

RETAIL EDUCATION

Scholarships

2024 Application Guidelines:

Thank you for applying to the **Retail Education Scholarship Program!**

Please review this document carefully as it includes all the information necessary to successfully apply for a scholarship.

Should you have any questions, you can contact the Retail Council of Canada's Education team at education@retailcouncil.org or call us at 1-888-373-8245.

Best of luck on your Application!

Scholarship Application Process:

Who is eligible to apply?

To be considered for one of the scholarships, applicants must meet one the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled full-time or part-time at a Canadian college or university for Fall 2024
- Currently pursuing a retail, business, fashion, marketing or any other retail related post-secondary program
- Currently working part-time or full-time within the retail industry We will accept applications who have been laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

What do applicants need in order to apply?

1. **Complete the online application and release form** – Application form found on RCC's Application Website - https://retailcouncilcanada-apply.smapply.io/prog/2024_retail_education_scholarship_program/
2. **An official transcript from the last two semesters from either a high school or post-secondary institution**
3. **Proof of applicant's enrollment in a Canadian post-secondary institution. One of the following is acceptable:**
 - Letter of acceptance or conditional letter of acceptance
 - Proof of tuition payment

- Letter from Office of Registrar
- 4. A reference letter (200 words max.) from a current employer that includes the following:**
- Applicant’s demonstrated and continued commitment to the retail industry
 - Ways in which the applicant has distinguished him/herself from other employees
 - Reasons indicating why the applicant is deserving of this scholarship
 - Current employer/supervisor contact information

5. Artificial Intelligence in Retail:

Please upload a typed essay (800-1000 words max) in PDF or MS Word file format, addressing the following statement:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is dedicated to creating intelligent machines that mimic human cognitive functions. In the retail industry, AI has swiftly emerged as a game-changer, transforming various operational facets. Retailers now utilize AI for personalized customer experiences, predictive analytics, inventory management, and decision-making processes. AI algorithms analyze vast amounts of data to forecast consumer behavior, optimize pricing strategies, and enhance marketing campaigns. Its applications also extend to chatbots for customer service and virtual assistants to streamline operations.

Evaluate the current impact of AI in the retail industry and forecast its future role in revolutionizing the sector. Explore the diverse applications of AI within retail, including personalized customer experiences, data-driven decision-making, supply chain optimization, and predictive analytics. Discuss the ethical considerations and challenges accompanying the pervasive use of AI in retail and propose strategies to leverage its benefits while mitigating risks. (800-1000 words max)

6. Make Retail Your Career Presentation

Your presentation must include the following:

- Introduce yourself
- Employer: Where do you work and why?
- Retail experience: How has the past year affected your experience in the industry?
- Post-secondary school and program of study: What program will you be taking in September 2024 and why?
- A career in retail: Retail is an industry that offers new challenges and opportunities every day. It is fast and exciting and requires talented individuals to fill a variety of roles, from front-line customer service and store management to data analysis and cyber security. Tell us why you are one of these special professionals.

Presentation Video Requirements:

- Must introduce yourself including name & current retail position

- Use a combination of videos, text, images and/or animation to address the statement above
- Presentation submission should be between 2-3 minutes in length
- Please have as minimal background noise as possible
- All sources must be cited - No uncopyrighted material (music, images etc.)
- Presentations / Videos must be filmed **horizontally**. Wide screen / 16:9 / Landscape
- Presentations should be .pptx .mp4, .mov, and .avi file types only. Please note: your presentation must be able to play on both Mac and PC Platforms
- Speak slowly, clearly and show enthusiasm
- Suggested programs to create a presentation: PowerPoint, iMovie, Windows Media Player, Animoto, Kizoa to name a few.

7. Proof of applicant's enrolment in a Canadian post-secondary institution.

One of the following will suffice:

- Letter of acceptance or conditional letter of acceptance
- Proof of tuition payment
- Letter from Office of Registrar

Please note: This scholarship program is for students who are enrolled in or applying to retail, business or marketing-related post-secondary programs in Fall 2024. If you are not enrolled or applying to one of these programs or attending school in Fall 2024 your application will NOT be considered.

Application Deadline – March 29, 2024

Retail Council of Canada must receive applications on or before March 29, 2024 . Late applications will not be considered.

How to Apply:

Please click on the following link to start the application process. Please note: the 2024 application process is completed online at: https://retailcouncilcanada-apply.smapply.io/prog/2024_retail_education_scholarship_program/

1. Create your account in Retail Council of Canada's Application website
2. Click on Apply to create you online account.
3. Fill out the Application Form
4. Upload your Application to application website – PDF or Word file format accepted only
5. Upload your Presentation – Please refer to the "Presentation Requirements" for upload details
6. Scan and Upload reference letter directly to application website

7. Scan and Upload proof of enrolment directly to application website
8. Scan and Upload transcripts– Please note that all transcripts must be received before deadline. You will receive confirmation in the application that the transcripts have been received in the transcripts section of your application webpage

Parents / Legal Guardians Account

Legal guardians must also grant permission for their children under the age of 18 to participate in the Retail Education Scholarship Program. Persons under the age of 18 will not be considered for a Retail Education Scholarship until the legal consent form and release form in the application have been digitally signed by the Parent / Guardian Account.

To create a Parent / Guardian Account and attach it to your child's account:

1. Please have your child create their account in the 2024 Retail Council of Canada's Application website. Please see instructions above.
2. Once in your child's account, on the right-hand side of the page, please click Add Team Member.
3. Your child can enter your name and email address and an email will be sent automatically from our system to the parent/guardian to provide access to the account.

Please note that the information collected in this account is only used only for the 2024 Retail Education Scholarship Program.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How are the applications processed?

- Applications will be reviewed by a panel of retail industry experts.
- Every effort will be made to engage a cross-section of Canadian industry professionals who possess a range of experience in the review process.

When will applicants know if their submission has been successful?

- The review process typically takes about four to six weeks.
- A decision will be made on or around May 15, 2024.

What does the selection process involve?

- Applicants' submissions will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the "What do applicants need in order to apply?" section.
- We will evaluate to what extent applicants have demonstrated an interest in pursuing a career in retail and what degree of thought they have put into the ways they will make an impact on the retail industry.

Tips for submitting a scholarship application:

1. Please ensure that you meet the outlined requirements.
2. Start the application process early.
3. Take your time writing and developing your scholarship essay and presentation.
4. Reference letters and transcripts take time... plan ahead.
5. Follow the award criteria as closely as possible, as this is what you will be judged on.
6. Think creatively about how you will present your submission.

Preparation:

1. **Allow yourself time** – ensure that you provide yourself with enough time to prepare your research and thoughts. Providing yourself with at least two weeks will enable you to properly prepare.
2. **Read the scholarship topic carefully** – ensure that you understand the purpose of the question and the information that it seeks from you.
3. **Do your research** – combined with your education and intuitional insights concerning the retail industry, do as much research as possible (newspaper and magazine articles, websites, textbooks, etc.) to reinforce the position that you take in your essay and to support your ideas with examples and case studies.
4. **Outline your thoughts** – it's always a good idea to begin formulating your thoughts by roughly outlining them in a document before you begin writing. Include main points with supporting thoughts, ideas and examples. This will help you determine your flow of information before you begin writing your essay.

Writing the Essay/Presentation:

1. **Believe in your response** – as soon as you've completed the required research and preparation, ensure that you understand your own position and believe in it. Be sure you have all of your information and ideas formulated with enough supporting information.
2. **Understand your audience** – when writing your essay/presentation, keep in mind the audience that you're writing for and cater your language and response accordingly.
3. **Originality is a must** – be sure to answer the question in your own words, leveraging your own thoughts and experiences. The scholarship committee wants to learn about what you have to say about the topic and your related experiences.
4. **Lead with a solid introduction** – It is imperative to get the reader's attention within the first few lines. Lead with the answer to your essay question, followed by three supporting thoughts/ideas/facts. Leading this way will allow you to properly formulate your response and will also ensure a seamless flow to your essay.
5. **Link your information** – based on your introduction, ensure that each supporting point is included within the body paragraphs of your essay. Each point put forward that supports your response must be expanded upon and explained concisely within the essay.

6. **Avoid plagiarism** – based on your independent research and ideas, ensure that your essay is written using your own thoughts, ideas in your own words.
7. **Ensure a strong conclusion** – be sure to tie your main supporting points to the objective of your response in the conclusion. The conclusion is your final opportunity to persuade the reader.

Review:

1. **Seek feedback** – once you have finished writing your essay, give it to teachers, professionals, friends, family and anyone else whose opinion you value for their feedback and insights.
2. **Revise... and revise again** – once feedback has been received and applied to your essay/presentation, be sure to read and review your essay/presentation carefully. Be sure that your response and ideas are stated clearly, the information presented is accurate and that you eliminate any difficult phrases, grammar or mistakes in punctuation.