

The 125 Fund: Application guidance notes

Purpose

In an effort to enhance student's employability and help you to achieve your full potential, the University of Westminster, with generous matched-funding from The Quintin Hogg Trust, is offering a number of grants for current students.

The 125 Fund supports all kinds of projects, as long as they benefit your personal/professional development and/or employability. You could apply for a grant to attend an overseas conference, purchase a piece of equipment to help with your course, develop that business idea you've been working on... it's completely up to you.

You are encouraged to apply for the relevant amount required for the specific activity, project or piece of equipment within the range of £150 to £1,500.

Applications for the following will not be considered:

- Laptops
- Apple Macs
- Computers
- Cameras
- Video cameras
- General living expenses (rent, tube costs)
- Tuition fees

This is an opportunity fund so it will **not** cover general expenses or tuition fees. Due to the high volume of applications for laptops and cameras each year we will not be considering these applications unless in exceptional circumstances. We want to encourage applicants to think more creatively.

What the decision board will be looking for

The 125 Fund is made up entirely of generous donations from alumni and friends who wish to enhance the student experience for University of Westminster students. When putting together your application, do bear this in mind, as the donors will be at the forefront of the decision-making process. If you were a donor supporting this fund, how would you like to see your money spent? The decision board will be looking to support a wide range of projects that offer good value for money. Applications will have to demonstrate clear need and impact.

For projects which cost more than the maximum grant amount (£1,500), you must outline how you plan on obtaining the rest of the funds.

The decision board will not consider:

- Funding to pay a third party for a service, i.e. funding to pay a consultant to deliver a workshop or funding for a videographer to create a short film.
- Funding which will go towards a charity (this is a conflict of interest).
- Funding for food and drinks costs (The 125 Fund will **not** cover any food/drinks expenses).
- Applications for retrospective funding will not be considered.

Breakdown of costs

In your application you must include a clear breakdown of costs. It is imperative that we know where every penny of donor's money is being spent. Vague applications which fail to provide a detailed breakdown of funding will not be put forward to the decision board.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply for a 125 Fund grant, you must be a **current** University of Westminster student, studying in London, on a full or part time undergraduate or postgraduate (research and taught) course. Students from partner institutions (on an exchange semester or year) are not eligible.

Deadline and how to apply

The deadline for applications is midnight on Wednesday 5th February 2020.

To apply, please complete the application form that will appear on this page on 2 January:
www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/support-and-facilities/the-125-fund-awards.

When explaining what you are applying for (max 500 words) you will clearly need to outline:

- What the project or activity you require funding for is
- What the funding will cover (with full breakdown of costs)
- How the funding would benefit your professional or personal development
- Your financial need for this award

Failure to clearly outline these four points will jeopardise your chances of being awarded funding.

What happens next?

Successful applicants will be contacted by the Development and Alumni Relations Office at the end of February.

If you are successful, you will be required to:

- Sign a terms and conditions form ensuring funds will be spent in line with your application
- Submit a report (with photos if possible) about your project or activity by 1 August 2020
- Attend an award ceremony in March

Please note: the number of applications will exceed the amount of funding available therefore regretfully not all applications will be successful. In addition, due to the high volume of applications expected we are unable to provide individual feedback to applicants.

The 125 Fund: Application FAQs

How do I apply?

You will be able to make your application from 2 January until 5 February 2020. For more information, please visit <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/support-and-facilities/the-125-fund-awards> and check back on 2 January, where the application form will be live.

Can I put in more than one application?

No. We will only accept one application for funding per person.

What kind of projects can I apply for funding for?

It's an opportunity fund, so it really is up to you. On the application form we make suggestions of: conference, workshop or training; equipment; internship or work placement costs; research project; and social enterprise projects. But you don't have to pick out of these categories, it can be anything which contributes to your personal or professional development and ultimately increases your employability.

What will not be considered for funding?

- General living expenses such as rent, and tube costs will not be accepted for funding
- Tuition fees will not be considered for funding
- Applications for laptops/Apple Macs/cameras/video cameras will not be considered for funding unless in exceptional circumstances
- Funding to pay a third party for a service
- Funding which will go towards a charity
- Funding for food and drinks costs
- Applications for retrospective funding will not be considered

I've had funding in the past, can I apply again?

Yes

Who can apply?

All University of Westminster students, studying in London, on a full or part time undergraduate or postgraduate (research and taught) course. Students from partner institutions (on an exchange semester or year) are not eligible.

My project has received funding from another source. Can I apply to The 125 Fund too?

Yes, if you can combine funding from another source this makes our funding go further, which is great news. However, for projects which cost more than the maximum grant amount (£1,500) you must outline how you plan on obtaining the rest of the funds.

What is the maximum grant available?

£1,500

Can I apply for a grant to help my dissertation or PhD research project?

Yes, you can apply to The 125 Fund for costs related to your dissertation/PhD research project as this would come under the criteria of developing a project which is relevant to your studies. However, the funding would need to be for something directly related to your project, not to cover general living costs whilst you undertake your dissertation.

Can I apply for funding to do an overseas placement?

Yes, funding for placements abroad is something which would be eligible for funding from The 125 Fund as it would come under personal/professional development. We are happy to cover placement costs, flights and accommodation however general living expenses such as daily transport and food will not be awarded funding.

Where is the funding coming from? What is The 125 Fund?

The 125 Fund is the result of donations from alumni, friends and staff who wish to enhance the student experience at the University of Westminster. The 125 Fund is in its third year, and last year awarded over £100,000 to 122 students. The bulk of the funds have been raised through fundraising telephone campaigns employing students to call alumni, but we also receive donations as a result of meetings, events, emails and social media appeals. The Quintin Hogg Trust have generously pledged to match all donations to The 125 Fund up until 31 July 2020, so all donations we receive this year have been doubled.

What are the chances of my project being successful?

Competition for funding from The 125 Fund is extremely high therefore it is important students do not rely on this funding. It is an additional opportunity fund unique to the University of Westminster, supported by alumni and friends, and funding is not guaranteed.

Last year we had almost 600 applications totalling almost £700,000. We had £140,000 to disburse therefore only 166 students out of 905 were awarded funding.

Applications will be entirely judged on the supporting statement and we are anticipating over 1000 applications this year.

How much is in the pot this year?

TBC

Are there any conditions attached to the grants?

- You must attend The 125 Fund awards ceremony in April, where you will be able to meet donors who have contributed to The 125 Fund.
- You must use the funds provided by 1 August 2020.
- You must produce a written report by 1 August 2020 to update the Development and Alumni Relations Office and donors on how your money has been spent.
- Should your project fall below budget, any funds left must be returned to The 125 Fund unless agreement has been explicitly given by the Development and Alumni Relations Office.
- You will be expected to take part in occasional activities and events involving donors to help demonstrate how their gifts are making a difference.
- We ask that you include information about The 125 Fund in any publicity related to the project (including internal publications).