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New EU-funded platform enables students to access € 620 million of unclaimed scholarships

There are 12,000 scholarship programs in the EU. Studies show that up to 20% of them remain unclaimed. The newly launched platform european-funding-guide.eu brings students and niche scholarships together.

Up to this point it has been a daunting task to get an overview of the myriad of scholarship programs offered within the EU: There are over 12,000 programs with selection criteria ranging from the conventional (academic achievements, financial need, civic engagement) to the exotic (place of birth, marital status, religious denomination). With the launch of european-funding-guide.eu - the first matching-based scholarship platform in the EU - this task has been greatly simplified. "Now every student can easily find out which scholarships exactly match his or her individual profile in just a few clicks", says Mira Maier, founder and chief executive of European Funding Guide. The platform which has been developed by the non-profit Initiative for Transparent Study Grants and co-founded by the European Commission is offered completely free of charge.

[European-funding-guide.eu](http://european-funding-guide.eu) helps students in all academic fields, of all semesters and in 16 European countries to find the best matches in scholarships, awards and grants out of more than 12,000 scholarships, grants and loans with a total value of more than €27 billion. 300 of these programs are based in Belgium. Students only have to enter their profile and the automatic matching software instantly selects the programs that fit best with the individual student. European Funding Guide includes financial support for the cost of living, for a semester, an internship or a language course abroad or support for an academic research project. Once the best matches are found, it often only takes a motivation letter and a CV to apply. The service of the European Funding Guide does not stop there: The portal offers a wide array of tips on how to get a scholarship, how to submit a written application as well as information on the oral selection phase, such as interviews and individual presentations.

Scholarships are often thought to be hard to get and only granted based on merit or need. Due to such myths and the lack of knowledge of the spectrum of scholarships offered most students do not even consider applying for scholarships. The main hurdle being the lack of knowledge regarding the financial support options available. On the other side, even in Great Britain, nearly half of students cannot fully concentrate on their studies due to financial problems. Furthermore, one third of all students have considered dropping out of university for financial reasons.

Mira Maier, the German founder of the portal and a former scholarship holder herself, knows that most students are not aware of the variety of scholarships. „In Germany out of the 28% of students that apply for a scholarship, 92% apply at only 0.8% of foundations. Most people think scholarships are only for outperformers in financial need. Some foundations for example are regionally specialized and support only students who were born in a certain place. Many of those smaller and less known foundations struggle to find applicants.“ This is why she and Alexander Gassner launched a German portal named www.mystipendium.de in 2011, which

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functioned as a pilot for the European Funding Guide. „80,000 students use the portal every months to find information on matching funding opportunities and over 2,300 supporters at 90% of the universities actively recommend our service. This success demonstrates the importance and need of expanding the overview of the different funding opportunities to another 15 European countries.“

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Pictures of the founders, a factsheet, a profile of the organisation and a logo can be found in our press room: <http://www.european-funding-guide.eu/content/press-room>

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