



ThinkAviation

The Aircraft Owners & Pilots' Association of New Zealand Charitable Trust

James PG Foundation

ThinkAviation Trust Scholarship 2026

Guidelines for applicants, terms & conditions

About the Scholarship

The James PG Foundation ThinkAviation Trust Scholarship 2026 ('The Scholarship') is to assist aspiring aviators to gain a Private Pilots Licence (Helicopter), and help them on a pathway to becoming a valued member of New Zealand's rotary wing aviation community.

The Scholarship package includes \$4,750 NZD toward flying training, plus other benefits from AOPA NZ, ThinkAviation and The James PG Foundation.

This Scholarship is highly competitive, so put your best foot forward. It is the applicant's responsibility to manage time and ensure all the parts of the application are received by ThinkAviation before the deadlines. Flying demands attention to detail, motivation and excellent interpretation of technical requirements - and this Scholarship is no different.

These guidelines, terms, conditions and application form constitute the entire agreement between applicants, recipients and ThinkAviation. If any conditions are not met, ThinkAviation reserves the right to disqualify an application or cease providing the Scholarship benefits.

All the resources, applications and guidelines are available online:

ThinkAviation.nz/scholarships

If you have any questions, or need clarification, please [contact us](#).

Authorised by:

Mandy Deans – Chairman | ThinkAviation

Key dates

Applications open:

8 June 2026

Applications close:

5 July 2026

Flying training organisation provides supporting info:

6 July - 26 July 2026

Winner announced :

8 September 2026

Eligibility criteria

Late, incomplete or ineligible applications will not be considered.

Applicant prerequisites

- You must be a New Zealand Citizen, currently living in New Zealand.
- You must be aged between 17 and 25 as of the applications closing date.
- Previous recipients of a ThinkAviation Scholarship may not apply.

When you apply, you must:

- Have formed a relationship with a flying training organisation
- Have completed between 2 and 30 hours flight training towards a PPL.
- Provide a community reference about your character.

Before receiving funds you must prove that that you have:

- Passed a fit and proper person application with CAA.
- Passed a medical examination suitable for a PPL.

During the period that you are receiving Scholarship benefits:

- You may not conduct any flying or training in a Robinson helicopter

The Scholarship recipient must agree to:

- Be available for 3 short video interviews that ThinkAviation will use for promotion.
- Complete a short progress report each time you access funding.
- Allow your story and videos to be promoted on our website and social media.

Application process

As part of the application, we require a character reference from a well-regarded member of your community. This person must not be involved in the applicant's current flying training organisation, and they may not be a relative of the applicant. Also, we require information from the Flying Training Organisation that you have a relationship with.

To help you prepare for applying, examples of the questions for you and for the Flying Training Organisation are provided on our website: Thinkaviation.nz/scholarships

Applications open:

- Candidates complete the application form.
- Candidate provides details of flying training organisation contact person.
- Community referee sends us a reference.

Flying Training Organisation provides supporting info :

- ThinkAviation sends questionnaires to your FTO.
- FTO completes the questionnaire and returns it to us before the deadline.

Judging

- A shortlist of applicants are invited for online interviews.
- ThinkAviation selects a successful applicant. The judge's decision is final.

Scholarship benefits

Flying training

- \$4,750 NZD towards flight hours for a PPL(H) - approximately 5 hours in a Cabri G2.
 - After receiving a certified flying time invoice, we will pay 50% of the amount.
 - Scholarship payments are made directly to your training organisation.
 - The scholarship is for flight time only - no payments will be made towards exams or other incidental costs.
 - The funding is only available for training towards a PPL(H)
 - The recipient needs to submit the first invoices and make a claim for payment within 6 months of the scholarship being awarded otherwise the scholarship will be forfeited.
 - The recipient has a maximum of 12 months from the first claim to submit claims for the remaining scholarship funds, otherwise unused funds will be forfeited.

Other benefits from AOPA NZ

- One year's membership to AOPA NZ (Pathway or Full membership, depending on recipients age)
- One year's subscription to Approach Magazine – the quarterly magazine of AOPA NZ
- An AOPA NZ Calendar
- Access to the AOPA NZ newsletters
- Invitation to join the ThinkAviation mentoring programme.

Other benefits from James PG Foundation

- \$3,000 worth of support to attend the [Aviation Industry Association Annual Conference](#), including accommodation & travel
- \$ 750 of Aviation apparel from Eye In The Sky, James PG Foundation, Over The Top.
- \$1,500 of support to complete a HUET (Helicopter Underwater Evacuation Training) course, including accommodation & travel.

Flying Training Organisation obligations

As part of your application

- They will complete a questionnaire about your personal qualities and flying experience.

If you are selected as a recipient. They must:

- Certify all invoices raised for your flying to confirm the training has been completed
- Notify us if you stop training with them
- Agree to participate in promotion of the scholarship with an interview