

### Who is eligible to apply?

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

- Enrolled full-time or part-time at a Canadian college or university in Fall 2014
- Pursuing a retail, business or marketing-related program
- Currently working part-time or full-time within the retail industry

### What do applicants need in order to apply?

Completed application and release form

- Official transcript from either high school or post-secondary institution
- A reference letter (200 words max.) from 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 explaining why the applicant is deserving of this scholarship
  - Current employer/supervisor contact information
- A typed essay (500-700 words) that answers the following question:
  - There are few things more critical to a retailer's success than the ability to develop strong relationships with customers and cultivate loyalty to their brand. The more ambassadors a retail brand has, the greater its presence will be in the market. Each retailer has different goals for their growth and success and approach loyalty in different ways. Yet, each attempts to appeal to today's consumer who, nine times out of ten, is more willing to downgrade on the grocery items that they purchase than be without their mobile device.

As a future retail leader, how do you define "brand loyalty" in the context of retail today? In your estimation, what is required of a retailer to effectively achieve brand loyalty amongst its customer-base? And, how do you feel your current retail experience and future educational pursuits will help you understand today's consumer – their ever-changing and evolving tastes and preferences – and build incentives that will keep them engaged with a brand? (500 – 700 words max)

- 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 September 2014. If you are not in one of these programs or attending school in Fall 2014, your application will **NOT** be considered.*

**Application Deadline –March 31, 2014**

***Retail Council of Canada must receive applications on or before Monday March 31, 2014. Late applications will not be considered.***

**How to Apply:**

Please click on the following link to start the application process. Please note the 2014 application process is completed online.

<https://retailcouncilcanada.fluidreview.com/>

1. **Create Account** in Retail Council of Canada's Application website
2. Click on **2014 Retail as a Career Scholarship Program**
3. **Fill out** general information
4. Upload essay – **PDF or Word** format accepted only
5. **Scan and Upload** reference letter
6. **Scan and Upload** proof of enrolment
7. **Mail in transcripts** to the address listed below – Please note all transcripts must be received before deadline. You will receive mail notification that the transcripts have been received.

Retail as a Career Scholarship Program  
c/o Retail Council of Canada  
1881 Young Street, Suite 800, Toronto, ON M4S 3C4

Attention: Education Manager

Please note the information collected in this account is only used for the 2014 Retail as a Career Scholarship program.

**Parent / Guardian Account:**

Parents / guardians can have an account set up to review their child's application. Canadian Retail Institute (CRI) requires legal guardians of persons under the age of 18 wishing to apply for a Retail as a Career Scholarship to read, complete, and digitally sign on behalf of their child where required the following attached Retail as a Career Scholarship Application form, Privacy Disclosure and Release form.

Legal guardians must also grant permission for their children under the age of 18 to participate in the Retail as a Career Scholarship Program. Persons under the age of 18 will not be considered for a Retail as a Career Scholarship until the legal consent form and release form in the application process have been digitally signed through 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 2014 Retail Council of Canada's Application website. Please see directions above.
2. Once in your child's account, on the right hand side of the page there will be a button that says Add Team Member. Please click on this link.
3. Your child can enter your name and email address and an email will be sent automatically from our system to the parent/guardian so you can also have access to the account.

Please note the information collected in this account is only used only for the 2014 Retail as a Career Scholarship Program.



**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 they are, submission has been successful?**

- The review process typically takes about four to six weeks
- A decision will be made on or around May14, 2014

**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:**

Please ensure you meet the following requirements:

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

**Scholarship Essay Writing Tips:**

**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 essay topic carefully** – ensure that you understand the purpose of the essay 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 is 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:**

1. **Believe in your response** – as soon as you have 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... and begin writing your essay.

2. **Understand your audience** – when writing your essay keep in mind the audience that you are writing for and cater your language and response accordingly.
3. **Originality is a must** – be sure to answer the essay 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** – approach the writing of your essay understanding that reviewers will likely spend five minutes reading it. Because of this, as is the case with any other form of writing, 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 enable 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 main supporting point that you included is fleshed out within the body paragraphs of your essay. Each point put forward as supporting 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 and, most importantly, your own words. For more information on avoiding plagiarism, including tips to properly cite sources, use quotations and paraphrases, please go to [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize).
7. **Ensure a strong conclusion** – be sure to tie your essay's main supporting points to the objective of your response in the conclusion. The conclusion is your final opportunity to persuade the reader or impress upon them your qualifications.

**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. Even for the seasoned professional writer an extra set of eyes is required to ensure consistency and accuracy.
2. **Revise... and revise again** – once feedback has been received, and injected into your essay, be sure to read and re-read your essay carefully. Be sure that your response and ideas are stated clearly, that the information you present is accurate, and that you eliminate any difficult or awkward phrases and mistakes in grammar and punctuation.