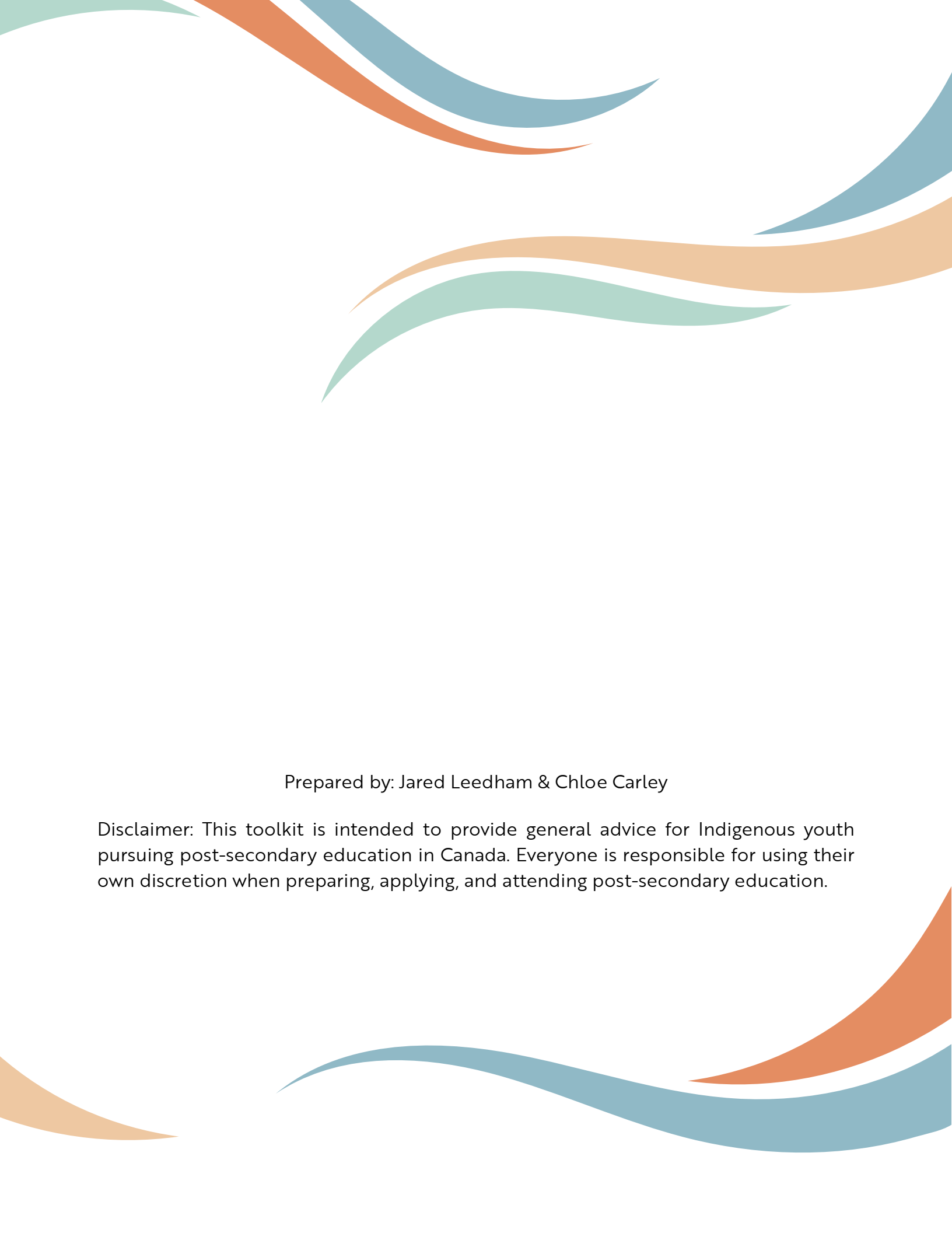




# **Generation for Equality: Applying to Post-Secondary School in Ontario**

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Disclaimer: This toolkit is intended to provide general advice for Indigenous youth pursuing post-secondary education in Canada. Everyone is responsible for using their own discretion when preparing, applying, and attending post-secondary education.

The Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) is a national Indigenous organization representing the political voices of Indigenous women in all their diversities in Canada. NWAC advocates for and works with First Nations – on- and off-reserve, status and non-status, disenfranchised – Métis, and Inuit peoples across Canada. As an aggregate of Indigenous women’s organizations across Canada, NWAC works to enhance, promote and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Indigenous women, in all their diversities, within their respective communities.

## Generation for Equality

NWAC’s Generation for Equality (G4E) is a platform for Indigenous youth to gather information, ask questions, and connect with others working towards gender equality and gender diversity. The G4E platform represents an Indigenous youth-led movement which provides a critical space for Indigenous youth to engage on issues impacting them the most. The G4E platform includes, and celebrates, the voices and experiences of Indigenous youth of all genders and gender expressions advocating for gender equality and gender-diversity.

With funding from Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), NWAC was able to explore the barriers to post-secondary education and employment. In response, NWAC developed this supplementary document to go alongside the “Generation for Equality: Applying to Post-Secondary School Toolkit,” to provide specific information for Indigenous youth in Ontario.



# Post-Secondary School in Ontario

Ontario is home to 23 public universities, 24 colleges, 9 Indigenous Institutes, and more than 500 registered career colleges and institutions (Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, 2025). Each of these institutions offer different certifications and have their own admission requirements. In most cases, to apply to post-secondary institutions in Ontario, students are expected to complete or have a high school diploma.

## College

- Certificate Programs
- Diplomas
- Apprenticeships
- Degrees

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## University

- Undergraduate Degrees
- Graduate Degrees
- Professional Programs

Unlike in some other provinces and territories, students in Ontario can apply to post-secondary school and for financial assistance through a centralized application system.

## Indigenous Institutes

Indigenous Institutes are Indigenous governed and operated institutions that provide opportunities for students looking to complete their post-secondary education in a flexible, personalized and culturally responsive learning environments (Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, 2025). There are currently 9 Indigenous Institutes located across Ontario:

- Anishinabek Educational Institute
- First Nations Technical Institute
- Kenjgewin Teg
- Iohai:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute
- Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Educational Institute
- Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre
- Seven Generations Education Institute
- Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig
- Six Nations Polytechnic

Indigenous Institutes work in partnership with colleges and universities to offer:

- Degree programs
- Apprenticeship programs
- Certificate programs
- Diplomas

In addition to post-secondary credentials, Indigenous Institutes also offer high school programs, continuing education courses, and Indigenous language education programs (Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, 2025). Students interested in attending an Indigenous Institute must apply directly through the school.

## **Ontario College Application Service (OCAS)**

OCAS is a non-profit organization that helps Ontarians explore and connect with Ontario's colleges. Through the [ontariocolleges.ca](https://ontariocolleges.ca) website, OCAS helps learners explore colleges and programs and learn about college student life, housing, services, and more (OCAS, 2025). Most importantly, the [ontariocolleges.ca](https://ontariocolleges.ca) website operates as a centralized application system for all of Ontario's public colleges.

### How to apply on OCAS

To apply to any of Ontario's 24 public colleges, students must do the following:

1. Create or log into your [ontariocolleges.ca](https://ontariocolleges.ca) account.
2. Fill in your personal information and educational history.
3. Add your college and program choices.
4. Request your transcripts (most Ontario high school students will automatically have their grades submitted).
5. Pay application processing fee and any transcript fees.
6. Log back into your account to verify your transcript information or make changes or update your application.
7. Log into your account after November 1 to view and confirm offers of admission (OCAS, 2025).

During the application process, Indigenous students have an opportunity to self-identify as an Indigenous person. By self-identifying, colleges can provide additional support and invitations to cultural events or specific activities tailored to Indigenous learners during their studies (OCAS, 2025).

## Important Dates

<b>October</b>	Applications become available for programs starting the following fall.
<b>November</b>	Colleges begin sending offers of admission.
<b>February</b>	Equal Consideration Date.
<b>May</b>	Deadline to confirm offers.
<b>Mid-June</b>	Tuition deposit payment due.

## Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC)

OUAC is the centralized application service for Ontario universities, working as a division of the Council of Ontario Universities. OUAC processes application for admission to the following programs at Ontario universities:

- Undergraduate
- Law
- Medical
- Rehabilitation sciences
- Teacher education (OUAC, 2025)



The centralized system improves the ability for students to manage multiple offers of admission and greatly reduces duplication and costs in processing applications (OUAC, 2025).

## How to apply

To apply to any of Ontario's 23 universities, students must do the following:

- Create or log into your OUAC account
- Complete all sections of the application:
  - Personal details (name, address, telephone number, email address).
  - Background information (education, extracurricular activities, employment)
  - Review and select programs of interest
  - Add supporting documents (i.e., transcripts)
- Submit and pay for you application (OUAC, 2025)

During the application process, Indigenous students can declare their Indigenous ancestry. By self-declaring, students can be contacted by universities regarding supports and resources offered to Indigenous students (OUAC, 2025).

## Important Dates

<b>January 2026</b>	Deadline for applicants to submit their completed applications to OUAC.
<b>May 2026</b>	The latest date applicants who submitted their applications by the January deadline can expect a response form an Ontario university.
<b>June 2026</b>	The earliest date applicants may respond to an Ontario university offer of admission and give financial commitment (OUAC, 2025).

# Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

OSAP is Ontario's student support program, offering students a mix of grants and loans. Through OSAP, applicants are automatically considered for both grants and loans when they apply for financial assistance.

**Grants** Money received for a specific purpose, such as financing your education, which does not have to be repaid.

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**Loans** Money borrowed to help pay for your education, loans must be repaid with interest (TD Bank, n.d.).

The OSAP program is intended to help post-secondary students cover the costs of:

- Tuition
- Books and Equipment
- Fees and charged by your school
- Living expenses (full-time students)
- Childcare

The amount of funding received by each student will depend on their academic costs, course load, program hours, and personal financial situation. In some cases, the OSAP program may provide additional funding to Indigenous students, students with disability, and youth in or from extended society care (OUAC, 2025).



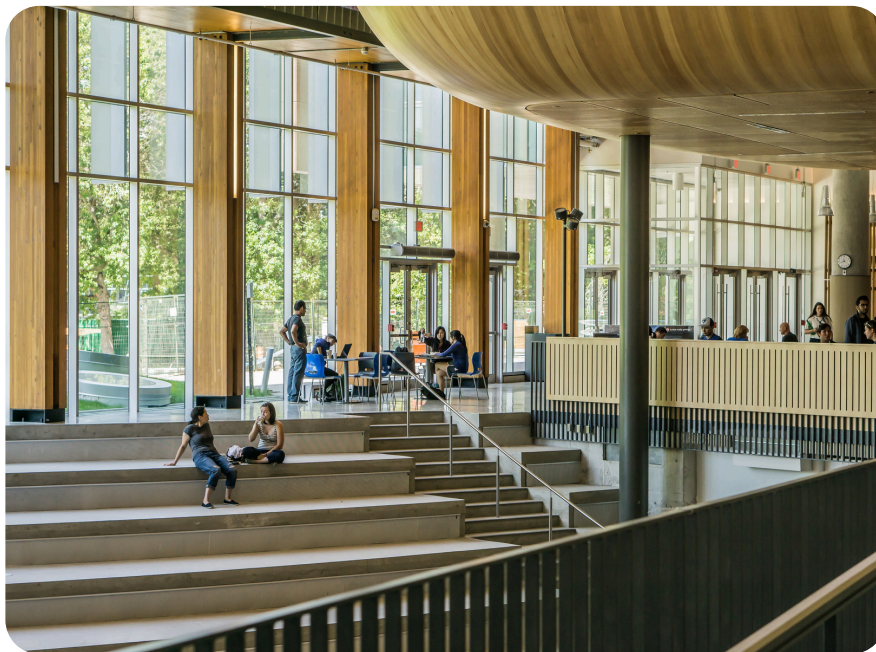
## How to apply for OSAP

To apply for OSAP, students must do the following:

1. Register online for an OSAP account (OSAP will ask for your Social Insurance Number).
2. Apply for OSAP by providing the following information.
  - a. Information about your school and program
  - b. Your parent's or spouse's Social Insurance Number (if applicable)
  - c. Your tax information
  - d. Your parent's or spouse's tax information (if applicable)
3. Submit your OSAP application by the deadline.
4. Receive an estimate of funding after submitting your application.
5. Check your application page for updates about your application (OUAC, 2025).

## Student Access Grant

Students who need additional financial assistance after their OSAP is approved may be eligible for assistance through the Student Access Grant (SAG). Through SAG, Ontario's public colleges and universities can provide additional financial aid to students through bursaries, scholarships, and work study or summer employment programs (Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, 2025).



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