

Alternative Sources of Postgraduate Funding

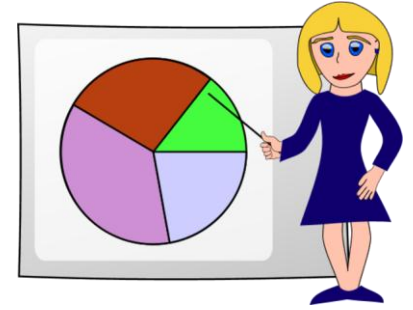


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Summary

- Possible routes to finding alternative sources of postgraduate funding
- fees, maintenance, research expenses, conferences or travel
- I will focus on how to identify sources, to approach and successfully apply to charities/bodies with the most effective methods and provide an introduction/demonstration to the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding.

Who is this aimed at?



- All postgraduate students – Masters and PhD students
- Prospective and current students
- International, EU and UK students
- Self-funded/partially-funded students
- Fourth year PhD students
- Research, travel and conference expenses
- Supervisors to best advise their students on what alternative funding is out there
- Learn how to win grants from charity

Flow of the Workshop

1. Introduction of my story
2. Group discussion of difficulties of PG funding, whether audience has considered it before
3. Introductory presentation on Alternative funding sources
4. Presentation on finding charities, trusts
5. Presentation on making strong application to charities
6. Activity session on applying
7. Closing comments, questions

Introduction

- Lucy Atkinson
- 2nd year PhD student
- School of Social Sciences, Division of Psychology
- **Entirely self-funded PhD (full time first year, part time second year...)**
- **Won some internal scholarships and applied for charity funding and raised over £6000 in two years**
- Tuition fees, accommodation, maintenance
- Employment

2013-2014

SUCCESSFUL AWARDS

2013-2014

Charity	Date	Amount	Successful	Status	Notes
Sidney Perry		£1,000	YES	Wrote report	Fees
T D Lewis		£1,000	YES	Wrote report	Fees
Merchant Navy Educational Trust		£1,000	YES	Wrote report	Maintenance
Bancroft		£300	YES	Wrote report	Materials
Dorothy Johnson Charity		£250	YES	Wrote report	Materials
Chancellor's Award		£800	YES	Wrote report	China research abroad trip
Swallowdale Children's Charity		£250	YES	Wrote report	For China research abroad

TOTAL £4600

2014-2015

SUCCESSFUL AWARDS

2014-2015

Charity	Date	Amount	Notes	Used for?
TD LEWIS	May-14	£700	Interview Monday 23rd June Awarded £700	Accommodation
Lee Bakirgian Family Trust	Jul-14	£400	Awarded £400 September 2014	Towards tuition fees
DOROTHY JOHNSON	Jul-14	£50	Awarded £50 October 2014	Materials
Sidney Perry	Jan-15	£800	Awarded £800	Accommodation
Dr Mike Daniel Research Degree Scholarship	Jun-15	£150		Conference costs in Summer

Total so far =

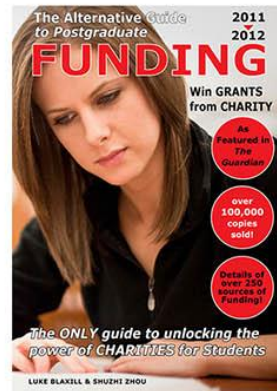
£2,100

My Story

- <http://www.postgraduate-funding.com/lucy>
- First year PhD student successful in funding awards
- Contacted the “**Alternative Funding Guide**” owners to just thank them for a great resource and if there was anything I could do to help them.
- Since, I have completed some freelance jobs through them and have been helping them write some articles about student funding and get them online.

Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding

- GradFunding was founded in 2007 as a social enterprise dedicated to postgraduate funding from charities
- Available in printed, CD, and PDF form. *The Alternative Guide* sold over 350,000 copies or licences
- Sell subscriptions of the Alternative Guide to individual users, and licence it centrally to universities (also offers workshops)

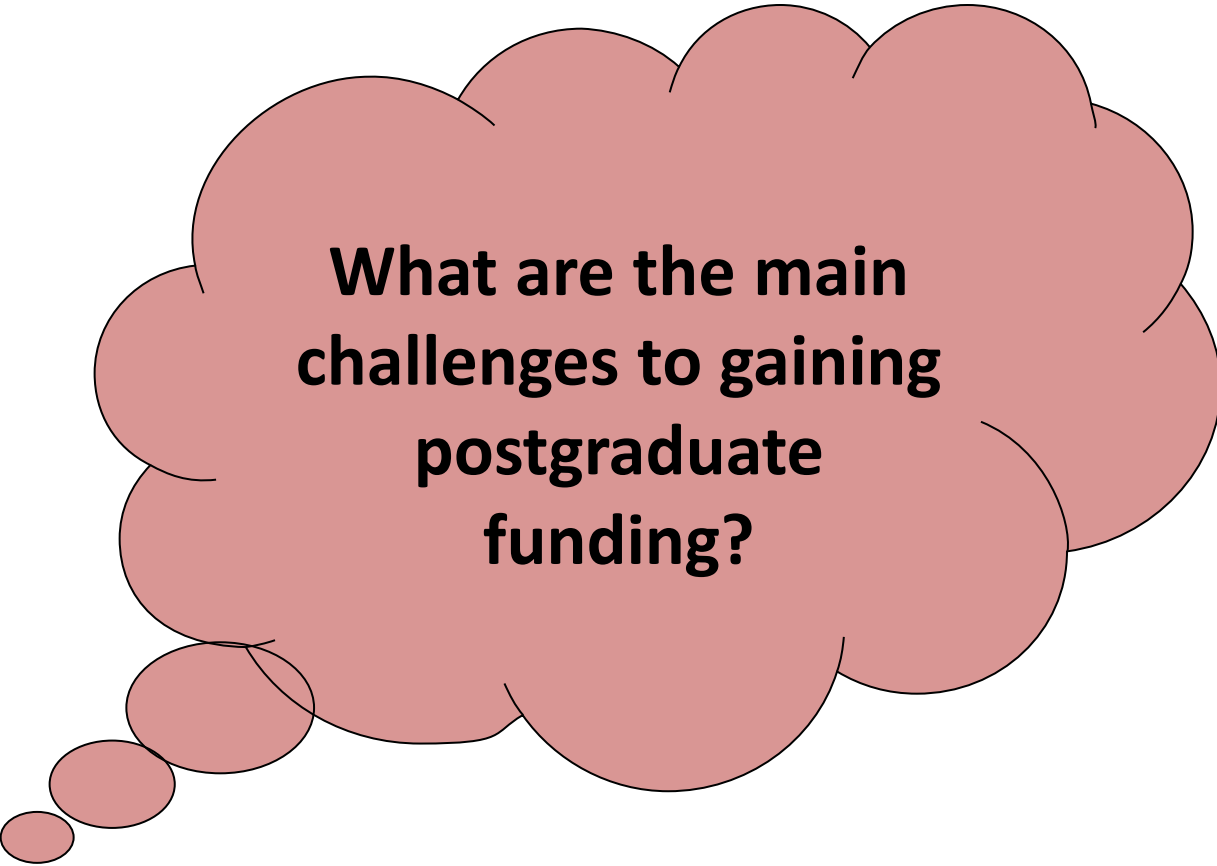


About Gradfunding, the publishers of The Alternative Guide

- Dr. Luke Blaxill is co-Director of GradFunding. In 2006-7, he was rejected over a dozen times from various research council and university scholarships, and started his PhD at King's College London (in Political History in 2006) unfunded. Over the next 4 years, he gained 45 separate charity awards totalling over £40,000. He was inspired to first write the Alternative Guide in 2008. Luke is also Junior Research Fellow in History at Hertford College, University of Oxford.
- Dr. Shuzhi Zhou is GradFunding's second co-Director, having joined the company in 2008 to also develop the Alternative Guide. Her background is in the Biological Sciences (PhD Neuroscience from King's College London). She specialises in Science Funding, and is particularly experienced at fundraising for research, travelling, and conferences.

Activity:

Discussion Session



What are the main challenges to gaining postgraduate funding?



**Have you ever considered applying to charities for graduate funding?
If not - why not?**

Main Topics

- Introducing alternative funding bodies
- Finding these bodies
- Initially approaching these bodies
- Applying to alternative funding bodies.



Research Councils



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council

- Allocates awards to University departments, not to individual students
- Close communication with department vital!
- Competition is very fierce
- Very limited Masters funding
- You may reapply if rejected. You may even apply or reapply after you've started your course
- Applicants on 'borderline' of remits of research councils can apply to both (but always check!).

University of Northampton

Scholarships available



Remember PhD students may also have the **UN Research Expenses budget (£250)** *different if you are a bursary student

- <http://www.northampton.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/funding-your-study/bursaries-scholarships-and-awards>
- Also, you may be eligible for Financial Assistance Fund
This is managed by The Financial Guidance team at the university, pop into the Student Centre at Park or Avenue for more info.

T D Lewis Scholarship

Award: Up to £1500

Course: Any

Other Criteria: Academic achievement

Dr Mike Daniel Research Degree Scholarship

Award: £500

Course: Any postgraduate Research degree

Chancellor's Fund

Award: between £100 to £1,500

Applicants must be current students or
members of staff



Alternative Funding Sources

- Charities
- Foundations
- Trusts
- Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust
- Vegetarian Charity
- Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust
- Bestway Foundation

Why?

- Plan B to full funding - build up portfolio of awards
- Unpredictable research costs
- Conference costs are expensive
- Unpredictable maintenance costs
- Write-up costs



The Voluntary Sector

- Not like Research Councils
- Thousands of bodies- big to small
- Varying budgets £500-£2000 per award each year.
- Trick is to build up a portfolio of awards, domino effect
- Not always academic, have their own agenda
- Some are for hardship
- Varying eligibility criteria: subject, age, nationality
- Professional bodies & learned societies
- Very diverse- something for everyone
- Flexible: multiple deadlines per year
- Apply in advance or during your course.

The Voluntary Sector:

Two Approaches to applying



Industrial Approach

Search as wide as you can, make max. number of applications.

Time needed: Initially at least a week, and a few hours per week thereafter.

Pros: Most money, lessens effort required per applications.

Cons: Big time commitment, lots of dead ends.

Suits: Someone who needs a lot of money, and has time.



Targeted Approach

Carefully choose a small number of charities where you have the best chance

Time needed: 1-2 days

Pros: High success rate, much more time-efficient.

Cons: Less money, stops you discovering unexpected sources

Suits: Someone who needs less money (£4,000 or less) and/or has less time available.

Finding Charities

Mission: make a list of potential funders

- Do not discount a body unless its obviously inappropriate
- Always check if body makes awards to individuals. Most charities only deal with organisations (and in some circumstances, University of Northampton does qualify as an “organisation”)

Finding Charities :

1. Looking Online

- Your university's funding pages - <http://www.northampton.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/funding-your-study/bursaries-scholarships-and-awards>
- Alternative Guide Online Database, www.postgraduate-funding.com



- Scholarship Search, Postgraduate Studentships, Research Professional, Uni Grants, Charity search engines (e.g. TurntoUs)

Finding Charities :

2. Local Library

- The Educational Grants Directory
- The Charities Digest
- The Grants Register
- The Directory of Grant Making Trust



Finding Charities :

3. Learned Societies

e.g. Society for Neuroscience, Royal Historical Society

- Interested in promoting their area
- Grants for conferences and research
- Small membership fee



Finding Charities :

4. Ask for Advice

- Educational Grants Advisory Service (EGAs)
- Education Division of Local Council (home address)
- Clerk of Parish Council (home address)
- Simply ask at your university department (ask Corinna Coleman in Silverstone, Park Campus)



Finding Charities : The Initial Approach

- Condense your long list of potential funders into a smaller, manageable list
- If little information, ask if you're eligible to apply with a short letter, email or phone call
- Be prepared to send lots of letters
- Include stamped, self-addressed envelope
- Example template letter on the Alternative Guide Online.



Alternative Guide (online demonstration)

- If you want a log in you can:

1. Visit the page <http://www.postgraduate-funding.com/gateway>

2. Then go scroll down to



The image shows a registration form titled "Register for personal username/password". It has two options:

1 I'm a Current Student or staff member. Email me personal username and password!

University Email: [?]

2 I am a prospective student. Email me personal username and password !

Alternative Guide Pin: [?] Email Address: [?]

3. Use OPTION 2 and use the Pin 0572 with your email address.

4. You will then get this message:

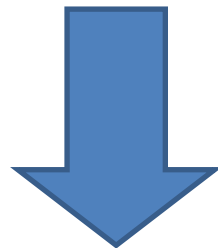
Registration Successful! Check the email account you specified for login details, then return to this page and enter them in the blue box above to login to the Alternative Guide

There is also a pdf version, which I can send you if you let me know.



My Approach

- Identified all of the charities/scholarships I would apply for
- Prepared my documents
- Created an Excel Spreadsheet to log everything
[..\..\FUNDING\Funding Log.xlsx](#)
- Bought envelopes (large for application, small to self-address), stamps, and printed all of my documents



Application

- If it requires an application form:
- Look on their website, email if there is an email address
- Download from their website, and fill in
- Always keep a copy of the application you sent (use it again for next year but tweak it)

Application

- *Initial contact:*
- A letter introducing yourself, ask for more information and an application form (if possible)
- *Send all documents off:*
- Personal statement, Financial statement, References (supervisor and employer)
- Copy of your C.V.
- Include a University of Northampton business card (if you have one)

Activity:

Discussion Session

What makes a
strong grant
application for
this purpose?



Applying: General Tips

- Decide what is body's priority: academic, hardship or does it have its own agenda?
- 500-800 word personal statement
- Strong arguments- why fund you?
- Make research easy to understand
- List all the other bodies applied to/have received money from!
- Clear financial plan
- Future career plans



Applying: Research, Conferences & Travel

- Make sure of eligibility/membership
- Plan in advance
- Be sure of research relevance
- Detailed financial statement for the relevant period
- Mention other sources of funding for the relevant period
- Don't talk about your general financial situation
- **Emphasise the benefits from attending conference/ doing this research**
- **Maintain good relations with sponsors-** reports especially important here

Applying: Financial Statement

- Always required by charities
- List all bodies you've applied to this year with results
- Itemise your income and expenditure for the year
- Request an amount based on the deficit between income and expenditure, but also the amount the charity typically awards
- Don't always ask for the maximum, a gamble
- State what you will be spending the grant on: fees, travel, living costs?
- For research/travel/conference, support your cost estimates with evidence for the relevant period.



Applying: Model Financial Statement

BODY	DATE OF DECISION	AMOUNT	SUCCESSFUL?
Vaughan Memorial Trust	Done	£1,000	Yes
Empire Foundation	Done	£2,000	Yes
Baccarat Trust	Done	£500	No
Sir Campbell Fund for Excellence	Done	£1,000	No
Red Roses Charity	Jan '14	£500	?
Runefaut Support Group	Jan '14	£800	?
Drake Foundation for Woman Graduates	Feb '14	£1,000	?
The Irani Catholic Foundation	Mar '14	£500	?
Annette Burns Fund for Political Journalism	Mar '14	£250	?
The Krell Travel Fund	Apr '14	£400	?
Prince's College London Bursary	Apr '14	£2,000	?

Projected Income and Expenditure for Academic Year 2013-14

EXPENSES	INCOME
£4,000 (Course fees to Prince's College London)	£2,900 (Working as a Waitress)
£6,500 (Rent: I live in Hammersmith)	£3,000 Charities and Trusts (see above)
£600 (Utility Charges: light, heat, water)	£3,600 Savings
£400 (Telephone: landline and mobile)	
£1,800 (Food)	
£300 (Clothing)	
£300 (Household Miscellaneous: TV licence, internet, contents insurance)	
£300 (Books for study)	
£800 (Travel into university)	
£400 (Essential research trips)	
£100 (Photocopying and Printing)	
Total Expenses £15,500	Total Income £9,500

Amount Requested

I would like to request a sum of £1500- the maximum your trust permits, although I appreciate that any award made may be at a lower level.

Applying: References and Aftermath

- Get references as early as possible
- Reference from one of your PhD supervisors is essential
- Be neat and diligent with forms
- If you're successful, write to say thanks and write a short report at end of year
- Can renew awards each year





Activity: Compare 3 Statements

- There are three candidate statements- decide with your group which is the strongest and rank them in order 1,2,3.
- *Please note these are all real examples of statements PhD students used (names have been changed).*

Activity:
Statements (notes)

Statement A

- The way he describes his research is obscure and may be overly academic
- No specific need for the money
- Overboard on the disadvantages in life

Statement B

- Prepared, plan is well thought-through, has applied for other awards
- Tone is modest and reasonable

Statement C

- Spelling mistakes
- Looks rushed
- Applicant draws attention to his own weaknesses (missing the research council deadline)
- No sense of what he needs the money for

Golden Rules

- First, make sure you're eligible
- Understand a charity's priorities and tailor your application
- Keep your research simple
- Show how your research might benefit society
- Have a career plan
- Show a clear financial plan
- Never give up



GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Start early in your first term. Some charities operate strict deadlines, and it would be a pity to miss a fruitful opportunity just because you are a few days late.
- Establish your credibility – accompany applications with a statement setting out the benefits of your research and studies. Lecturers and tutors will usually supply references in support of applications for funds. You might be sending quite a few letters and should, therefore, be prepared to "tweak" an application's contents to fit the intended charity.
- Check the aims and objectives of each funding body, perhaps even by writing in advance and asking if you can apply. It's no good trying if there are age limits, or they will allocate grants solely to the offspring of people previously employed in certain, distinct and/or obscure professions (for example, leather sellers or commercial travellers).
- Make sure you address the letter to the correct person and that it is polite, proofread and appropriate. Ideally, frame your application around the **contribution you will make to society** if you can fund your education, rather than simply pleading for cash.
- Check to make sure how much the body awards (they usually say) as there is little point in requesting £1,000 if the upper limit is £100. Remember, though, that these small sums can mount up, so it's still worth applying – £100 is quite a few textbooks.
- And remember – some bodies ask to be credited if research they've supported results in academic publication. Not only is this part of the agreement, it's also polite.



How to Access: Current Subscribers



www.postgraduate-funding.com/gateway

Feel free to browse
on the website,

Any queries please
email me

[lucy.atkinson@
northampton.ac.uk](mailto:lucy.atkinson@northampton.ac.uk)

Log in details:

**Sign up with your
Northampton email address**

Prospective Students

www.postgraduate-funding.com/gateway

- Log in using the pin: **0572**

- Go to the site and

Login Now!

1 Login with my personal username/password for the Alternative Guide (If you have them) [?]

User Name: Password: [Forgot your username](#)

2 Login automatically from campus right now! [?]

Register for personal username/password

1 I'm a Current Student or staff member. Email me personal username and password!

University Email: [?]

2 I am a prospective student. Email me personal username and password !

Alternative Guide Pin: [?] Email Address: [?]

Log in here with the
pin 0572 and your
email address.

They will then send
you an email to your
email address.



Any questions?

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