

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10612, August 23, 2013]

AN ACT EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (S&T) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND STRENGTHENING THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Fast-Tracked S&T Scholarship Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Science, technology and engineering are essential for national development and progress. The State shall give priority to research and development, invention, innovation and their utilization. Priority shall also be given to science and technology education, training and services.

In line with the above, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the development of the country’s science and technology manpower in line with economic development and to provide the capability required in the areas of research, development, innovation as well as their utilization. As such, it is important that the State provide for quality science and mathematics teachers at the secondary level, which would encourage more students to pursue careers in science and technology.

Therefore, the State shall provide for scholarships to deserving science students and other specially-gifted citizens to enable them to pursue higher education or training in the areas of science, technology and engineering, and to provide incentives for them to become secondary school teachers, especially in their home regions.

SEC. 3. *General Objectives.* – To carry out the measure, this Act shall strengthen the country’s science and technology education by fast tracking graduates in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering who shall teach science and mathematics subjects in secondary schools throughout the country. Towards this end, scholarships shall be provided to finance the education of talented and deserving students in their third year of college, and pursuing a degree or training in the areas of science and technology, and to provide incentives for them to pursue a career in teaching in high schools, especially in their home regions.

CHAPTER II
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA

SEC. 4. *Scholarship Program.* – This Act builds on the current Science and Technology Scholarships offered by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), through its Science Education Institute (SEI), as provided for in Republic Act No. 7687, otherwise known as the “Science and Technology Scholarship Act of 1994”. It envisions a fast tracking of more science, technology, and engineering graduates by offering scholarships to deserving students in these courses in their third year of undergraduate study, based on their competitiveness and merit. It also offers additional incentives to attract the graduates of this scholarship program into teaching science, mathematics and technology courses in a public or private high school.

SEC. 5. *Eligibility.* – The following are qualifications for the scholarship with teaching incentive. Applicants must:

(a) Be a Filipino citizen;

(b) Be a regular third-year college student at the time of award;

(c) Be currently enrolled in any of the state universities or colleges, or in private universities, especially in Commission on Higher Education (CHED)-compliant programs, under any of the identified priority S&T courses;

(d) Have a general weighted average (GWA) of eighty-three percent (83%) or better during their first and second year of college; and

(e) Qualify in the Junior-Level Science Scholarship Examination.

SEC. 6. *Award Amounts.* – Recipients are entitled to an annual award for full-time study equal to the complete financial assistance package offered under Republic Act No. 7687, for students attending an approved undergraduate program at quality schools, such as CHED-compliant programs and DOST Network Institutions, public or private, with minimum slots awarded in private schools to offset differences in tuition costs.

SEC. 7. *Duration.* – Recipients shall be entitled to an award for the last two (2) years of undergraduate study, or the last three (3) years for those enrolled in five (5)-year courses such as engineering, while matriculating in an approved program.

SEC. 8. *Approved Courses and Priority Programs.* – Recipients shall pursue degrees in science, technology and engineering, as identified and approved by the DOST as priority S&T courses. Applicants who are currently enrolled under such courses under the CHED-compliant programs will be given priority.

SEC. 9. *Terms and Conditions.* – Applicants for the scholarships must execute a service contract in which they:

(a) Agree to teach as their return of service (ROS);

(b) Agree to any of the approved ROS conditions; and

(c) Agree to repay the amounts disbursed plus interest pursuant to the terms of their service contract.

Failure to comply with the terms of the service contract will result in the full repayment (plus penalties, if applicable) of all award monies received within a specified time, limit.