**BURSARIES & GRANTS**

**Supporting UNISON Activists Bursary Scheme**

The West Midlands Region of UNISON has set up a bursary scheme for activists who are members of branches which are part of this region. The bursary scheme will provide financial support for activists who would like to participate in courses or programmes of self-development which build their skills, knowledge and abilities as trade unionists.

Below are the terms of the scheme. If you wish to apply please complete the application form and forward to Jennifer Morris at J.Morris@unison.co.uk or Jennifer Morris, UNISON West Midlands, 24 Livery Street, Birmingham, B3 2PA.

1. This scheme provides a bursary for UNISON activists for a wide variety of educational and development activities. For example: assistance to do “advance courses” like the Foundation Degree in Trade Union Studies at South Birmingham College, the Certificate in Trade Union Studies at Keele, Ruskin and Northern College, the MA in Industrial Relations at Keele, but not courses in the TUC/WEA and UNISON programmes, the Open University, or for vocational courses.
2. The bursary can be used to support trade union study visits to union centres in other countries.
3. The bursary can be used for doing research which is approved by the Education & Training Committee.
4. The bursary may be used to support someone on secondment which is related to improving knowledge and skills of trade unions, trade unionism and industrial relations.
5. The bursary may be used for course fees, books, equipment and travel.
6. An applicant must have a proven track record of activity in their branch, service group, self-organised group or at regional or national levels of the lay structure in UNISON, and have attended a range of TUC/UNISON courses. Applicants will be expected to provide evidence of this, and be able to explain what benefits they will gain from involvement in the chosen pathway of self-development.
7. The finance for the scheme will be drawn from the regional income part of the E&T budget. This is a limited fund and will depend on income from events in the Regional Programme and from charges to branches, with the provision of a guarantee of £1,000.00 reserve from the Regional Education budget. This can be drawn upon in the event of the bursary budget being empty at the time of a Bursary Sub-Committee meeting. Any expenditure from this reserve will be repaid to the Regional Education Budget on receipt of income.
8. At the meeting of the Education & Training Committee held on 13 March 2015, it was agreed that a maximum of £3,000 will be allocated to the Bursary Scheme for the year. From this budget bursaries will be awarded up to a maximum of £500 per application, following consideration of each application by the Bursary Sub-Committee, which meets after normal business meetings of the Education & Training Committee Meeting. The Bursary Sub-Committee will comprise 3 members plus a reserve.
9. In deciding the amount to allocate to an applicant the Sub-Committee may take into account other sources of funding applied for by the applicant. The applicant may only apply to one UNISON source of funding, either from a regional or national bursary. Applications to more than one UNISON source of funding, i.e. both regional and national bursaries, will not be permitted.
10. An individual is limited to one bursary per year.
11. There is a limit of 3 consecutive bursaries for a bursary for an individual. A bursary will not be considered for a fourth year. Thereafter the Bursary Sub-Committee will deal with further applications on a year by year basis, taking into consideration the provision of previous bursaries.
12. Bursaries are allocated on an annual basis and nothing in this guidance should be interpreted that a successful applicant in one year is entitled to a bursary in following years.
13. Evidence of expenditure, a pro-forma invoice, or acceptance letter for a place on a course will normally be required before a bursary is paid.
14. Preferably the bursary will be paid directly to the course/equipment provider, or on receipt of an invoice.
15. The allocation of bursaries will be made by a majority decision of the Education &Training sub-group.
16. Appeals against decisions of the bursary sub-group will be dealt with by an Appeals Panel comprising 3 members and 1 reserve. These will be current members of the Education & Training Committee who are not also members of the bursary sub-group.
17. All applications have to be signed by either the Branch Secretary or the Regional Officer of the applicant’s branch. Any applications received without one of these signatures will be returned to the sender.
18. Successful applicants will be required to produce a report for the Education & Training Committee at the halfway stage and on completion of the period of learning supported by the bursary. Failure to produce a report at the required time will result in the rejection of further applications for a bursary.

**January 2022**