

Education Scholarship program and guidelines

1. Purpose

Link Housing is committed to providing opportunities to our residents to help them achieve their full potential and 'realise a better future'. Link Housing is committed to building the capacity of our residents and offering opportunities for further education, training and development. The program fits Link Housing's vision to provide 'a better future for those in need, through safe, affordable housing'.

The Education Scholarship Program provides eligible residents with the opportunity to access financial assistance towards the cost of education or training. The funding is aimed towards assisting residents with school age children (Kindergarten to Year 12), tertiary students and residents pursuing professional development activities, for example, sports, music or the arts. The funding provides residents with financial assistance to participate in development activities in their chosen area.

2. What does the scholarship program offer?

The Scholarship Program offers residents with school age children and household members in tertiary education the opportunity to apply for funding to assist with education or training related costs.

Stream	Eligible amount up to maximum
Primary school age (Kindergarten to Year 6)	\$750.00
Secondary school age (Year 7 to Year 12)	\$1,000.00
Tertiary education (University and TAFE) and professional development	\$1,500.00

The scholarship funding can be used to pay for a wide range of items/ services including but not limited to:

- school fees
- text books
- computer equipment
- uniforms
- sports kit/ equipment
- school trips, educational visits or camps
- employment related skills for example, driving lessons
- specialist skills development e.g. writing courses or football academies
- extra-curricular activities e.g. swimming, football and singing lessons

Primary school age children can apply for a maximum funding amount of \$750.00.
 Secondary school age children can apply for a maximum funding amount of \$1000.00.
 Professional development including tertiary and further education applicants can apply for a maximum funding amount of \$1,500.00.

3. Essential Criteria

- Applicants must be a Link Housing tenant or household member
- Applicants should have a clear rent account and have no other debt owed to Link Housing or have a repayment plan in place.
- Applicants must fully complete the Education Scholarship Application Form and submit it to Link Housing before the deadline. Applications received after the deadline may not be considered.

4. Completing the application form

- Application forms can be obtained from the Link Housing office or can be completed online via the Link Housing website.
- The applicant will be required to provide supporting documents about activities, enrolment and costs associated with their application. E.g cost of activity, course fees and equipment costs o Advice on appropriate supporting information can be provided by Link Housing as required.
- All information supplied on the application form and any supporting information will be treated in accordance with Link Housing's privacy and confidentiality requirements.

5. Scholarship program process

- All applications open at the beginning of every financial year (July).
- All applications are assessed by a panel of Link Housing officers and a community representative.
- Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email/ letter with next steps outlined for successful applicants.
- Invites to the successful tenants/ households sent out for the Award Ceremony which is scheduled to take place November/December– location to be confirmed
- All payments made to successful applicants in December to January.

6. Monitoring and Feedback

All successful applicants will be contacted following the receipt of their scholarship payment in order to request information on how the money has been spent, how it has positively contributed to the awardees life/ achievements in their chosen area and what impact it has had for the person.

The monitoring/ feedback information will be used in Link Housing promotional material and all successful applicants by accepting the scholarship funds agree to their information/ images/ story being used for such purposes and will also be used to improve/ refine the scholarship process.

Where Link Housing have concerns regarding the award of scholarship funds we reserve the right to request additional information to prove that the money has been spent on eligible expenses.

If Link Housing are not satisfied that the money has been used in accordance with the program/ guidelines steps may be taken to recover the funds from the tenant/ applicant. Where it has been shown that the applicant provided false or misleading information Link Housing reserve the right to take steps to recover the funds from the tenant/ applicant.

Link Housing will take steps to recover a grant;

- where false information was provided in order to access a scholarship,
- where a recipient is unable to provide the relevant documentation
- where the recipient is no longer a Link Housing tenant.

7. Privacy & Confidentiality

Link Housing will be mindful of its responsibilities under its Privacy and Confidentiality Statement. Information released will be on 'a need to know' basis only unless required by law. Where ever possible special arrangements will be made without informing contractors or external parties of the reasons why.

8. Complaints and Appeals

A tenant who is not happy with a decision made by Link Housing, or who believes that Link Housing has not followed this guidelines may complain or appeal using the Complaints and Appeals Policies.

9. Quality Assurance

The Education Scholarship program and guidelines will be reviewed annually.