



Ideas for Funding the Eco-Gap Program

If you are looking for a way to fund your gap year program we suggest a combination of finding a job and working a bit so you can save some money (either before or after the program), fundraising, and applying for scholarships.

Step 1: Get a Job

If you haven't already started working at a job, we highly suggest you consider it. We know there may be some obstacles, like how much free time you have or transportation, but as soon as you can find solutions we suggest you start applying. If you haven't had a job before, don't be too picky about what you do. Any job can be a worthwhile learning experience and you never know who you'll meet and what new opportunities might arise once you get started. Don't limit yourself because you think you might not be eligible for a job - just go for it and apply - you never know! Ask your family, friends, teachers and counselors for help writing a resume, filling out applications or writing any cover letters and also if they have any leads or know someone or an organization that might be hiring. Then apply to several different opportunities to make sure you get at least one! Having a job is the first step to building a resume that will secure you better and more jobs in the future. And earning money is very satisfying, especially if you can use it to do something you really want to do, like the Eco-Gap Program!

Step 2: Fundraising Ideas

- Reach out to your own community simply by asking. You could write a letter or an email or create a short video of what it is that you'd like to do and why. You can ask family members, your church, local organizations or businesses, especially any that are involved with energy efficiency, social activism, organic farming, cooperative businesses, youth empowerment, etc. Think about the themes of the Eco-Gap Program and why you are interested in them and then seek out like minded individuals or organizations. And just ask people who are close to you and/or your family. You might be surprised by how willing people are to donate some money to you and even a little can add up. Don't forget to keep a list of who gives you money and how much so you can thank them afterwards and prepare a short presentation of what you accomplished.

- Write a story or make a video about what you want to do and why and then reach out to a local radio station or newspaper to ask them if they'll help you spread the word.
- Use Facebook, Instagram or You Tube or other social media.
- Try crowdfunding by using a site like Kickstarter or GoFundMe - search on line for more options

Step 3: Scholarship Options

There aren't a lot of scholarships available for Gap Year students, but here are some we know of:

Eco-Gap Scholarships - If you live in Tompkins County you may be eligible for a full or partial scholarship to cover your full tuition and housing. Apply for the scholarship when you apply for the program so that you can be considered!

EnRoute Gap Year Consulting - will be granting one or more counseling scholarships to students who plan to dedicate their entire gap year to activism. They want to connect enthusiastic young people with organizations, campaigns and leaders who will help develop students into the leaders of tomorrow. Grantees will be entitled to a full Standard Gap Year Consulting Package, a \$2000 USD value. To be eligible, you must be a: high school graduate or matriculated into college as of June; you must plan to take a full academic year of gap time; and, you must plan to dedicate your entire gap year to activism (you can, however, work on more than one project).

<http://enroutegapyear.com/student-activist-scholarship-application/>

Travel Access Grant - award yearly grants to students who are pursuing a gap year experience. In 2018 the grant amount was \$3000 and applications were due March 1st.

<http://www.travelaccessproject.org/fund-a-scholarship>

Step 4: Inspiration:

- Here is an example of two young met who got very creative in looking for funding for their gap year using You Tube - www.telegraph.co.uk
- How to crowdfund for an adventure:
<https://matadornetwork.com/trips/how-to-crowdfund-your-next-travel-adventure/>