



Plus Programme Graduate Opportunities Fund 2021 Guidance

Please note this is a new version of the Opportunities Fund which is only open to Plus Programme students who are expecting to graduate in summer or winter 2021

This fund is open from 5th July 2021 to 4th October 2021- all applications must be received before this date.

The Plus Programme has opened the Graduate Opportunities Fund designed to help students who would otherwise be unable, for financial reasons, to access extracurricular professional development opportunities offered through the University of Leeds or external organisations.

The purpose of this fund is to allow students to access non-compulsory activities which may enhance their employability or be related to their field of study or desired career, which they may otherwise not be able to access due to financial reasons.

Please note, applications will usually be processed within 14 days, although this may increase during busy periods. As soon as you have completed the application form, this 14 day period will activate.

Eligibility:

The Opportunities Fund is for registered Plus Programme students who are expecting to graduate from their course in 2021 only (both undergraduate and postgraduate)

If you are unsure as to whether you are on the Plus Programme, please send us an email theplusprogramme@leeds.ac.uk

Frequently Asked Questions- you must read this before making your application

What types of things will this fund pay for?

Below are some examples of what we may fund, however if you have an opportunity which doesn't fall under these categories, please feel free to apply anyway so that we can assess your case.

Examples of activities we might support	What we may fund to enable you to attend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internships, Work Experience and Volunteering Opportunities • Attendance at conferences (virtual or in person) • Accessing Lifelong Learning Centre / University of Leeds events • Attendance at an interview or assessment centre • Attendance at a career insight day • Attendance at a network event in your field of study/ chosen career area • Short courses to enhance your skills/ CV such as a Social Media online course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare specifically to enable you to attend an opportunity • Travel costs • Clothing (e.g smart attire for an interview) • Attendance fees for courses, conferences or residential training events • Accommodation costs associated with a work experience/placement opportunity in the UK

On course or course related costs

We are now able to approve requests for funding towards *some* course related costs. Examples of these would include:

- DBS check required for research/placement/practical module
- Professional Body Membership
- Qualifications which are earned through taking part in a university module but there is an extra cost associated
- Materials for practical courses such as Art and Design, Fine Art and Graphic Design. We will award up to the following amounts for these materials. Receipts for equipment must be provided.

Level 1- £150

Level 2- £200

Level 3- £350

- Research project costs- for example if you require access to a journal that is not available through the library, or you need to travel to somewhere like the British Library or a museum to conduct research.
- Revision courses such as those for practical courses like Medicine

Please note we will not pay for laptops, PCs or musical instruments.

Is there a limit on the amount of money I can request?

Applications for funding in the region of £0 – £500 are normally considered. No matter how much you request, you may be awarded less than this and this is at the Plus Programme’s discretion.

Can I apply even if I already used the Opportunities Fund in 2020/21?

Yes, no matter how much you were awarded.

How far in advance do I need to apply for the fund?

The more notice you give us, the better. You must have sent in the application **before** your opportunity takes place as we will not accept retrospective opportunities. It may have taken place by the time we process your application, but we must have received the initial application before it does.

Will you pay for me to go abroad?

At the moment we can provisionally approve activities abroad in the summer, however we will not be able to make payment for an activity until closer to the time due to the changing COVID19 situation and current non-essential travel ban. If we have reimbursed you for the activity cost and it does not go ahead (and you receive a refund), you will be liable to pay back this money.

Will you pay for me to buy books?

We expect all students to make use of the comprehensive library services. We will not pay for books unless you can provide proof that the library is unable to provide either a physical or digital copy of the text and the book is essential to your coursework, project or dissertation.

How will I receive the money?

This will depend on what we are funding. For travel requests, we may book these ourselves through the University travel site and then email you the tickets, for example a return train trip from Leeds to London. For some items we may request that you make the purchase with your own money, send us the receipt or proof of purchase and then we will reimburse you. In this case, you must remember to keep all receipts and proof of expenditure or we will not be able to reimburse you.

You must submit all receipts/ proof of purchase for reimbursement via email within 21 days of the opportunity ending. If you do not submit within 21 days of the opportunity ending, the funding award will be rescinded and you will not receive the money.

In order to receive reimbursements, you must ensure your bank details are correct on Minerva.

<https://students.leeds.ac.uk/bankdetails>

Why are there so many questions on the application form?

We receive a large volume of requests to the Opportunity Fund and we need to ensure that we have enough information to assess your application fairly. If you are unsure about any of the questions, please email us on theplusprogramme@leeds.ac.uk

How will I know if I have been successful in my application for the Opportunity Fund?

We will get in touch with you within up to 14 days of you submitting your application. We advise you to include as much supporting information as possible to your application to avoid any delays. Please also ensure you apply for funding with plenty of time prior to your opportunity taking place (as far as possible).

Do I have to do anything after my opportunity has taken place?

If we have requested receipts/ proof of purchase or similar, you must send these by the deadline given.

As part of the funding award, you are required write a 500 word report about how the opportunity has benefitted you personally, academically and/or professionally as well as how the funding enabled you to access the opportunity. We may use quotes from your report as testimonials for areas such as our website, however we won't use your name without asking for your permission first. This report will need to be submitted within 28 days of your opportunity taking place.

I submitted an application but didn't receive a confirmation email straight away. Did my application go through?

Confirmation emails are not automatically sent through when an application is sent. However, if you reach the completion screen, your application has gone through. Please allow time for the team to work on your application before chasing it up, as we are expecting a high volume of applications.

Where has the money come from?

Most of the opportunities fund money has come from generous gifts from University of Leeds Alumni and donors to the university. The rest of the money has come from the university.

What if I have any more questions?

If you have any more questions before submitting your application, please email theplusprogramme@leeds.ac.uk and a member of the team will get back to you as soon as possible.