The Alberta Teachers' Association

2026–27 APPLICATION

Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary

If you have any questions or need assistance completing this application, contact the ATA's Professional Development program area at pd@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208.

PD-3-8-1_2026 09

About the Award

Each year, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) awards up to one Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary of $5000. Recipients receive the bursary funds in a single payment once proof of registration has been provided to the ATA.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

You **are eligible** to apply for the Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary if you

- ✓ hold an Alberta permanent professional teaching certificate;
- ✓ have completed at least five years (or 700 days equivalent) of successful K–12 teaching in Alberta, during which time you held the highest level of ATA membership possible;
- ✓ are an ATA member in good standing (ie, you have no ATA dues that are outstanding) and are at the highest possible level of ATA membership at the time of application and throughout your graduate program;
- ✓ are registered in any year of a graduate certificate, diploma or master's degree program in education offered by a recognized public university in Canada;
- ✓ intend to complete or are currently completing a culminating research project (capstone, thesis or other culminating activity worth at least 3.0 credit hours) that focuses on contemporary issues impacting professional practice or public education, or innovative approaches to teaching or school leadership; and
- ✓ intend to continue to contribute to K–12 public education in Alberta upon the completion of your graduate program.

You are **not** eligible to apply if you

- ✗ have previously received a Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary.
- ✗ are also applying for the ATA Doctoral Fellowship in Education or the Belairdirect Award for Learning and Leadership this year.

WHAT IS AN ELIGIBLE RESEARCH TOPIC FOR THIS AWARD?

If your research topic pertains to teaching, learning, school leadership, the teaching profession or the education system in Alberta, it meets this eligibility requirement. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and learning, integrating Indigenous world views across subject areas, student and teacher mental health, addressing class size and complexity, culturally responsive teaching, inclusive classroom or school design, gamification or land-based learning approaches, etc.

Eligibility FAQs

WHAT IS THE "HIGHEST LEVEL OF ATA MEMBERSHIP POSSIBLE"?

Teachers who are employed by public, separate and Francophone school divisions in Alberta are active members of the ATA, which is the highest level of membership possible.

All other teachers in the province (including those who are employed at schools operated by First Nations education authorities, the provincial government, and charter or private school societies); those who are retired, unemployed or engaged in full-time study; those who work in faculties of education in Alberta and in certain roles in Alberta's education system are not eligible for active membership, but may purchase associate membership in the ATA. Visit the ATA website, or click or scan the QR code for more information.

WHAT IS A "RECOGNIZED PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN CANADA"?

For the purposes of determining award eligibility, the ATA will recognize

- the following Alberta-based universities that have either a long-standing relationship or memoranda of understanding with the ATA: Ambrose University, Concordia University of Edmonton, Mount Royal University, St Mary's University, the King's University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge;
- other Canadian postsecondary institutions that are listed as "universities" in the Government of Canada's list of designated educational institutions. ("junior colleges" and "private institutions" are not eligible). Click or scan the QR code to view the list.

DOES "SUCCESSFUL K–12 TEACHING" INCLUDE MY WORK AS A SCHOOL LEADER?

Absolutely! For the purposes of this award, successful "teaching" includes leadership work at the school and division level.

Required Documents

If you are eligible to apply, your application package and all required documents **must be received by February 28, at 5 PM**. The ATA scholarship subcommittee will only review complete application packages that are received by the deadline.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Your application package will be **accepted** if it includes

- ✓ the completed and signed application pages included at the back of this of this booklet;
- ✓ proof of current registration in of an eligible graduate program at a recognized university in Canada;
- ✓ official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate coursework you've completed to date (including any graduate coursework completed in the fall semester of this year); and
- ✓ two dated and signed letters of reference, each no longer than two pages in length, that attest to your exemplary K–12 teaching practice, academic achievement and contributions to the ATA and to public education.

COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Bursary recipients are required to provide the ATA with a physical, bound copy and a digital copy of their completed research once it is complete.

Your application package will be **rejected** if

- ✗ you submit an outdated copy of the application booklet (ie, double check that you are using the application for this school year);
- ✗ any or all of the required documents listed on the left are received after the deadline;
- ✗ the application pages are not completed or are not signed;
- ✗ responses in the application booklet or letters of reference are handwritten;
- ✗ transcripts are not official copies;
- ✗ more than two letters of reference are provided, any letter is more than two pages in length, or any letter is provided by a current or former member of ATA staff or a current member of the ATA's provincial executive council; or
- ✗ any additional unsolicited documents (such as your résumé, curriculum vitae or photographs) are included or if any website links are included in your application responses or letters of reference.

Les membres francophones de l'ATA sont invités à soumettre leurs dossiers de candidature et leurs lettres de recommandation en français! Francophone members of the Association are welcome to submit application packages and letters of reference that are in French!

Timeline

February 28 at 5 PM
Application Deadline

Early March
ATA staff will review all application packages to determine that eligibility requirements are met. Eligible application packages will be forwarded to the scholarship subcommittee.

Early to mid-April
The scholarship subcommittee will adjudicate eligible application packages to identify up to one potential recipient and one alternate.

Early to mid-May
The ATA's Provincial Executive Council will review the recommendations of the scholarship subcommittee and will approve the recipient and alternate.

Late May to early June
ATA staff will contact all applicants to tell them if they were successful. Once proof of registration has been provided to the ATA, the $5,000 bursary will be transferred to the recipient.

Graduate Research Program Completion
Recipients must provide the ATA with a physical, bound copy and a digital copy of their completed graduate research.

Other FAQs

WHAT HAPPENS IF I RECEIVE A BURSARY, BUT I'M NOT ABLE TO ACCEPT IT?

This award cannot be deferred. If a recipient becomes ineligible or is unable to accept the bursary, the alternate will be notified that they are a recipient.

WHAT MAKES A TRANSCRIPT "OFFICIAL"?

Transcripts are considered official if the ATA receives them directly from your postsecondary institution either as

- hardcopies bearing the signature of the institution's registrar, sent to the ATA by mail in a sealed envelope; or
- digital copies that are shared by the institution via email to pd@ata.ab.ca or through MyCreds.ca

Any other transcripts or grade reports will not be accepted.

WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE LETTER OF REFERENCE?

The scholarship subcommittee reviews dozens of letters of reference every year. Make sure that your letters of reference are effective by ensuring they

- **are specific**—each letter directly addresses the award criteria (ie, your exemplary K–12 teaching practice, contributions to the ATA and to public education and academic achievement).
- **are descriptive**—each letter is written by an individual who is able to provide detailed examples that demonstrate how you meet or exceed the award criteria.
- **add value**—each letter enhances your overall application by sharing new information that the subcommittee cannot ascertain from your application form, transcripts or other letters of reference.

DO I HAVE TO REPORT MY BURSARY WHEN I FILE MY TAXES?

Yes. Bursary income is taxable. The ATA will provide recipients with a T4A slip to report the payment of $5,000 for the tax year when these funds were paid.

How to Apply

The complete application package, including the application form on the following pages of this booklet, letters of reference, proof of admission or registration and official transcripts can be submitted using the following methods.

MAIL

TECC Scholarship Subcommittee
Alberta Teachers' Association
11010 142 Street NW
Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

Registered mail is strongly recommended.

EMAIL

pd@ata.ab.ca

MYCREDS

Official transcripts can be submitted online through MyCreds.ca

HAVE QUESTIONS?
Contact the ATA's Professional Development program area at pd@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208.

Contact, Membership and Employment

The information you provide on this page will be used to verify that you meet the eligibility criteria for this award. Personal information (including your name, age and contact information) will be redacted and will not be shared with the scholarship subcommittee.

IDENTIFICATION

First Name

Last Name

Pronouns

Date of Birth
YYYY/MM/DD

CONTACT INFORMATION

Home Mailing
Address

City/Town

Province

Postal
Code

Home/Mobile
Phone #

Email

CERTIFICATION

Alberta Teaching
Certificate #

Certificate Type

◯ Permanent Professional ◯ Interim Professional ◯ Letter of Authority

MEMBERSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT

Current Level of ATA Membership

◯ Active ◯ Associate ◯ Life ◯ None

Current ATA Local
(if applicable)

Current Employment Status

◯ Full or part time ◯ Substitute ◯ On Leave ◯ Retired ◯ Other

If "other," please specify: _____

Current School Division
(if applicable)

TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Position	**School Division** In reverse chronological order with your current or most recent employer at the top	**Location** City/town and province, or country if not in Canada	**Employment Period** YYYY MM–YYYY MM

If you have additional teaching experience that can't fit in the table above, provide the relevant information here. (50 words maximum)

word count:

Education and Research

PREVIOUS POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Institution Attended	**Registration Period** YYYY MM–YYYY MM	**Degree/ Diploma** eg, BEd, MA	**Discipline/Program** or Major and Minor	**Status** Completed, In Progress, etc

If you have additional postsecondary education that can't fit in the table above, provide the relevant information here. (50 words maximum)

word count: 1

GRADUATE PROGRAM

Institution

City/Town

Province

Faculty/
Department

Degree
(MEd, MA)

Start Date
YYYY MM

Anticipated End Date
YYYY MM

RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Provide a brief description of the research study you intend to complete during your graduate program. ***Please be as specific as possible*** *(eg, What is the purpose of your research? What are your research questions? What approach or methods will you use?)* (150 words maximum)

word count: 1

Briefly describe the potential impact of your research on teaching, learning, school leadership or public education. ***Please be as specific as possible*** *(eg, Why is your research important? How could it specifically help address a critical or emerging issue in education?)* (75 words maximum)

word count: 1

Following the completion of your graduate program, how do you plan to continue to contribute to K–12 public education in Alberta? (50 words maximum)

word count: 1

RESEARCH AND SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Please provide a brief summary of any contributions to education-related research including:

- previous research completed (as a principal investigator, research assistant or research team member);
- academic publications or presentations; and
- scholarships, grants and bursaries awarded for undergraduate, graduate or doctoral work.

Please do not provide a long list of publications and presentations with full titles and reference information. Only a high-level summary of topics and themes is required.

(200 words maximum)

word count: 1

Exemplary K–12 Teaching and School Leadership

EXCELLENCE RELATED TO YOUR WORK AS A TEACHER OR SCHOOL LEADER

How have you demonstrated exemplary K–12 teaching and school leadership during your career? Provide a bulleted list of specific examples that highlight how you have demonstrated excellence in one or more areas of the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) and/or Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) through your everyday teaching and leadership work. ***Please be concise and specific – What sets your work apart?***

Responses to this question should be based on your day-to-day teaching and leadership position(s). Activities, initiatives or accomplishments that go beyond your classroom and school duties should be reported in the "Contributions to Public Education" section on page 16.

(300 words maximum)

word count: 1

AWARDS, NOMINATIONS AND FORMAL RECOGNITION

List any awards or nominations you have received in recognition of your exemplary K–12 teaching or school leadership.

"Please only list awards, nominations, and formal recognition related to your work as a certificated teacher.

Award, Nomination or Formal Recognition	**Issuing Organization**	**Year** (YYYY)

If you have additional awards or nominations related to your teaching or school leadership that can't fit in the table above, or of you'd like to share a brief description about any of the awards you have listed, provide the relevant information here. (50 words maximum)

word count: 1

Contributions to the Association

ELECTED AND APPOINTED POSITIONS

List any elected or appointed positions you have held in ATA subgroups (ie, ATA locals, convention associations, specialist councils and bargaining units) or in the provincial ATA (eg, Association learning facilitators or Indigenous Education PD facilitators).

This table should be used to report elected and appointed leadership positions. General membership on provincial ATA or subgroup committees should be reported in the "Committee Appointments and Representation" section on page 15.

Position/Role	**Provincial ATA or ATA Subgroup**	**Period** (YYYY–YYYY)	**Commitment** (# of days per year)

If you have additional ATA elected or appointed positions that can't fit in the table above, or if you'd like to briefly explain the responsibilities of any of the positions you have listed, provide the relevant information here.
(50 words maximum)

word count: 1

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATION

List any committees you sit on at the ATA provincial or local level as well as any external organization or government committees where you represent the ATA and its members.

This table should be used to report membership on ATA and external committees. If you are the chair or hold any formal leadership responsibilities on the committee, please report this information in the "Elected and Appointed Positions" section on page 14.

Committee	**Provincial ATA, ATA Local, External Organization or Government Ministry**	**Period** (YYYY–YYYY)	**Commitment** (# of days per year)

If you have additional ATA committees or external/government committees that can't fit in the table above, or if you'd like to briefly explain the work of any of the committees you have listed, provide the relative information here. (50 words maximum)

word count: 1

Contributions to Public Education

EXCELLENCE RELATED TO PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Aside from your work as a teacher or school leader, how have you contributed to public education in Alberta? Provide a bulleted list of specific examples that highlight your positive impact in one or more of the following areas:

- contributing to the professional development of other teachers and school leaders through presentations at conferences, teachers' conventions, workshops and webinars.
- mentoring new teachers and school leaders or supervising education students during their practicum experiences.
- instructing undergraduate and graduate courses in education or contributed to educational research efforts.
- sharing insights about teaching, learning and leadership through publications, blogs, vlogs or podcasts.
- volunteering with organizations or community groups that are focused on education-related topics or issues.

Please be concise and specific—*How do you contribute to the education system and teaching profession?*

Responses to this question should be based on contributions beyond those related to your assigned teaching or school leadership position(s). Activities, initiatives or accomplishments related to your classroom and school duties should be reported in the "Exemplary K-12 Teaching and School Leadership" section on page 12.

(300 words maximum)

word count: 1

Reference Letters and Use of Generative AI

Two dated and signed letters of reference are required to support your application. Please list your referees here.

Current and former members of ATA staff and current members of the ATA's Provincial Executive Council may not serve as referees.

REFEREE 1

Name	
Title/Position	Relationship to the applicant
Organization	
Email Address	Phone #

REFEREE 2

Name	
Title/Position	Relationship to the applicant
Organization	
Email Address	Phone #

USE OF GENERATIVE AI

The ATA scholarship subcommittee does not take issue with the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to help draft, review, or revise application materials, provided these tools are used professionally, their use is disclosed and the final submission is accurate and authentic. How have you used generative AI tools to draft, review or revise your application?
(50 words maximum)

word count: 1

Checklist and Declaration

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

You are ready to submit your application package if you have

- ◯ completed all of the required pages in this application booklet and signed the declaration below;
- ◯ checked that your graduate program is offered by a recognized public university in Canada (refer to the FAQ boxes on page 3 for more information);
- ◯ evidence that you're currently registered in an eligible graduate program at a recognized public university in Canada;
- ◯ arranged for official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate coursework you've completed to date (including graduate coursework from this fall) to be sent to the ATA by mail, email or MyCreds.ca; and
- ◯ gathered two letters of reference that
  - are dated and signed;
  - are no longer than two pages in length each; and
  - specifically address your exemplary K–12 teaching practice, contributions to the ATA and to public education and your academic achievement.

Please review your entries!
The text boxes on this form have strict character limits. Please double-check that none of your answers have been truncated. If any text has been cut off, please adjust your answer to fit within the space provided.

DECLARATION

By signing or typing your name below, you declare that

1. all the information provided in your application and supporting documents is truthful and accurate;
2. you have not been found guilty of unprofessional conduct or professional incompetence nor have you engaged in any activities that, if made public, could possibly tarnish the reputation of the Alberta Teachers' Association and/or the Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary; and
3. you understand that making any false representations could result in the disqualification of your application, the revocation of fellowship funds and ineligibility for future ATA awards.

Signature or typed name	Date

The Alberta Teachers' Association requires the information contained in the application forms in order to conduct the professional and business affairs of its membership and will collect, use and disclose the personal information about you accordingly. For inquires, objections or concerns about how the Personal Information Protection Act *applies to your personal information, please refer to the privacy policy on the Alberta Teachers' Association website or call 1-800-232-7208 and ask to speak to our privacy officer.*

End of Application Form

The following page is for Alberta Teachers' Association staff use only.
Please include it with your application forms.

FOR ATA STAFF USE ONLY

Graduate Research Bursary Applicant Intake

Applicant's Name in the Membership Database:

Association Local in the Membership Database:

ELIGIBILITY AND DOCUMENT RECEIPT

- ☐ Member holds an Alberta permanent professional teaching certificate?
- ☐ Member is currently at the highest level of Association membership possible?
- ☐ Member is in good standing (ie, has no outstanding dues)?
- ☐ Member has 5 years (or 700 days equivalent) of K-12 teaching experience in Alberta, during which they were at the highest level of membership possible?
- ☐ Member has not received the graduate research bursary previously?
- ☐ Member is not concurrently applying for other Association fellowships or scholarships?
- ☐ Graduate program is at an eligible public university in Canada and meets the credit hour requirement for its culminating research project?
- ☐ Member has provided documentary proof that they are currently registered in their graduate program (eg, admission letter, course verification letter, transcript showing graduate courses completed or underway)?
- ☐ Official transcripts have been provided for all undergraduate and graduate coursework completed to date?
- ☐ Two letters of reference have been provided that are dated and signed, are no longer than two pages in length each and are not written by current or former members of ATA staff or current members of Provincial Executive Council?

Notes

Initials of Reviewer

Date