

HOW DO I PAY FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL?

Attending graduate school is a large investment of time and money, but there are ways to lessen the financial burden. There are generally three forms of financial assistance for graduate students: 1) Graduate Student Appointments; 2) fellowships and grants; and 3) On-campus employment.

Assistantships

There are three types of graduate student assistantships:

- **Teaching Assistant:** work with students in a classroom, lab, or quiz section setting
- **Research Assistant:** work on research projects; does not involve teaching
- **Staff Assistant:** other types of duties such as, advising or administration

Once admitted, you should contact your department to determine what (if any) financial assistance (e.g., TA/RA positions) the department can provide. At the University of Washington, Academic Student Employees (ASEs) are hired directly by the employing department. Many departments on campus hire from their own student populations. Other departments—particularly those that don't have graduate students or administrative units that hire graduate students—will recruit widely for positions from relevant degree programs across campus.

You may hear about positions via email forwarded you from your department. Check the UW Employment site: <http://hr.uw.edu/jobs/> for TA/RA/SA positions (under the “Academic Student Employee” category).

The **Graduate Funding Information Service (GFIS)** (<http://www.lib.washington.edu/commons/services/gfis>), located in Suzzallo Library, is another resource. You can subscribe to the GFIS blog for updates on both UW and outside funding.

More information about assistantships at UW can be found at <http://grad.uw.edu/assistantships>.

Fellowships

It is never too early to start looking for fellowships—even while you are an undergraduate you can begin searching for fellowship funding for your graduate career. While many fellowships are available only for current graduate students, you can apply for some fellowships before beginning graduate studies.

Most fellowship competitions have deadlines 9-12 months prior to the beginning date of the fellowship, and usually require personal statements and letters of recommendation that may take several months to compile. There are fellowships that are discipline-specific as well as broad-based (e.g., international study). The Office of Fellowships and Awards administers a variety of fellowships and the staff is happy to discuss these opportunities with you.

Each fellowship is different—read the criteria carefully and be sure to address them in your application. Provide the fellowship information/criteria to your recommenders so that they can also address them. Fellowships can last several years or just one quarter and are usually very competitive, so do not hesitate to apply for a number of different fellowships at one time.

There are competitions that require your nomination by your department or a faculty member. When you ask your department to consider nominating you, be prepared to provide documentation and information to support your nomination. Pay attention to what is offered through the fellowship: What is the length of the fellowship? What is the funding level? Does it include insurance or a tuition waiver? Does the funding come to

you through the university or are you paid directly by the sponsor? If you are in a fee-based program, check to see how that might affect what you receive (e.g., instead of a tuition waiver will some of your fees be paid?).

Looking for a fellowship

- On our website we have a list of fellowships, some of which are specific to the University of Washington and some that are national or international: <http://grad.uw.edu/fellowships>.
- The **Graduate Funding Information Service (GFIS)**. This is a service, funded by the Graduate School and the Libraries, that posts fellowship and employment opportunities, offers workshops, and assists with funding searches: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/commons/services/gfis>.
- Internet search. Use your favorite search engine and start looking! Don't limit yourself to looking under your discipline—be as broad as possible (discipline, research topic, countries, gender, ethnicity, etc.).

On-Campus Employment

There are multiple resources for locating on-campus employment here at the UW. These appointments are *not* ASE positions, but may come with other benefits, such as tuition remission or housing.

- **UW Hires:** General campus job openings
<http://hr.uw.edu/jobs/>
 - **Handshake:** Campus jobs open to all UW students
<https://uw.joinhandshake.com/>
- Housing & Food Services:** Apply to become a Resident Assistant
<http://depts.washington.edu/hfsresed/ra/>

The Graduate School Office of Fellowships and Awards

The Office of Fellowships and Awards provides many services for graduate students and departments, including administrative and counseling information services. Our staff assist students by publicizing upcoming deadlines, providing some applications and participating in the application process or administration of some campus-wide awards. See our list of fellowships for deadlines and award information: <http://grad.uw.edu/fellowships>.

We also coordinate and administer regional and federal fellowship and scholarship programs that require Graduate School involvement. We administer and monitor fellowship monies from private gifts, coordinate Fulbright and other international and research abroad programs for students and faculty, and administer and allocate fee waivers to departments and individuals.

While we cannot provide individual support to students in the funding search, we are happy to answer questions and provide counseling services to students applying for the various funding opportunities with which we work.

Fellowships and Awards, The Graduate School

G-1 Communications, Box 353770
gradappt@uw.edu | 206-543-7152.

Advising Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
(*appointments preferred*)