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

There are 12,000 scholarship programmes 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 programmes offered within the EU. There are over 12,000 programmes 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 their 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, in all semesters, and in 16 European countries. There are more than 12,000 scholarships, grants and loans available worth more than €27 billion, and it helps students search through this quickly to find the best matches. Students just have to enter their profile and the automatic matching software instantly selects the programmes that offer the best fit. European Funding Guide includes financial support for semester-long living expenses, as well as to cover the costs of an internship or a language course abroad, or to support an academic research project. Once the best matches are found it often only takes a covering letter outlining the student's motivation, and a CV to apply. The services available on European Funding Guide do not stop there though. The portal also offers a wide range of tips on how to get a scholarship, help on 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. Because of these myths and the lack of knowledge about what is available, most students do not even consider applying. The main hurdle is that lack of knowledge regarding the range of financial support options that are available.

Mira Maier, the German founder of the portal and a former scholarship holder herself, knows that most students are not aware of the full variety of scholarships available. "In Germany, out of the 28% of students who apply for a scholarship, 92% apply at only 0.8% of foundations. Most people think scholarships are only for top performers and those in financial need. Some foundations, for example, are regionally specialised and only support students who were born in a certain place. Many of these smaller and less known foundations struggle to find applicants". This is why she and Alexander Gassner launched a German portal called www.mystipendium.de in 2011. It was a pilot for the European Funding Guide. "Eighty thousand students use the portal every month to find information on funding opportunities that match their circumstances, and over 2,300 supporters at 90% of EU universities actively

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recommend our service. This success demonstrates the important need to expand this overview of the different funding opportunities that are available 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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