

ThinkAviation

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

Think Aviation PPL Scholarship 2026

Guidelines for applicants, terms & conditions

About the Scholarship

The Think Aviation PPL Scholarship 2026 is to assist aspiring aviators to gain a Private Pilots Licence, and help them on a pathway to becoming a valued member of New Zealand's aviation community.

The Scholarship package includes \$5,000 NZD toward flying training thanks to PacAvia International Ltd, plus other benefits from ThinkAviation and The Aircraft Owners and Pilots' Association of New Zealand.

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.
- 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 at least 3 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.

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 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](https://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. Judges decision is final.

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

Scholarship benefits

Flying training

- After receiving a certified flying time invoice, we will pay 50% of the amount.
- Scholarship payments are made directly to your training organisation.
- The maximum total we will pay is \$5,000 NZD
- 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
- 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

- 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.