university fees statement for the (undergraduate/Honours) course completed with a maximum R10,000 outstanding debt. The fee statement is mandatory for the application. No application will be considered without the fee statement.
2. Proof of graduation of undergraduate course (or Honours) missed due to outstanding debt (some universities allow students with outstanding fees to attend graduation ceremonies but not receive their degrees and academic transcripts – please provide a letter from your Head of Department or Fees Office confirming this).
3. Proof of academic grades of the completed course.
4. Reference letter from an academic based in their department supporting their merit and the completion of all courses for the degree (applicants can wait until they are shortlisted to obtain this).
5. Comprehensive CV and certificates which demonstrate the applicant's commitment to their area of interest.
6. Proof of financial need (bank statements, affidavit confirming economic difficulties).
7. Proof of payment of at least 10% of outstanding debt, within three months of the application deadline.
8. Certified copy of ID/Passport.

Filling in the form

Please remember that up to four Thekgo members (many of who are university lecturers) will read your application. Therefore:

1. Pay attention to grammar and presentation
2. Complete all sections
3. Attach all necessary documents
4. Submit your application in a timely manner
5. Be convincing in your answers and motivations

Do not

- Repeat answers
- Write in capital letters
- Attach unnecessary documents

How many scholarships are available?

Thekgo Bursary dispenses approximately 5-7 stipends per year depending on available funds and number of excellent, eligible received. The selection committee decides on the actual amount that will be awarded to individual successful applicants based on the clearance of the student's debt.

Selection Criteria

Eligible candidates are selected for debt relief on the basis of the following criteria:

- Completed application including all required documents
- Their academic merit and career promise ^[1]_[SEP]
- Adequate demonstration of financial need.

Deadline

The deadline for applications is 31st March 2019 at 11pm GMT. Late applications will not be considered.

When will you hear from us?

Please do not email us to ask about the outcome of your application. All notifications will be by email by the end of March 2018 so please make sure you provide an accurate email address. Only successful applicants will be notified. Short-listed candidates may be interviewed telephonically in March 2019.

Terms and Conditions

- The financial aid can only be for outstanding university tuition fees and will be paid directly to the institution on behalf of the recipient.
- The recipient must provide all necessary details such as: fees statement, student number, University bank account details, full course details in order for payments to be paid in time.
- Stipend awards will be made on a case-by-case basis subject to availability of funds.

- The awarded amount will be determined by the committee based on the amount needed to clear the student's debt.
- Successful applicants will be required to keep the committee posted on further career and academic studies.
- Awardees are expected to submit a short biography and profile photo which they agree will be presented in Canon Collins Thekgo Bursary reports.
- In the event of a shortlisted student failing to produce the required documents within the specified deadline the awarded amount will not be disbursed.
- Applicants may not receive the bursary more than once.
- The decision of the committee is final and reserves the rights of the committee.