

Aspire Awards – Frequently Asked Questions

“What are the four different funds available?”

Your Degree – a grant is available to support one customer or service user per annum who is aspiring to start or complete a law or medical undergraduate degree. Applicants must provide evidence of acceptance onto their chosen course along with evidence of obtained or predicted A level grades.

Your Career – a grant is available to help residents and service users who want to complete training to help get into employment, improve their career prospects or start a small business but are unable to do so due to lack of money. Grants will only be considered where there is no other source of funding available.

Your Talent – this funding is available for customers with a proven talent in art, sports or music to cover costs of training or equipment.

Your Community – a grant is available to support customers or local groups, partners and agencies who want to make a difference through a one-off project or longer-term initiative. You will need to demonstrate how the project will help make the local community, block or scheme a great place to live. This could include building community spirit, helping to resolve a local issue or addressing an area of particular need. The initiative needs to benefit Guinness customers first and foremost and show that it has the support of the local community.

“What is the deadline for getting my application form in and what if I can’t get all the information in time?”

We judge applications three times a year. The deadline is 5pm on the published date (this can be found on our website or contact aspire.awards@guinness.org.uk for details). If you can’t get all the information in time then your application will be held until the next round of judging.

“Who could I ask to provide me with a reference?”

Your reference must be by someone who has known you for at least two years. You could ask a school teacher, family friend or someone you currently work or volunteer with.

For a ‘Your Community’ award we’re also interested in hearing from people in the community that would benefit from your project or initiative. You could ask them to send you a supporting statement with what impact this will make to them or the community.

“What qualifies as proof of fees?”

We will need you to provide us with evidence of how much the course/training/equipment will cost. You could send us a link to the course/training provider’s website if they have the fees listed on there or a copy of the prospectus or booking form if that shows the fees.

If your application is for books or equipment then you can email us a wishlist from the website we can buy it from, or take a screen shot of the website with the prices, or if you have a brochure you could highlight the items you need and send that to us.

“Could you recommend a course for me?”

We are unable to recommend a course for you. You must have already selected the course you wish to study before you submit an application form.

“Can a member of Guinness staff help me fill in my application form?”

Yes, however the information on the form must be accurate to you. If applying for a community award then the staff member cannot be a beneficiary of the project.

“I’m part way through my course and the Aspire Awards have supported me previously, will I be able to apply again?”

You can only apply once in a financial year and only twice in the lifetime of the awards.

“When will I receive the funding?”

If your application is successful the Aspire Award team will send you an email or letter stating the next steps shortly after the judging has taken place. If your award is for course fees then you will need to book your place on the course and ask the training provider to send an invoice to you or the Aspire Awards team. If your award is for books or equipment then the Aspire Awards team will make arrangements for these to be sent to you within 6 weeks of you being informed that you have received an award (subject to availability).

“How does the funding get paid?”

We will pay course fees directly to the training provider and purchase equipment on your behalf.

“Who do I contact with questions I may have?”

Talk to Claire or Amy in the Aspire Awards team on aspire.awards@guinness.org.uk or 0203 819 0006.

Your Degree

“Would you consider any type of medical degree or just a doctor?”

We would consider the doctor of medicine degree and the bachelor of medicine undergraduate degree from level 4 to 6 in the National Qualification Framework (NQF). The NQF rule applies to law as well.

“Can I apply for a different degree or post graduate qualification?”

No, we are only offering funding for undergraduate medical or law based degrees.

Your Career

“I need a laptop to be able to complete assignments as part of my course and can’t afford to buy one, does this qualify as an exceptional circumstance?”

No, we wouldn’t be able to accept that as an exceptional circumstance. Exceptions for requesting a laptop are for courses where the laptop and software are completely bespoke such as Graphic Design. You could have a look to see if there are alternative funding options available to you. This is a helpful website when looking for other grant funds: <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

“What qualifications can I apply for under Your Career funding”

We will consider applications for vocational qualifications up to level 3 in the National qualification framework as set by the government:

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

We do not offer funding for undergraduate or post graduate degrees or qualifications level 4 upwards.

Your Talent

“Can I use this to cover travel for my coach or parents too?”

No, travel is only for the person who applied for the grant.

Your Community

“What sort of projects qualify for a Your Community grant?”

This grant can cover a range of projects such as: creating an allotment on a communal area of land; tools for gardening on a sheltered housing scheme; building a children’s play park; a summer play scheme or summer fete. The list really is endless. The main thing to consider when applying is whether the project helps to resolve a local issue or address an area of particular need. It should benefit Guinness customers and be supported by the local community.

“How do I know whether the project will benefit more than 80% of Guinness customers?”

As part of your research into the project you should find out how many people will benefit from the project and check that 80% of those are Guinness customers. If you would like to talk through your potential project please get in touch with us on aspireawards@guinness.org.uk and we will put you in touch with our Sustainability Enabler who will be able to advise you.

“What is the application process?”

Step One

Decide which funding you would like to apply for. Please note that only one type of funding per application form will be considered and if you’re applying for a training course you must find the course before applying.

Step Two

Find out the costs of the training, equipment or funding you require. You will need to provide proof of this with your application. (Please refer to the terms and conditions for full details of what grants can be used for)

Step Three

Fill in the form telling us why you should receive an Aspire Award; please provide as much detail as possible.

Step Four

Get a reference, this must be by someone who has known you for at least two years. You could ask a school teacher, family friend or someone you currently work or volunteer with.

For a ‘Your Community’ award we’re also interested in hearing from people in the community that would benefit from your project or initiative. You could ask them to send you a supporting statement with what impact this will make to them or the community.

Step Five

Send your completed form to us. Applications will be considered three times per year, please see our website for the latest submission deadlines:

- Email it to Aspire.awards@guinness.org.uk
- Post it to: Aspire Awards, 30 Brock Street, Regent’s Place, London NW1 3FG

Remember to include your reference and proof of costs. Please note that incomplete applications or applications without the supporting documents will not be considered.