



World Braille Foundation
Fondation mondiale du braille

**GERALD DIRKS SCHOLARSHIP FOR ADVANCEMENT OF
BRAILLE LITERACY**

BACKGROUND

The scholarship, established in 2013, recognizes Dr. Gerald Dirks' passion and extensive use of Braille throughout his distinguished academic career. Dr. Dirks held the position of Professor in the Politics department at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada where he combined a successful teaching career with research and writing.

The World Braille Foundation (WBF) Board acknowledges with appreciation the inaugural gift in support of this scholarship from Dr. Patricia Dirks, Gerry's widow; and further by designated donations from family, friends, former colleagues and other supporters of WBF with an initial goal of \$25,000 capital investment.

THE SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship honours Gerry's commitment to Braille literacy, inclusive education for blind children and the expansion of employment opportunities for blind adults by furthering these causes within the African Union.

The objective is to award one or more scholarships of up to USD \$1000 each annually.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Blind or visually impaired women and men between the ages of 18 – 35 years from the African Union.
2. Applicants are expected to possess Braille reading and writing skills.

3. Preference will be given to candidates who have pre-requisite education or training to qualify either as a teacher of blind pupils; or train as a teaching assistant working alongside a qualified teacher in the classroom; or be involved in a creative braille literacy project.

Application Guidelines

1. Application letters to be received by June 30 of any year. Letter to outline how the scholarship will be used and include a high level budget to a maximum of \$1000.
2. Application to be supported by a letter from a recognized organization of or for the blind from within the country where the applicant resides or from a World Blind Union in-country representative.
3. Applications must be accompanied by a 500 word essay describing the proposed course of study or program.
4. The World Braille Foundation Selection Committee will review all eligible applications to select one or more recipients annually. All decisions of the Selection Committee are final.
5. Completed applications should be submitted either electronically to Contactus@worldbraillefoundation.com or mailed in print or Braille to World Braille Foundation Selection Committee, 2255B Queen Street East, #244, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 1G3, Canada.
6. The funds will be advanced to the successful applicant by electronic transfer to the supporting association.

Approved: Feb22_13