



RICE UNIVERSITY  
Professional Science Master's Program

# A GUIDE TO EXTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

[PROFMS.RICE.EDU](https://profms.rice.edu)

## External Fellowships, Grants and Scholarships – All Programs

Graduate students are encouraged to apply for external funding — funds from sources not affiliated with Rice. Sponsors range from government agencies to corporations and private institutions. Funds may be limited to a single year of enrollment or may be renewable for multiple years and may be paid to the student or directly to the university. It is important for recipients to thoroughly understand the terms and conditions of such fellowships when planning for graduate studies.

### Scholarship Search Engines

- [CHCI NextOpp](#)
- [FastWeb](#)
- [UNCF Scholarships](#)

### International Scholarship Search Engines

- [eduPASS](#)
- [International Financial Aid and College Scholarship Search](#)
- [International Scholarship Search](#)
- [The International Student and Study Abroad Resource Center](#)

Funding Source	Criteria Overview	Deadline Month	Amount
<a href="#">American Association of University Women (AAUW)</a>	A variety of grants and fellowships for graduate women students.	November/December	\$2,000 – \$30,000
<a href="#">American Foundation for the Blind</a>	This scholarship is awarded to entering undergraduate and graduate students. Recipients must be full-time students who are legally blind and involved in their school/local community.	February	\$2,000 – \$7,500
<a href="#">Esso Angolan Scholars Program</a>	The Esso Angolan Scholars Program must be a citizen of Angola and hold a bachelor's degree in Geosciences from a college or university in the United States or the United Kingdom.		
<a href="#">Best &amp; Brightest Scholarship Program</a>	This scholarship is awarded to aspiring undergraduate and graduate students pursuing careers that impact the public good. Recipients are selected on the basis of academic merit and financial need. They must demonstrate leadership potential and commitment to contribute their academic and professional development toward the advancement of the public good.	March	\$3,000
<a href="#">Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT) Scholarship</a>	Scholarships for Mexican students who wish to pursue graduate studies in science and technology.		\$5,000 USD per year, for two years.
<a href="#">DAR American Indian</a>	This scholarship is awarded to Native American students of any age, any tribe and in any state striving to get an education at the undergraduate or	January	\$4,000



	graduate levels. All awards are judged based on financial need and academic achievement.		
<a href="#"><u>Education for Sustainable Energy Development (ESED) Scholarship</u></a>	The purpose of the ESED scholarship is to support outstanding master's students pursuing advanced studies in sustainable energy development and to encourage meaningful contributions to the collective body of knowledge about this subject.	April	Up to \$10,000 US per year (max. two years)
<a href="#"><u>Fred Scheigert</u></a>	Awarding three (3) students an individual prize of \$3000, this competitive scholarship is available to full-time college students with low visual acuity who meet academic guidelines.	March	\$3,000
<a href="#"><u>Fulbright Student Fellowships</u></a>	Fulbright Student Fellowships for graduate study in the United States leading to a master's degree or a Ph.D.	Varies	Varies
<a href="#"><u>GEM Minority Student Fellowships</u></a>	The National GEM Consortium's primary focus is to administer and award fellowships with paid internships to highly qualified under-represented students who wish to pursue graduate studies in engineering or science.	Varies	Varies
<a href="#"><u>Google Anita Borg Memorial Scholarship</u></a>	Open to female students enrolled in a Computer Science or Computer Engineering or a closely related technical field		
<a href="#"><u>Hawaii Community Foundation</u></a>	Various scholarships for residents of the State of Hawaii.	Varies	Varies
<a href="#"><u>HSF General College</u></a>	This scholarship is awarded to students of Hispanic heritage seeking a university degree. Awards are based on merit and financial need.	February	\$500 – \$5000
<a href="#"><u>Korean American Scholarship Foundation</u></a>	This scholarship is awarded to full-time students with Korean heritage studying in the United States regardless of citizenship status (including Korean Nationals).	June	\$500 – \$5,000



<a href="#"><u>National Water Research Institute (NWRI) Fellowships</u></a>	NWRI is offering a number of fellowships to graduate students (Masters and Ph.D.) at U.S. universities conducting research in the areas of water resources, treatment and policy.	varies	varies
<a href="#"><u>Paul &amp; Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans</u></a>	Fellowships for thirty New Americans (immigrants or the children of immigrants) who are pursuing graduate school in the United States.	November	\$25,000 stipend per year with a \$50,000 cap. 50% of tuition +\$10,000 per semester
<a href="#"><u>Pathways to Science Fellowship Listings</u></a>		Varies	Varies
<a href="#"><u>Roothbert Fund</u></a>	The Fund awards grants to persons entering a wide range of careers. However, preference will be given to those who can satisfy high scholastic requirements and are considering careers in education.	February	\$2,000 – \$3,000
<a href="#"><u>Science, Mathematics &amp; Research Transformation (SMART) Scholarship</u></a>	Open to US citizens in exchange for job placement with Department of Defense upon graduation. Full tuition and related education expenses covered.		Full tuition and related education expenses covered.
<a href="#"><u>The Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans</u></a>	Supports thirty individuals a year for up to two years of graduate study in any subject. Students already in graduate study are eligible, though not past their second year.		Varies
<a href="#"><u>Tillman Scholar</u></a>	This scholarship is awarded to remarkable service members, veterans, and military spouses as they look to begin their next chapter as public and private sector leaders. Recipients must demonstrate clear academic goals, extraordinary leadership potential, and a deep desire to create positive change.	February	Varies: \$10,000 average
<a href="#"><u>United Negro College Fund</u></a>	Various scholarships and grants available for African-American Students	Varies	Varies



## Seven Ways to Pay for Grad School

1. Find out if Your Employer Offers Assistance
2. Research Grad School Scholarships
3. See if you can Work While in School
4. Consider Student Loans for Graduate School
5. Check Eligibility for the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit
6. Research Loan Forgiveness
7. Explore Veteran Benefits

### 1) Find Out if Your Employer Offers Assistance

Some employers have programs that help their employees pay for grad school. Typically, this includes tuition assistance or tuition reimbursement, and the money you receive does not need to be repaid.

Of course, there are usually stipulations. Your graduate program has to be related to your profession, and some companies require a time commitment to the organization. For example, you may have to work for them for a year before and after your graduate program.

Why offer this benefit to employees? Companies can build loyalty with their most ambitious workers and reap the rewards of your acquired knowledge and skills. Meanwhile, you increase your skillset and gain a competitive edge in your industry.

### 2) Research Grad School Scholarships

Scholarships are free money, so [research them](#) as soon as you decide to pursue your graduate degree. Not sure where to begin? Visit the U.S. Department of Labor's [scholarship search website](#).

As a graduate student, you are eligible to receive scholarships from a few different sources:

- Private organizations
- Your university
- Your individual school or program

Private organizations can include large corporations, small businesses, nonprofits, religious groups and more. While some scholarships are awarded for merit, others are based on a variety of factors including your cultural background and personal interests.

### 3) See if You Can Work While in School

Working professionals can't always take a few years off to attend graduate school. A full-time master's or doctoral program might be difficult to navigate with a busy career, so find out if your program offers a part-time track. You'll be in school longer, but on the other hand, you don't have to stress about stretching your income.

Just keep in mind that if you drop below a certain number of units, you may become ineligible for some student loans. Check with your university to find out the unit limit.

### 4) Consider Student Loans for Graduate School

Solving the challenge of how to pay for grad school usually requires student loans. With student loans, you borrow money to fund your school-related expenses and pay it back once you graduate.

There are two types of student loans:

- **Federal Student Loans** Federal student loans (aka, loans from the United States government) are popular as they have low interest rates and don't require a credit check. As a graduate student, you'll want to apply for a [Stafford](#) or [Graduate PLUS](#) loan. You may also want to explore [income-driven repayment options](#), which seek to give borrowers a reasonable monthly payment plan.
- **Private Student Loans** Private student loans for graduate students may also be an option. You can apply for them from your bank or financial institution, but they are typically more expensive than federal loans and require a credit check. Plus, you might not have as many flexible repayment options. If you're not sure where to start, explore federal student loans first. You'll likely save more money on your education.

### 5) Research Loan Forgiveness

Did you know that the government may forgive part of your student loan? Under the [Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program \(PSLF\)](#), you can have the remaining balance of your loans cancelled after you reach a certain point in your repayment schedule (if you qualify). Under the PSLF, you must:

- Make 120 qualifying monthly payments



- Have a qualifying repayment plan
- Work full-time for the government or qualifying not-for-profit organization

## 6) Check Eligibility for the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit

To help pay for career-related education on a limited income, the government created the [Lifetime Learning Tax Credit](#).

Here's how it works: You can claim up to \$2,000 on your federal taxes if you, your spouse or a dependent can show qualified education expenses for higher education. The intent of your coursework should be to improve your job skills.

There is a catch, however. As of 2018, your Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) can't be more than \$67,000 or \$134,000 if you file a joint return. While \$2,000 is probably a fraction of your costs, it's not insignificant. If you qualify, don't forget to claim your education expenses and receive some money back.

## 7) Explore Veteran Benefits

If you're ROTC or a U.S. military veteran, you may be eligible for special types of financial aid. In addition to your [G.I. education benefits](#), some universities participate in the [Yellow Ribbon Program](#). If you qualify for this program, the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs will match money awarded to you by your college.

## Final Thoughts on How to Pay for Grad School

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for how to pay for grad school. It's a personal decision that ultimately depends on your career aspirations and financial circumstances. Make sure you research your options in detail, find out how a master's or doctoral degree might help your job prospects, and if you apply for student loans, calculate the timeline and amount of your future payments. You might also want to review The U.S. Department of Education's guide to [financial aid for graduate students](#).