The Crowther Fund
General information and guidance notes
Academic Year 2019/20

All applications for Crowther funding for study between 1 May 2019 and 30 April 2020 must be completed in full by both new and continuing applicants and should be sent to the Secretary as soon as possible after applications open on 1 November 2018.

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 28 FEBRUARY 2019.

Purpose

The Crowther Fund was established as a tribute to the late Lord Crowther, the University’s first Chancellor. Grants are awarded by the Crowther Fund Awards Advisory Board, and are limited to Open University graduates only.

The objective of the Crowther Fund is to assist Open University graduates in building upon the work already undertaken for their Open University degree. This is likely to be through formal study or research, or by a general broadening of experience, for example through a period of voluntary work. The Board is willing to consider applications for grants towards any activity, which could be considered to be inspired by, or an extension of, work already undertaken towards an Open University degree.

How much support is available?

Awards from the Crowther Fund are intended primarily to assist in meeting expenses such as tuition and travel costs. Once an award has been made for a specific purpose e.g. fees, the Board will not normally approve re-allocation because of changed circumstances.

Awards are considered up to a maximum of £1,000 but most awards are for between £500 – £750 due to the limited amount of funds available. Applications for large sums of money to support full-time study are less likely to be successful than applications for more moderate sums to support part-time study.

Who should apply?

Applications are invited for grants to assist with:

• study or further education
• formal supervised research proposals
• projects which are either concerned with the community or an extension of studies already undertaken as an Open University student, or activities which are being undertaken or in which the graduate has been invited to participate because of his/her Open University studies
• other activities such as study tours, special tuition, ‘master’ classes, and personal lines of study.

The Board gives priority to those who have obtained a good honours degree without having received credit transfer (first class or upper second class honours degree), and in particular, those from a deprived educational background are prioritised. Applications from previous recipients of Crowther Fund Awards are also looked upon favourably but the Board cannot guarantee funding from one year to the next.

The demand on the Crowther Fund considerably exceeds the resources available each year. Therefore, if you cannot demonstrate that you meet any of these criteria, your application is unlikely to be successful.
In assessing applications, the Board looks for a plausible progression in a student’s study and a feasible study plan. Proposals that relate to a change of career are encouraged.

The Board consider the following aspects within applications to the Fund:

• the level of degree held (taking credit transfer into account)
• the overall quality of the application
• the apparent need for funding
• the goals/progression that the student would achieve.

Applications are judged solely on their merits: the Crowther Fund is not a fund to relieve financial hardship. Applications are regarded as confidential, and no publication is made of the sums awarded without the permission of the recipient.

Awards are not made to assist applicants towards the cost of Open University undergraduate study, unless such courses form part of a postgraduate or professional diploma for which the applicant is registered.

Applications for the 2019/20 year can be made for study or projects that commence from 1 May 2019. Awards are not made to reimburse expenses already incurred, however retrospective claims for course fees will be considered for courses that started after 1 January 2019. The fund cannot be used for fees of courses that begin before 1 January 2019.

Please note that awards are made for one year at a time and the Board cannot guarantee continued support. Applications for further awards must be made each year. You should also note that the Board only makes awards for equipment in very exceptional circumstances. The decision of the Board is final.

What do I need to provide?

All applicants
You will need to complete the Application Form electronically and email it to us at OU-Crowther-fund@open.ac.uk

Continuing applications
If you have previously received funding from the Crowther Fund for the qualification/course of study/project or other activity you will also need to supply a progress report from your supervisor, tutor or other person acquainted with your work. Applicants who are studying towards a PhD, MPhil, MLit or BPhil must attach a report from their current supervisor to their application. These documents should be submitted electronically to us at the same time as your application form.

How do I apply?
Applications for the Crowther Fund will be available from November 2018 from the following page:
http://www.open.ac.uk/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/ou-funding

Please complete the form electronically and email it to The Secretary at OU-Crowther-fund@open.ac.uk with any supporting evidence as outlined above. If you have any queries, you can contact the Crowther Fund team by using the same email address.

The closing date for applications is 28 February 2019

Help with your application form

Please complete the application fully. Incomplete or poorly completed application forms will not be considered favourably by the Awards Board.

Section 2 Financial details. In this section, you are asked to provide information regarding your household income. This information will be treated confidentially. You should provide details of your expected gross income in the tax period April 2019 to April 2020 for yourself and for any spouse or partner living with you at the time of your application. If you are living with your parents, you do not need to provide information relating to their income.

What happens after I have applied?

The Award Board meeting will normally take place in April and applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application as soon after the meeting as possible.

Recipients of awards must be prepared to submit a report on the conduct of their work if the Board directs. Failure to do so may involve the cancellation or suspension of an award. Continuing applicants must supply the report in order to be considered for further funding.