VIRGINIA PUBLIC TRANSIT FOUNDATION

Professional Development Scholarship Program

INFORMATION PACKET

Investing in Virginia's Transit Workforce Through Education, Leadership, and Professional Growth

Program Overview

The Virginia Public Transit Foundation Professional Development Scholarship Program provides financial support to current transit employees pursuing education and professional development that strengthens their work, supports long-term career growth, and benefits public transportation in Virginia.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

Help Virginia transit professionals gain relevant skills, credentials, leadership experience, and industry knowledge, then share those benefits with their teams, agencies, and communities.

Why Apply?

Career Growth
Advance skills and professional qualifications.

Leadership Development
Prepare for future leadership opportunities in transit.

Industry Recognition
Receive Foundation support for meaningful career advancement.

Shared Learning
Bring new ideas and best practices back to Virginia transit.

Eligible Professional Development Activities

- Training courses and workshops
- Industry certifications and certification examinations
- Professional conferences
- College or university coursework
- Leadership development programs
- Other transit-related education approved by the Foundation

Application Cycles

Cycle	Deadline	Next Steps
Spring	April 1	Eligibility review, committee review, award notification
Fall (OPEN)	December 15	Eligibility review, committee review, award notification

Eligibility and Funding

Eligibility Checklist

Before submitting, applicants should be able to confirm each of the following:

☐ Current employee of a public transit agency or transit-related entity

☐ Demonstrated commitment to a continued career in the transit industry

☐ Request is for training, certification, a conference, coursework, or another professional development activity supporting the applicant's role or transit career path

☐ Clear commitment to improving public transportation in Virginia

☐ Supervisor or organizational support for the proposed activity

What Funding May Cover

• Registration or tuition	• Exam or certification fees
• Travel	• Lodging
• Meals	• Books or materials
• Other approved expenses	• Approved educational costs

Budget Requirements

Applicants must provide the total cost, the amount requested, an itemized cost breakdown, and any other funding sources. Estimates may be used when final costs are not yet available, but the basis for each estimate should be clear.

- Employer contribution, including paid time, travel approval, or partial funding
- Other scholarships or grants
- Applicant out-of-pocket contribution
- Impact if the request is not fully funded

IMPORTANT

Scholarship funds may be used only for the approved purpose. Final eligible expenses, payment conditions, and documentation requirements will be governed by the approved program guidelines.

Preparing a Strong Application

Statement of Purpose

Submit a 500 to 1,000 total word statement that directly addresses all topics below. Specific examples and clear connections to Virginia public transit will help reviewers understand the value of the request.

- Why you are requesting support and what you plan to learn
- How the opportunity will strengthen your current work in transit
- How it supports your longer-term transit career goals
- How you will share the benefits with your team, agency, or community
- How the opportunity will benefit Virginia public transportation

Impact and Outcomes

Describe the expected result of the activity and how success will be demonstrated. Examples include:

- A new skill or applied work practice
- Completion of a certificate or credential
- Passing a certification examination
- A presentation or knowledge-sharing session for colleagues
- A work product, implementation plan, or other defined deliverable

Organization Endorsement

A sponsor organization should explain how the opportunity supports the applicant's role and performance. The endorsement should also identify any support the employer will provide, such as approved time, travel authorization, or partial funding.

Tips for Applicants

Be specific	Name the skill, credential, or outcome you expect to achieve.
Connect the benefit	Explain the value to your role, employer, and Virginia transit.
Use a realistic budget	Provide itemized costs and identify other support.
Plan to share	Describe how colleagues or the wider transit community will benefit.

Application Checklist

Use this checklist before submitting your application package.

Required Materials

☐ Completed scholarship application

☐ Statement of purpose, 500 to 1,000 words

☐ Organization endorsement

☐ Program brochure, webpage, link, or clear description of the opportunity

☐ Itemized cost estimate

Optional Supporting Materials

☐ Resume

☐ Letter of recommendation

Applicant Commitments

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees to:

- Use scholarship funds only for the approved purpose
- Provide proof of completion, when applicable
- Provide a short written summary after completion, suggested length one page, describing outcomes and how the learning will be applied

Submission Instructions

SUBMISSION PROCESS TO BE CONFIRMED

Submit the completed application and all required attachments through the Foundation's application portal. All required attachments must be submitted through the Foundation's Dropbox in PDF file format. Please name document(s) as Last Name First Name File Item (for example: Plaugher Danny Brochure)

Before You Submit

☐ Confirm that every required field is complete

☐ Verify dates, costs, and requested amount

☐ Confirm the sponsor endorsement is complete

☐ Label attachments clearly

☐ Retain a copy of the full application package

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply?

Current employees of Virginia transit agencies and transit-related entities who meet the final program eligibility requirements.

What opportunities may qualify?

Training, certifications, conferences, workshops, college or university courses, and other approved professional development activities that support a transit role or career path.

Can travel be funded?

Travel, lodging, and related costs may be considered when associated with an approved activity and included in the itemized budget.

Is an employer contribution required?

We ask applicants to identify employer support and other funding sources if they are applicable, but a financial contribution is not required.

How often are applications reviewed?

The program uses a biannual review cycle, with application deadlines of April 1 and December 15.

How much can I request?

There is not a minimum or maximum award amount. Our annual scholarship amount max is $10,000 for both awards and the organization can distribute these funds as they see fit.

What will recipients provide afterward?

Recipients agree to provide proof of completion when applicable and a short, written summary describing outcomes and how the learning will be used. Recipients may be requested to present their outcomes at a VPTF sponsored event.

Can an incomplete application be reviewed?

Applicants should submit every required component. The Foundation should establish and publish its policy for incomplete or late submissions.

Contact and Application Resources

Virginia Public Transit Foundation
1904 Byrd Avenue, Suite 218
Richmond, VA 23230

Scholarship email	info@vatransit.com
Phone	804-643-1166
Website	www.VAPTF.org
Application portal	Fall Cycle Open

READY TO INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE?

Review the application, gather your supporting materials, and apply during the next scholarship cycle.