

# The ABCN *Accelerate* Scholarship

## 2023 Application Guide



Accelerate Scholars at the 2022 Leadership Summit, Sydney.

The ABCN *Accelerate* Scholarship Program is a three-year program that supports high-potential students who are experiencing socio-economic challenges to achieve their potential.

ABCN is seeking students who demonstrate significant promise to succeed in their aspirations and to become a leader in their desired field.

The 2023 scholarships are for years 2024-2026. Applications will open on **Monday 19 June 2023** and must be submitted by **Friday 25 August 2023**. Principals will be notified of award winners **Friday 3 November 2023** and are responsible for notifying them of the outcome.

**ABCN**   
**Foundation**  
CELEBRATING  
**10 YEARS**  
*Empowered for tomorrow*

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE SCHOLARSHIPS?

For many students from low socio-economic areas, financial and mentoring support is invaluable. Often it can make all the difference when it comes to achieving their goals.

ABCN scholarships aim to empower students to realise their potential. They are directed at students who would benefit from financial assistance and mentoring support to successfully complete Years 11 & 12 and transition to tertiary education, training and/or work.

### WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS?

The scholarship is made up of three components of equal value and importance – financial support; mentoring support – structured 1:1 mentoring and peer mentoring; and collaborative workshops.

The financial component equates to \$7000 over three years – \$2000 each year in Years 11 and 12 and \$3000 in the first year of tertiary study as well as travel expenses to attend ABCN functions, work and program events.

The mentoring components are paramount. Each scholarship winner will be provided with their own dedicated corporate mentor from an ABCN member company to provide assistance and support through their studies and work. Peer Mentoring is a key element of the program. Scholars and mentors from across all years and states interact and exchange learnings twice a year through online sessions.

Scholars and mentors meet in four structured group sessions per year, alongside monthly one-on-one meetings. During this time, they will explore their goals, aspirations, challenges, achievements and areas for development alongside monthly one-on-one meetings and attendance at collaborative workshops.

### WHAT CAN THE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS BE USED FOR?

The scholarship funds can be used to cover any fees or costs associated with education. All *Accelerate* scholars receive a debit card at the beginning of the program, onto which ABCN will load the relevant funds for each year.

A written request by the school principal and written approval by ABCN is required prior to proceeding with any educational costs that are not outlined in the examples below and are over \$1500.

Some examples of items or services which can be purchased may include:

- > home or laptop computer, software and printer
- > books, study aids and stationery
- > tuition, specialist equipment and course costs
- > other support for education costs such as uniforms and transport.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

All Year 10 students who are Australian citizens or permanent residents are eligible to apply. This includes students from schools outside the ABCN network and students who have never participated in an ABCN program.

**We are grateful to the following organisations that are sponsoring targeted scholarships this year:**

First Nations students – with thanks to CBA, KPMG, Microsoft and Stockland  
 NESB (Non-English-speaking Background) refugee or new arrival to Australia – with thanks to Microsoft  
 WA – with thanks to the Fogarty Foundation and Stan Perron Charitable Foundation  
 NSW – with thanks to the James N. Kirby Foundation  
 Interested in pursuing a career in fashion, design, retail or marketing – with thanks to PVH

Our warmest appreciation also goes to TAL, the Bennelong Foundation, Anthony Costa Foundation, Be Kind Sydney, Carla Zampatti Foundation, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation through Eldon & Anne Foot Trust, Harold Mitchell Foundation, KPMG, Ventia, VGI Partners and James N Kirby Foundation for their generous support of our current scholarships, the Waratah Education Foundation for their support of the Highly Commended Awards and to KPMG for their pro bono support of the application process.



**'In this program I have learnt so much from the mentors, other scholars and staff. We learnt so much about ourselves and the potential we have if we put it to use. It pushed me out of my comfort zone but also boosted my self-confidence and belief in myself.'**

Sophia, First Nations *Accelerate* scholar

### WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION?

ABCN is seeking students who demonstrate significant promise and personal motivation to succeed in their aspirations. We will be looking for students with potential to grow with the program's financial and mentoring support, and to become leaders who can contribute to society in their desired fields. The application process gives students the opportunity to share their experiences about where they have come from and the challenges they have faced. Important factors for consideration include:

- 1 low socio-economic and/or other significant challenges (social, cultural or economic)
- 2 engagement, effort and drive.

We are looking for students who have demonstrated significant effort and application in their academic or extra-curricular activities. At least two out of the following three categories must be met:

- > academic – demonstrating commitment and high engagement in academic school work
- > leadership – demonstrating responsibility and organisation at school and/or extra-curricular activities
- > community service and sports – reflecting commitment and dedication to others in need, to their extended family unit and/or a team

### HOW DOES A STUDENT APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

**The ABCN Foundation has introduced a new three-step application process in 2023. The final application is submitted by the Principal or supporting teacher.**

#### Step 1: School Nomination Form (section 1)

- > Principals/supporting teachers nominate students who they believe are suitable applicants for the Accelerate scholarship.
- > Principals/supporting teachers complete the nomination form with relevant school and student details.

- > A student application deadline date is nominated by the school for the return of completed student forms to be emailed to the principal.

#### Step 2: Student Application Form (section 2 + 3)

- > When the School Nomination Form is submitted, an email will be sent to each nominated student containing:
  - > information about the Accelerate scholarship program
  - > the deadline date for their application form to be submitted to the principal
  - > a link to the 2023 Accelerate Student Application Form prefilled with their school contact details.
- > The student completes the Student Application Form, paying particular attention to their essay and submits the form.
- > The Principal/supporting teacher may review the student essay and provide feedback and support if required.

#### Step 3: School Endorsement Form (section 4)

- > When the student submits their Student Application Form, the principal will receive an email with a link to the School Endorsement Form which contains the student's prefilled answers including their essay.
- > To support and finalise the application, the principal/supporting teacher reviews the student's answers and completes the Principal's Assessment section.
- > Principals are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to help us understand the student's background and challenges, their contribution to their community or school, their leadership potential, why they are an exceptional student and why they would excel in the Accelerate program.
- > An email containing a PDF summary of the full application will be sent to the Principal immediately after the form is submitted.

**Final applications must be submitted online to ABCN by 5pm, Friday 25 August 2023.**

**Principals will be notified of student Accelerate scholarship application outcomes by 3 November 2023.**



**‘Thank you to the ABCN Foundation. I have had lots of opportunities meeting new people and benefiting from their knowledge and wisdom. My favourite part of the program was the time I had with my mentor and the advice I received from his time and wisdom.’**

Hamid, *Accelerate scholar* studying Bachelor of Education

### WHAT IS THE ESSAY ABOUT?

Students are required to submit an essay of up to 750 words addressing the following topic:

- > The difference this ABCN scholarship will make to my life and the community around me.

Please take the time to ensure your student reflects and succinctly captures their story. It may be a challenge however it is an integral part of 'why' they are applying and gives the reviewers a better understanding of who the student is, their experiences and aspirations and why they are so extraordinary. The essay is the qualitative scoring component of the application process and may be a defining factor when there are a high number of applicants who share the same quantitative data result.

The student should write their essay framed on responding to the questions outlined below:

- > What will be the benefits to you of having a corporate mentor, how can they help you most?
- > How will the scholarship benefit you financially, what will you use the scholarship funds for?
- > What is the impact you would like to make on your community in the future? What contribution do you currently make to your community, school and/or home life e.g. involvement/leadership roles in extra-curricular activities and/or family/community responsibilities?

### HOW WILL THE SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS BE MADE?

The applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Scholarship Selection Panel, which is made up of representatives from the ABCN Foundation, supporters and educators. Applications will be considered on merit providing equal opportunity to all applicants. Selection criteria for successful applications will consider the applicant's academic competence and personal leadership qualities, their level of need for support in their studies, their principal's recommendation and, most importantly, their potential to grow and succeed in their aspirations.

### WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP?

Through the *Accelerate* Scholarship, scholars not only gain confidence and emotional support, but also practical skills in goal setting, planning, communicating, relationship-building and networking, time and financial management and career pathway advice. Scholars establish both a peer and professional network which often provides them with their first real work opportunity.

To get the most out of the program, we expect scholars to display commitment by responding promptly to mentor contact and attending all meetings and sessions. It is a mandatory requirement that scholars attend all scheduled program sessions unless under permissible circumstances.

The initial introductory scholar/mentor meeting is held at the scholar's school. For all subsequent meetings, a mixture of face to face and online meetings are expected. The face to face meetings may include workplace visits, university visits and other relevant career/study based excursions. Scholars are required to travel into their mentor's place of work, typically in the CBD, during school/work hours and are expected to be proactive in maximising this relationship throughout the term of the scholarship.

In the first year of the program, scholars will spend a minimum of 14 hours with their mentors in structured sessions and informal meetings. All Year One scholars are expected to attend the annual Leadership Summit as a year group. It may involve interstate travel and accommodation for some (the cost of this is covered by ABCN).

Years two and three are based around study commitments however scholars must only spend their financial award on education related expenses. They will also attend other ABCN facilitated sessions and events. Scholars, principals and mentors are required to complete an evaluation at the end of each calendar year. Scholars must only spend their financial award on education related expenses.

If the scholar changes schools, the scholar must inform ABCN and provide forwarding contact information. The continuance of each scholarship will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

ABCN reserves the right to publish or use the student essay to promote the ABCN Foundation. Student identities will not be disclosed without consent.



'I love and appreciate the opportunities (the *Accelerate* program) has created for me and has allowed me to change as a person, becoming more open minded to loads of different things.'

Salam, *Accelerate* scholar

'Salam is a really kind, open and intelligent person, we share a love of reading!'

Anna, Salam's mentor

## CASE STUDY

As the principal of Plumpton High School and member of the NSW Principals Council having worked in partnership extensively with the Australian Business Community Network (ABCN) for more than 7 years I have experienced and witnessed the increased social mobilisation of our graduating students as a direct result of being emersed in ABCN programs.

Plumpton High School is located in Western Sydney with approximately 80% of our students coming from the bottom two quarters of socio-economic disadvantage in Australia. ABCN programs have enabled students to be mentored by executives from national and multinational organisations who have provided expert support in goal setting, time management, networking, access and insight into high-value career opportunities and the organisations they work for. A key piece of the coaching and mentoring students receive is gaining an understanding of the corporate employment world, the educational requirements to access this world that students had previously not know existed or would have had access to. As students have built their understanding of the corporate world their self-confidence has also grown significantly with them understanding that they have the capacity to succeed in that world. The *Accelerate* program also provides much needed funding for scholarship holders that is used to support their education through purchasing of computer or tutoring as examples.



**Tim Lloyd with 2022 *Accelerate* scholar, Bushra**

Plumpton students have been awarded 9 ABCN Scholarships over the last 7 years, which has resulted all going on to attend university then accessing post university employment where students have completed study, and knowing these students as their principal I can confidently state that should they not have had the *Accelerate* scholarship I believe their trajectories would have been lower that is evident. I provide a case study below of one scholarship example to demonstrate the high value of the *Accelerate* program in partnership with the school's education provision:

- > National ABCN Scholar in 2016,
- > Blacktown City Council Youth Ambassador 2017
- > Plumpton High School Vice-Captain in 2018.
- > Selected on the NSW Government's Youth Advisory Council for 2018, representing 2.4m children and young people
- > School Dux in 2018,
- > Recipient of Education Minister's Award for Excellence 2018
- > Western Sydney University Fast Forward Academic Excellence Scholarship that provides \$20,000 to support ongoing education.
- > Current member of the Plumpton High School Alumni group mentoring students in public speaking and project management 2019-2023.
- > Designer/Marketing Associate - Advance.org 2023.
- > Membership and Events Coordinator Membership and Events Coordinator Advertising Council Australia 2023

ABCN's ability to scale their highly valued and sought after *Accelerate* program has excellent potential working in partnership with its member companies and schools in both regional and metropolitan areas.

I state this having a deep understanding of regional NSW having grown up in a country town and seeing the potential for families and students to benefit from such an opportunity through both face-to-face and online access to the corporate world that builds a new world of possibility. Having successfully embedded the *Accelerate* program and other ABCN programs in a school setting where we mentor in excess of 600 students each year through ABCN I believe that this is possible on a smaller scale in regional areas knowing the value such communities see in external expert support that is otherwise not accessible. This in turn increasing opportunities for students to then engage in tertiary education where previously they did not have access to mentors who have studied at a tertiary level in a field they may choose to pursue. The added ability for the mentor to also provide their mentee access to networking opportunities increases their confidence and capacity to access an otherwise unknown world.

As such, I could not endorse and recommend the ABCN Scholarship Foundation *Accelerate* Program more highly as it is changing the life trajectory of young people and their families profoundly.

**Tim Lloyd,**  
**Principal, Plumpton High School**

## ABCN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 3-STEP APPLICATION FORM 2023

### Step 1 - SCHOOL NOMINATION FORM (section 1)

School teacher or principal to complete step 1 to nominate student/s. To receive this form click here: [linda.harkin@abcn.com.au](mailto:linda.harkin@abcn.com.au)

### Step 2 - STUDENT APPLICATION FORM (section 2 and 3 - essay)

The questions that will appear in the online application form are listed below. We recommend using these to prepare your responses to each question **before** beginning the online form.

### Step 3 - SCHOOL ENDORSEMENT FORM (section 4)

Principals will receive a final step 3 form to review student/s applications and complete the application for final submission.

For a quick guide to our new application process, click here: [How To Apply for Accelerate Scholarships 2023](#)

## Section 2. Student Details

10. Is the student currently in Year 10?\*

Note: students need to be entering Year 11 in 2023 to be eligible.

YES

NO

11. What is the student's gender?\*

Male

☐

Female

☐

Transgender/Intersex

☐

Prefer not to say

☐

12. Is the student a citizen or permanent resident of Australia?\*

Note: Students need to be a citizen or a permanent resident of Australia to be eligible.

YES

NO

13. Which represents more accurately the student's background?\*

English-speaking

☐

Non English-speaking

☐

14. Does the student live in a rural, regional or remote part of Australia?\*

YES

NO

15. Is the student of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent?\*

No

☐

Yes, Aboriginal descent

☐

Yes, Torres Strait Islander descent

☐

Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent

☐

Prefer not to say

☐

ONLINE SAMPLE

16. In the event we receive targeted funding, would the student like to be considered for one or more of the following targeted scholarships? (tick all that apply)\*

Note - successful targeted scholarships winners will not be publicly acknowledged without the student's consent.

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Nations Peoples	<input type="checkbox"/>
NESB (Non-English Speaking Background), refugee or new arrival to Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Western Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Victoria	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Victoria	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interested in pursuing a career in fashion, design, retail or marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Does the student live in out-of-home or foster care accommodation?\*

If the student lives in out-of-home or foster care accommodation, the application will continue at question 29.

YES	NO
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If the student lives in out-of-home or foster care accommodation, the application will continue at question 29.

18. Is the student from a low socio-economic status background?\*

YES	NO
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19. Is anyone in the student's household the holder of a Commonwealth Concession or Health Care Card?\*

Yes	<input type="radio"/>
No	<input type="radio"/>
Unsure	<input type="radio"/>

20. What is the highest level of education among the adult members of the student's household?\*

Bachelor degree or above

☐

Cert III - Advanced Diploma

☐

Year 12

☐

Below Year 12

☐

21. How many people live in the student's household?\*

Enter the number of people living within the student's household (including the student).

22. What is the number of parents or primary carers living in the student's household? \*

1

☐

2 or more

☐

**Please describe the employment status of the student's parents or primary carers:**

**Definition of each job type:**

Machinery operator, driver or labourer: Operate machines, plants, vehicles and other equipment to perform a range of agricultural, manufacturing and construction functions, move materials, and transport passengers and freight.

Community worker: Provide services in the areas of aged care and childcare, education support, hospitality, defence, policing and emergency services, security, travel and tourism, fitness, sports and personal services and assist health professionals in the provision of patient care, provide information and support on a range of social welfare matters.

Clerical worker: Perform general administrative, data entry and word processing tasks.

Sales workers: Sell goods, services and property, and provide sales support in areas such as operating cash registers and displaying and demonstrating goods.

Technicians or trade workers: Perform a variety of skilled tasks, applying broad or in-depth technical, trade or industry specific knowledge, often in support of scientific, engineering, building and manufacturing activities.

Managers or professionals: Plan, organize, direct, control, coordinate and review the operations of government, commercial, agricultural, industrial, non-profit and other organisations and departments.

23. Parent or primary carer 1 employment status:\*

Employed (full time)

☐

Employed (casual or part time)

☐

Unemployed

☐

24. Parent or primary carer 1 employment type: \*

Machinery operator, driver or labourer

☐

Community, clerical or sales worker

☐

Technician or trade worker

☐

Manager or professional

☐

25. Parent or primary carer 2 employment status:\*

Employed (full time)

☐

Employed (casual or part time)

☐

Unemployed

☐

26. Parent or primary carer 2 employment type:\*

Machinery operator, driver or labourer

☐

Community, clerical or sales worker

☐

Technician or trade worker

☐

Manager or professional

☐

27. How many bedrooms are in the student's household?\*

28. Does the student live in public housing or other supported accommodation? \*

Yes

☐

No

☐

Don't Know

☐

29. Is the student a refugee?\*

YES

NO

30. If the student is not a refugee, have they suffered any traumatic experience?\*

YES

NO

31. Does the student have a disability?\*

YES

NO

## Section 3: Student's essay

32. Students are required to submit an essay of approx 750 words addressing the following topic:

**'The difference this ABCN scholarship will make to my life and the community around me.\***

File Upload ▼

### Student Essay:

Please take the time to ensure you reflect and succinctly capture your story. It may be a challenge however it is an integral part of 'why' you are applying and gives the reviewers a better understanding of who you are, your experiences and aspirations and why you are so extraordinary.

Please write your essay framed on responding to the questions outlined below:

1. What will be the benefits to you of having a corporate mentor, how can they help you most?
2. How will the scholarship benefit you financially, what will you use the scholarship funds for?
3. What is the impact you would like to make on your community in the future? What contribution do you currently make to your community, school and/or home life e.g. involvement/leadership roles in extra-curricular activities and/or family/community responsibilities?

Please write and format your essay in Microsoft Word (4500 character limit) then upload your file by clicking the 'Choose a File' button below.

Add Question

**If your school has not applied before or you have any questions about the updated three-step application process for the 2023 ABCN Accelerate Scholarship, please contact Linda Harkin, Program and Administration Coordinator at [linda.harkin@abcn.com.au](mailto:linda.harkin@abcn.com.au)**

ONLINE SAMPLE