



BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE BURSARY



POST-SECONDARY BURSARY PACKAGE

2026
APPLICATION PACKAGE

www.syilx.org

2026 ONA BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE INITIATIVE

POST-SECONDARY APPLICATION

What is the ONA Building a Better Future Initiative?

The Building a Better Future Initiative is a testament to our commitment to supporting the educational endeavors of Syilx Okanagan Nation members. The ONA has built partnerships to assist with providing this scholarship, bursary, and awards initiative. With the help of our partners, we aim to provide financial assistance to eligible individuals, recognizing their perseverance and achievements as they pursue higher education. Whether you're studying in a traditional academic field or honing your craft in a skilled trade, this opportunity is here to support you to thrive.

If you are beginning a new educational journey or continuing your academic path, this initiative is open to Syilx Okanagan Nation members pursuing studies in the fall of 2026. It is designed to empower students to achieve their academic goals and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Our scholarships, bursaries, and awards are designed to alleviate financial barriers, enabling recipients to focus on their studies and skill development and to achieve academic excellence. By recognizing and celebrating student perseverance and achievement, we aim to inspire our members to continue their educational pursuits and strive for success.

We believe in the importance of investing in the next generation of leaders, innovators, and skilled professionals. Apply now to access the financial assistance available to support you as you work towards building a brighter future for yourself and your community!

Important!

Read the terms carefully before completing your application and relevant supporting documentation. *Students are welcome to apply for multiple awards – please see all available awards on our website.*

Who is Eligible to Apply?

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- You must be attached by ancestry, identity, and community to the Syilx Okanagan Nation
- Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary or vocational institution or display proof of acceptance, in full-time studies between: September 2026 - August 2027 (unless otherwise noted in the specific award listing).

Important Dates

- **Awards Application Deadline:** application packages must be received by 3 pm on June 15, 2026
- **Award Announcement:** July 2026
- **Payments:** September 2026

Application Package Requirements

- Students must ensure all application requirements are met before applying (See Checklist!)
- Students must take responsibility to ensure that all information is up-to-date and included in the submission
- Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Include all attachments in one email. We will send you an email notification when your application has been received.

Email to: Tara Montgomery: tmontgomery@syilx.org

Available Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards:

1. \$3000 in awards from FortisBC - Education for Life Awards

While building the Terasen Gas Southern Crossing Pipeline, Terasen Gas (now FortisBC) forged strong relationships with the member communities of the Okanagan Nation Alliance. In recognition, since 2009 Fortis BC established a Financial Award for Syilx Okanagan Nation members who are committed to building a better future for themselves and their community through post-secondary and vocational pursuits.

\$1500 Education for Life Awards (2 available)

The Education for Life Award is awarded to two (2) Syilx Okanagan Nation members who have demonstrated their commitment to bettering their community, and who show aptitude for and commitment to their chosen career or area of study. Whether you're working towards a degree, master's, or trade certification, this opportunity is designed to provide financial support to help you achieve your educational goals. We recognize the diverse paths and ambitions of students, and we are committed to supporting their journeys towards success.

Must be pursuing a minimum 2-year program.

2. \$10,000 in awards from EMB for Syilx Students

Formed in 2014, EMB Management Ltd. ("EMB") offers project development, project delivery, engineering, construction management and construction inspection services to utility and infrastructure clients across Western Canada. To help support Syilx Okanagan Nation members in furthering their education, EMB introduced \$10,000 in awards (\$8000 in post-secondary awards and \$2000 for high school graduates) in 2022 as a component of our Building a Better Future Initiative.

Their contribution will provide the following awards:

\$3500 EMB Engineering Bursary

With generous financial support, the EMB Engineering Bursary aims to empower aspiring engineers to pursue their academic goals with confidence. Whether you're fascinated by robotics, environmental sustainability, Biomedics, structures and design or any other engineering discipline, this bursary is open to students studying Engineering in the fall of 2026.

- Planning to attend an accredited post-secondary institution on a full-time basis pursuing a full-time (4 course minimum) engineering program.
- Open to high school students who are accepted into an engineering program and/or students continuing their pursuit in an undergrad or graduate program.

\$1500 EMB Surveying, Mapping, or Geomatics Bursary

This bursary is open to an undergraduate student studying surveying, mapping, or geomatics enrolled in full time studies in the fall of 2026.

\$1500 EMB Business Bursary

This bursary is open to undergraduate students enrolled in full time studies in the fall of 2026 who intend to study Business, Business Administration, Commerce, Management and/or related fields of study.

\$1500 EMB Walking My Learning Forward Award

The EMB Walking My Learning Forward Award, is dedicated to recognizing Syilx Okanagan Nation members who exhibit a strong dedication to community and display both aptitude and commitment to their chosen career or field of study.

- Applicants must be enrolled in an accredited educational institution.
- Applicants enrolled in a minimum two-year undergrad/trades program in the fall of 2026 are eligible
- Masters and PHD students are welcome to apply.

3. \$3000 Award from Buffy Mills, Syilx Nation Community Member

\$3000 Women Uplifting Women Leadership Award (For Syilx Women)

“I created this award because I want to be the kind of woman who creates the change I wish to see in our community. This award is for Syilx women who lead from the heart—who lift other women up, who walk with courage, and who make space for others to shine. You don’t need a title to be a leader. You just need the fire to rise—and the generosity to take others with you. If that’s you, I see you. I believe in you. This is for you”. – Buffy Mills

- Applications are open to Syilx Women in any stage of their educational journey (diploma, bachelors, masters, PhD) who are enrolled in a full-time program.
- Applicants must demonstrate leadership qualities and commitments to uplifting women in their community, family, workplace etc.

General Award Application Form

The information provided in the application will be used for the purposes of administering, awarding, and promoting the Building a Better Future Program. You may be contacted about future employment, training, or financial support opportunities.

Full Name:			
Email:		Phone:	
Mailing Address: <small>Include city and postal Code</small>			
Syilx Okanagan Nation Affiliation:			
Post-Secondary Institution:		Length of Program:	
What is the name of your program:		What year of study will you be entering in Sept 2026?	
Please tell us about your program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it full time studies (at least 3 courses per semester) • For Trades is there an apprenticeship involved • Please provide a link to your program page 			
Program of study: <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Trades <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			

The following information is required to complete your application package:

- Completed Application Form.
- Identify which awards you are applying for – you can apply for multiple with one application.
- Proof of Syilx Okanagan ancestry.
- Proof of enrollment
- Personal Narrative can be submitted as a separate document.
- All applicable bursary specific questions (answer those that you wish to apply for)
- Unofficial transcripts from your most recent studies.
- Minimum 2 letters of reference **sent directly by the writer** to tmontgomery@syilx.org

Please arrange for two references to be submitted. Reference letters should speak too why you deserve the award but also incorporate the attributes specific to the award(s) you are applying for. References must not be from a spouse or family member. ***reference letters not sent directly to the ONA will not be accepted.*

By signing, I agree to the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) collecting, processing, and disclosing my information and contacting me with opportunities related to employment, training, scholarships, and bursaries. I agree to ONA using my name and photo in external and internal communications including websites and social media. I understand that the information I have provided is subject to verification and audit.

Student signature:		Date:	
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Consent of parent/guardian for applicants under the age of 18: The parent or guardian of the person named above, consent to the above-named student applying for the ONA Building a Better Future Award and to the disclosure of personal information for use during this application process.

Print Name:		Address:	
Parent or guardian signature:		Date:	

2026 ONA BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE APPLICATION

Your answers to the questions provided in this application will serve to enlighten the selection committee about your experiences, perspectives, community engagement, achievements, and aspirations. Furthermore, it will explain your attributes relevant to each specific award you are applying for.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

What Is Your Story?

We invite you to share your story! Keeping in mind the above purpose (prompts provided below are optional) and here to help guide your response. Attach a separate document with your submission. Your submission **must be between 400 - 500** words.

- Introduce yourself, where you are from, what makes you, you?
- What is it about you that will contribute to your success in the future?
- Tell us about your community, nation, or family involvement – how do you show up for your relatives?
- What about being Syilx gives you strength? Do you think this will help you in your educational career?

BURSARY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Please answer the question(s) pertaining to the bursaries you are applying for. Each Bursary is listed and has its own criteria and question; these **MUST** be answered for the bursary you are applying for. Students are encouraged to apply for as many as they qualify for.

Education for Life Awards

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 400-500 words.

- Gaining an education provides you the opportunity to make changes not only for your life but for your community and Nation. Tell us how you see your education preparing you to build a brighter future for you, your family, community or Nation?

EMB Engineering Bursary

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 500 -1000 words

- What is one teaching or value from your Syilx community that has shaped how you see the world, and how do you see it influencing your studies or future work? Can you share an example of how this might show up in what you do?

EMB Surveying, Mapping, or Geomatics Bursary

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 400-500 words.

- How will your work in surveying, mapping, or geomatics help ensure Syilx lands are understood, respected, and sustained?

EMB Business Bursary

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 400-500 words.

To you, why is reciprocity important in the field of business, management, commerce or communication?

EMB Walking My Learning Forward Award

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 400-500 words.

- What does 'Walking My Learning Forward' mean to you, and how will your education help you give back to your community and the Syilx Nation?

Women Uplifting Women Leadership Award

Please respond to the statements below in a separate document. Your submission must be between 500-750 words.

- Describe how you have demonstrated leadership and uplifted other women in your life. What does community care among women mean to you, and how do you embody this in your personal journey.