

Tips for Keeping Graduate School Costs in Check

Consider attending public institutions rather than private.

Public institutions offer quality education at a fraction of the cost of private institutions — your tax dollars at work! The savings are most noticeable for in-state residents; therefore, get residency as quickly as possible in whatever state you plan on attending graduate school. Tips for getting residency are often available in the graduate school's catalog.



Apply for all possible university funding.

Review the graduate school catalog to discover all funding options from that institution. It is far more likely that you can pay for graduate school using university awards than it is using funding from other organizations. University funding comes in a variety of forms: service and nonservice, need-based and merit. Consider especially service awards such as research and teaching assistantships that will give you work experience in your subject area. NOTE: funding availability varies widely from discipline to discipline.

Consider non-university funding as supplemental.

Don't overlook non-university funding from the myriad foundations listed in foundation and scholarship directories. Indeed, many of these awards go begging for applicants. However, consider these awards as supplemental; rarely will they provide the funding necessary to pay for the bulk of your education. (Don't forget about the Post-Grad Honors/Awards discussed on page 3.)

Consider government loans as secondary.

Government loans can pay for much of your education at low interest, but many students end up saddled with debt long after graduate school. Consider loans as a good source of aid, but secondary, only after other award sources have been tapped.

Get a part-time job.

Get a part-time job on or off campus to supplement any financial aid. You might find that graduate school is less time-intensive than undergraduate school, as you may well be taking fewer courses per semester. This leaves time to make some spending money.

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