



# Scholarship Program

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A Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) was used to design this program. This document is structured through current Best Practices within the greater equity, diversity and inclusion space. AWSN is receptive to modifying and adjusting this program as needed.

Thank you to Canadian Equality Consulting for support on this project, specifically CEC Founder and President Marcie Hawranik BA (Hons) MA, and EDI specialist Shefaly Gunjal MScSM.

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Thank you to TC Energy for supporting this program.

**Sponsor:**



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## AWSN Background

AWSN is a non-profit organization that supports advocacy towards a more diverse and inclusive STEM future. AWSN has been supporting the greater STEM community in Alberta for over 25 years. AWSN's primary focus is to connect, unite, support, and promote STEM programs throughout the province.

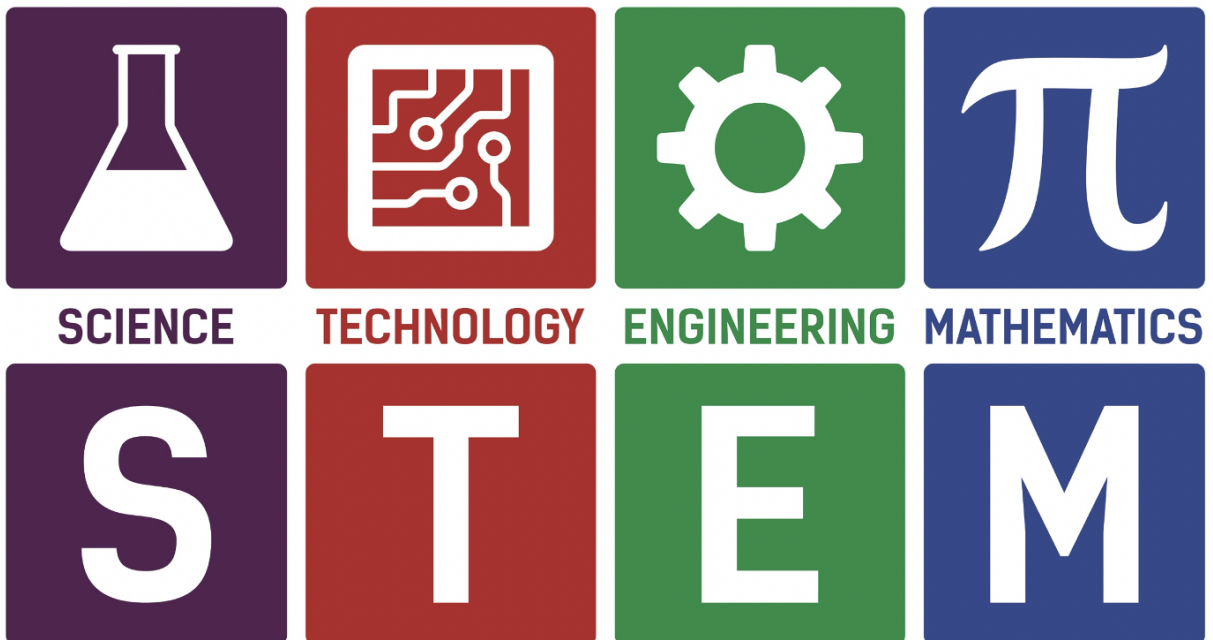
***Advocacy, Networking & Support for Alberta STEM programs that Promote Equity, Diversity & Inclusion.***

**Vision:** A transformative future with equal opportunity for all in STEM

***With strong STEM literacy at a public level, and where all can contribute to and have access to STEM.***

**Mission:** Enabling a culture of diversity, and inclusivity through STEM Programs.

***AWSN acts as a platform that initiates or supports programs, partners, and stakeholders who amplify, magnify, or accelerate systemic and social change within the greater community, allowing all to participate to their full capacity in STEM.***



## AWSN Scholarship Program Design Theory



The AWSN Scholarship program is part of larger equity efforts within the AWSN network. Traditionally the AWSN Scholarship program offered one scholarship with a focus on *underrepresented* populations in STEM, specifically the attrition-prone third and fourth year of an undergraduate program. With the support of TC Energy, the program will be expanded to ten scholarships and will offer AWSN a chance to better define the word *underrepresented*.

Through the guidance of a GBA+, the updated program design will use an intersectional lens - defined as an interconnected analytical framework for understanding how the social and political identities of an individual intersect to create different types of systemic oppression and discrimination\* and lived experiences. The award will be structured in a way that allows AWSN to distribute the scholarships in an equitable manner, limiting unconscious bias, stereotyping, and other barriers commonly faced by underrepresented groups within the review process, and to support AWSN's overall objective towards a more diverse and inclusive STEM future - where all can participate to their full capacity in STEM.

*"Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strengthen the scientific and engineering communities and the quality, social relevance, and impact of research. Sound equity, diversity and inclusion practices increase access to the largest pool of qualified potential participants, enhance the integrity of a program's application and selection processes, strengthen the research outputs, and increase the overall excellence of research."*  
NSERC

As individuals, each of us has identifying factors that make us who we are and influences how we experience our day-to-day life. The spaces we inhabit can also (re)produce cultures that are unwelcoming and restrictive. AWSN intends to design a scholarship program that will support dedicated and engaged STEM students with leadership potential who may otherwise be overlooked. Key factors that will be considered include:

- **1) Intersectionality of identities** - such as gender, race, ability, and diversity of lived experiences.
- **2) Leadership** - this quality can be evident in many forms both inside and outside of STEM and can include formal and informal leadership experiences such as leading school projects, clubs, and community involvement, among others.
- **3) Timing** - The third to final year of the undergraduate experience can propel increased attrition of STEM students. Meanwhile, for other demographics (such as re-engaging STEM professionals with a 2+ year career gap) the barrier can be financial, limiting STEM re-engagers to even consider going back to be re-educated.
- **4) Programming History** - AWSN is cognisant to the historical hegemonic gendering of STEM programming and knowledge production, and how this can limit inclusivity of all students - from computer science to nursing.

\*Columbia Law School - <https://intersectionality.law.columbia.edu/>

## Process and Timelines

The scholarship will be announced each year in April/May, with a submission deadline of June 30th.

The scholarship will be advertised through the AWSN network of inclusivity-, diversity- and equity-driven programming, collaborators, and partners and be distributed to the Alberta university/college faculty communities, such as:

- University of Alberta Faculty of Science, and Faculty of Engineering
- University of Calgary Faculty of Science, and Schulich School of Engineering
- Mount Royal University
- University of Lethbridge
- SAIT and NAIT
- Red Crow College
- Red Deer College
- MacEwan University
- Concordia University
- Olds College

The applicants will provide:

- For current students - A copy of their most recent transcript. Official transcripts will be required by AWSN from the scholarship recipients to verify the copy's authenticity.
- For STEM Re-engagers (2+ year career gap) - A copy of acceptance into programming.
- A completed application
- A reference letter to speak to the applicant's leadership demonstration
- Scholarship recipients will be asked to provide a short bio (optional - a picture) to be used by AWSN's Communications team.

Note: In case of technology barriers, applicants will have an option to mail in their submission.

Mailing address: AWSN

Attention: Scholarship Committee  
3553 - 31 Street NW, Box 53  
Calgary, Alberta T2L 2K7

Submissions will be processed through the summer months. AWSN will contact the scholarship recipients in late August or early September. A formal announcement will be made during the yearly AWSN WinSTEM Week celebrations in October.

AWSN will contact the remaining applicants to inform them that their application was not successful at this time. AWSN will include an invitation for all applicants to become engaged within the greater Alberta STEM community, as there may be other supports available - such as peer and formal mentorship, volunteer opportunities, leadership training etc. AWSN will also encourage applicants to join the AWSN [newsletter](#) to stay informed on these topics.

The next section will be the application template for the website.

## AWSN Scholarship - \$3000

The Alberta Women's Science Network (AWSN) is a non-profit organization that supports advocacy towards a more diverse, equitable and inclusive STEM future. The AWSN scholarship is an equity program designed through an intersectional lens\* to support STEM students underrepresented in their STEM field of study who demonstrate leadership as they pursue their STEM goals.

*AWSN acts as a platform that initiates or supports programs, partners, and stakeholders who amplify, magnify, or accelerate systemic and social change within the greater community, allowing all to participate to their full capacity in STEM.*

**Identity factors** that will be considered through an intersectional lens (in no particular order): Self-identified Woman, Self-identified Man, Non-binary, LGBTQ2S+, Persons with a disability, Black Person, Indigenous Person, Racialized Person, Age, Dependents/Caregiving Responsibility, University Location, and STEM Program Enrolment.

*\*Intersectional lens - defined as an interconnected analytical framework for understanding how the social and political identities of an individual intersects to create different types of systemic oppression and discrimination and lived experiences.*

*(Columbia Law School - <https://intersectionality.law.columbia.edu/>)*

Up to 10 scholarships will be awarded.

The application deadline is June 30th, 20XX at 11:59:59 p.m. MT

If mailing in an application, postmarked by June 30, 20XX

Submit to: AWSN

Attention: Scholarship Committee

3553 - 31 Street NW, Box 53

Calgary, Alberta T2L 2K7

If you have questions, please email [scholarships@awsn.org](mailto:scholarships@awsn.org) or call 1-855-ORG-AWSN

## Scholarship Categories

- STEM students who are continuing full-time undergraduate studies, entering their third to final year of an undergraduate program in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics in Alberta
- STEM re-engaging professionals returning to an Alberta STEM program to re-educate and/or update STEM credentials after an extended career gap (2+ years)

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## Personal Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Identifying Factors

Check one or more:

- Self-identified Woman
- Self-identified Man
- Non-binary
- LGBTQ2S+
- Person with a disability
- Black Person
- Indigenous Person
- Racialized Person
- Under 30
- Over 30
- Another \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to Answer

## Background Context

Current program enrollment, institution, and year in program.

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been awarded other scholarships or grants in the past 3 years?

- Yes If yes, please list and indicate the year awarded: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

Do you have financial dependents/caregiving responsibilities?

- Yes If yes, how many dependents will you be supporting during your school term? \_\_\_\_
- No

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## Essays

Leadership can come in many forms - both formal and informal. Discuss your involvement within your communities - from educational projects within your school, to volunteering within clubs/organizations, to how you support your greater community. Some things to consider:

- Why did you get involved?
- How do you believe your involvement shows initiative and innovation?
- Have your efforts strengthened others or led to change?
- How long have you been involved?
- What do you believe the long-term positive impacts of your involvement will be?

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Min 200 words (1,600 characters), Max 500 words (4,000 characters)

Please describe your education and career goals, including why you registered for your chosen program. Discuss how your lived experience informed your work.

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Min 100 words (800 characters), Max 250 words (2,000 characters).

Please share with us how this scholarship will assist you in the pursuit of your education and career goals. If financial assistance is a consideration, please include.

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Min 100 words (800 characters), Max 250 words (2,000 characters).

Next Page....

If selected, you will be asked to verify current contact information, provide proof of enrolment in an Alberta STEM educational institution, and an official transcript to receive your scholarship.

Please upload the following:

1. A copy of your most recent transcript.
2. A reference letter which speaks to your leadership demonstration - formal and/or informal

Submit...

Next Page...



## Agreement

By submitting this application, I confirm that I have the authority to submit this request and agree to the conditions described below.

The information I have provided in my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false or misleading statements will disqualify me from being eligible for this scholarship and may result in the retraction of any payment received. I consent to the use and storage of my personal information for the purpose of evaluating my application and to facilitate the potential payment of a scholarship. I consent to the use of my name, and essay content for the purpose of reporting, advertising, and promotion of the AWSN Scholarship, without further compensation. I consent to my identity factors being collected and used (anonymously) to better inform the awards design and to support the AWSN community as they promote equity, diversity and inclusion in STEM. If selected, I will provide a bio that can be used by AWSN for communications purposes (a picture is optional). I understand that AWSN reserves the right to change, modify or cancel the AWSN scholarship at any time. I consent to electronic or verbal contact with AWSN related to the AWSN scholarship program.

- I consent to receiving email notifications regarding this application.
- I have read the Agreement above and agree to all the terms therein.

How did you hear about this scholarship? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have recommendations on how this award may be improved, such as barriers within the application process or overlooked identity factors? \_\_\_\_\_

- Sign up to AWSN's [Newsletter](#) to hear about other opportunities within the greater STEM network.

Submit Form...

Next Page...

Thank you for applying for the AWSN Scholarship. Once you submit your application, you will receive an email confirmation from [webmaster@awsn.org](mailto:webmaster@awsn.org)

If you have questions, please email [scholarships@awsn.org](mailto:scholarships@awsn.org)

Thank you to our Sponsor:





## Data Collection, Training, and Forward Process

Once the scholarships are announced and communications are completed, AWSN will delete the personal information of the remaining years applicants.

AWSN will retain a database of yearly scholarship recipients and overall qualitative and quantitative statistics gathered from the program - including application numbers, overall demographics and identity factors, program and institution enrolment, how the applicant heard about the program, and their feedback on barriers through the application process. AWSN will work with Alberta Status of Women to collect data on scholarship distribution from both organizations' scholarship programs. Between the two groups, up to 60 scholarships will be distributed each year. AWSN will also retain the essay answers (minus any identifying information) as qualitative data. The essays may offer AWSN insights into how the applicants are involved within and outside the STEM environment, and if there may be further ways the AWSN network can support STEM students. All data collected - both quantitative and qualitative - will be reviewed through a GBA+ lens to inform and support the AWSN Scholarship team to refine the application and adjudication process - such as identifying award distribution gaps, what community groups are being missed for scholarship application announcements, and to assist the adjudicators as they work together to combat unconscious bias and stereotyping through the evaluation process. Each year a report will be presented to the AWSN Board and to TC Energy with a recap on the program year and how the program may be adjusted to better serve the students.

AWSN continues to be a leader in equity, diversity, and inclusion within the Alberta STEM ecosystem, but we can always do better. As a team, it is important to continue learning the most up-to-date EDI practices. It has been suggested that AWSN offer EDI training at least every two years at the leadership level within the AWSN network. The training should include EDI 101, unconscious bias, the impacts of bias, continuums of bias, microaggressions, discrimination, oppression, as well as biases in hiring/recruitment/evaluation. The volunteer AWSN Scholarship Team of adjudicators should either be included within this training or individuals with experience in EDI should be recruited.

For review purposes, the adjudicators can use these resources:

Status of Women Canada [GBA+](#)

NSERC [Unconscious Bias Review](#)

## Rubric

<b>AWSN Scholarship Rubric</b>				
<b>Candidate Name:</b>				
<b>Scholarship Category:</b>		3-last year undergrad student	Re-engager	
<b>Identity Factors:</b>				
Self-identified Women	Self-identified Man	LGBTQ2S+	Persons with a disability	
Non-binary	Black Person	Indigenous Person	Racialized Person	
Under 30	Over 30	Another: _____	Prefer not to Answer	
Program	Year	Institution	Previous Awards	Financial Dependents
<b>Essays</b>				
Rank each area out of 5. An average answer scores 2.5, an exceptional answer that fully meets the criteria scores 5 and a weak answer or red flags scores 1. Use partial scores when needed.				
<b>Community Involvement /Leadership</b>				
Demonstrates leadership in STEM - formal or informal				/5
Demonstrates leadership outside of STEM - formal or informal				/5
<b>Education and Career Goals</b>				
Clearly demonstrates genuine interest in pursuing a STEM career.				/5
Demonstrates personal attributes that will help them succeed in this career.				/5
<b>Overall Impressions of the Essays</b>				
Candidate shows creativity, sincerity, enthusiasm, open-mindedness.				/5
<b>Reference</b>				
Each ranked out of a score of 3. Note: Watch for unconscious bias in the reference letters.				
Clearly states candidate has leadership skills with examples.				/3
Statement that says they "recommend this candidate" strongly.				/3
<b>Total out of 31</b>				
Comments:				

## Scholarship Announcements

Successful candidates will be notified that they are award recipients in late August or early September. Each candidate will be asked to provide a short bio (500 words), a picture is optional.

The AWSN Scholarship Team will confirm that the candidates meet the criteria and verify current contact information before distributing the awards.

Checklist:

- Enrolment in an Alberta STEM educational institution/program
- An official transcript
- Current contact information

Once these documents and contact information have been verified, the AWSN Scholarship Team will work with the AWSN Financial Team to distribute the scholarship cheques.

The AWSN Scholarship Team will then work with the AWSN Communications Team to prepare for the scholarship award recipient announcements to the greater STEM community during WinSTEM week (traditionally during the second week in October).

## Resources:

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[https://www.awsn.org/sites/default/files/returning\\_to\\_work\\_after\\_an\\_extended\\_leave\\_2019.pdf](https://www.awsn.org/sites/default/files/returning_to_work_after_an_extended_leave_2019.pdf)

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Forsberg, G., & Stenbacka, S. 2017. Creating and challenging gendered spatialities: how space affects gender contracts. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 99(3), 223-237.

Jackson, L. 2017. Leaning Out in higher education; A structural postcolonial perspective. *Policy Futures in Education*, 15(3), 295-308.



McKinnon, M., & O'Connell, C. 2020. Perceptions of stereotypes applied to women who publicly communicate their STEM work. In *Nature: Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 7, 160.

Mollett, S., & Faria, C. 2018. The Spatialities of Intersectional Thinking: Fashioning feminist geographic futures. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 25(4), 565-577.

NSERC, 2021. "Bias in Peer Preview" Accessed January 14, 2021.  
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NSERC, 2021. "Framework on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion." Accessed January 14, 2021.  
[https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/framework\\_cadre-de-reference\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/framework_cadre-de-reference_eng.asp)

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Nunn, N. 2016. Emotional and Relational Approaches to Masculine Knowledge. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 18(3), 354-370.

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