

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR THE FOUNDATION YEAR STUDENT SUPPORT FUND - 2023/24

Please read the following guidance notes carefully before completing an application.

Overview of the Fund

The purpose of this fund is to support Foundation Year students who commenced their course in the 2023/24 academic year, are currently enrolled, and who may require financial assistance in a variety of circumstances, ranging from a shortfall in their finances to help meeting additional exceptional costs that have arisen after they have started their course.

The Astrophoria Foundation Year is responsible for processing and reviewing applications to the Fund.

The Fund

A non-repayable fund of between £50 and £750 is available. Depending on the level of demand, the award amount may be capped below the maximum to ensure sufficient funding is available to students in need of assistance throughout the academic year.

Eligibility criteria

All current Astrophoria Foundation Year students are eligible to apply for the bursary.

Students will be expected to have accessed all available funding from the Astrophoria Foundation Year before they can be eligible for a Foundation Year Student Support Fund Bursary. The Foundation Year Student Support Fund is designed to assist with one-off unexpected additional costs where other funding is not readily available.

The scheme is intended to offer one-off financial assistance that may be required to meet certain discrete costs or to address smaller funding gaps, it does not represent an extensive review of a student's financial situation.

Foundation Year students remain eligible to apply for Foundation Year Financial Assistance Funding, and will need to do so if their shortfall in finances exceeds the amount available through the Foundation Year Student Support Fund. Students should first discuss their situation with the Foundation Year Welfare Lead.

How do I apply?

Applications for the 2023/24 academic year must be made to the Astrophoria Foundation Year team.

You can obtain a Foundation Year Student Support Fund application form through the following link. Students who are unable to complete the form electronically should contact welfare@foundationyear.ox.ac.uk. You are advised to discuss your application with the Foundation Year Welfare Lead before submitting it. Please see the guidance below on how to complete the form.

We may ask for clarification relating to your application or for further information. If this is the case, you will receive an email from the Astrophoria Foundation Year. If no response is received within 21 days we will consider the application withdrawn.

Application deadlines are Friday of 1st week, 4th week and 8th week of each term. Submissions will be reviewed the week after the deadline by a panel consisting of the Foundation Year Welfare Lead, Foundation Year Programme Manager and Foundation Year Course Director. Once a complete application is received, we aim to process the application and communicate the outcome within two weeks. Outside of term-time this process may take longer.

Applications received after the Friday of Trinity Term week 9 will not be processed, except where students are participating in the September resit period.

How to complete the application?

The form consists of a number of sections.

- Section 1: About you – This section will ask you basic questions about you to help us identify you. You should answer all questions.
- Section 2: Course Details – This section will ask you questions about your course and college. You should answer all questions.
- Section 3: Income – This section will ask questions about your income (the money that you receive from bursaries, loans, paid work or other sources). You should answer all questions, but where you do not receive that type of income, you should record an income of 0. You should answer all questions.
- Section 4: Expenditure – This section will ask questions about your expenditure (the money that you spend). You should answer all questions, but where you do not spend in that category of expenditure, you should record an expenditure of 0. For more information about typical student spending please see the student fees and funding webpages. You should answer all questions.
- Section 5 – This section will ask you two questions:
 - How much funding are you applying for
 - A supporting statement outlining why you are applying for this funding.You should ensure that the funding you apply for covers the shortfall in your finances. If any of your estimated costs exceed the University's lower range figures then you are advised to explain the reasons for this in your supporting statement. You should answer both questions.
- Section 6 – This section asks you to agree to two declarations. Without your consent to these declarations, we are unfortunately unable to process your application.

How do I submit additional information relevant to my application?

If you wish to submit additional information to support your application, you should provide this to welfare@foundationyear.ox.ac.uk. It should be clearly identified as additional information relating to your application for a Foundation Year Student Support Fund Application so that it can be processed appropriately. Any additional information must be received by the published deadlines to be processed as part of the application.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications will be considered the week after the deadline by a panel consisting of the Foundation Year Welfare Lead, Foundation Year Programme Manager and Foundation Year Director.

The Panel will consider your current situation, the University's published lower range of living costs, the amount you have requested, and why you require additional funding.

Applications will be treated in the strictest confidence subject to the University's GDPR Policy as detailed in the application form declaration page.

How will I be notified of the outcome of my application and how will the funds be disbursed?

The outcome of your application will be sent to you via email, with the Foundation Year Welfare Lead copied in. Payment of any bursary will be made directly to you, usually in one instalment.

Can I submit a repeat or new application?

It is possible to reapply within the same academic year if your financial circumstances have changed, provided you have not already received the maximum award of £750. You should note that any subsequent application and request for funding will take into account that this is a subsequent request for the fund but will be reviewed based on your current circumstances and using the latest available information.

How can I appeal the decision or award?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application you may appeal in writing to Astrophoria Foundation Year at contact@foundationyear.ox.ac.uk.

Any appeal must be made within four weeks of the date Astrophoria Foundation Year notifies you of the outcome of your application. Decisions made regarding appeals are final.

An appeal must either:

- (i) Contain new or more detailed information relating to your situation which was not available to you at the time of your original application; or
- (ii) Dispute the application decision by demonstrating that the decision was not conducted in accordance with the stated procedure.

Contact details

Please contact us at welfare@foundationyear.ox.ac.uk if you have any queries or require further clarification before submitting your application form.

Last reviewed: November 2023