

What type of financial aid is available for graduate students?

Most governmental grant aid is targeted to undergraduate students with financial need. However, some opportunities exist for graduate students.

Here are some suggestions:

- Identify some graduate schools of interest to you and talk to the financial aid administrators there.
- Talk to your employer about any educational benefits it provides to employees. Employers may provide up to \$5,250 per year in educational assistance to each employee on a tax-free basis for undergraduate or graduate courses, often regardless of whether the education is job related. You can exclude from income up to \$5,250 of tuition assistance you received from your employer. Check with your employer for more information and see the Minnesota Office of Higher Education's *Your Guide to Paying for College*.
- Become familiar with student loan and work study programs by reviewing a copy of *Your Guide to Paying for College*; these include the following:
 - Federal Perkins
 - Federal Stafford (both subsidized and unsubsidized)
 - Federal Direct (both subsidized and unsubsidized)
 - Federal PLUS Loan (now available to graduate students)
 - SELF Loan program
 - State Work Study Program
 - Federal Work Study Program
- Learn about federal tax benefits. The Lifetime Learning Tax Credit provides up to \$2,000 per taxpayer return for education at the undergraduate as well as graduate level. The credit is subtracted from what you own in taxes. Additional information on federal tax benefits, such as the Student Loan Interest Deduction and the Tuition and Fees Deduction, can be obtained from the Internal Revenue Service by calling 1 (800) 829-3676 or at www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html. See publication 970, "Tax Benefits for Education".
- Look into health profession loan forgiveness programs administered by the state and federal governments. For information on state programs, contact the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care of the Department of Health at (651) 201-3838 or (800) 366-5424 for non-metro calls or www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/. For information on federal programs, visit www.hrsa.gov/help/healthprofessions.htm or write to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Careers Diversity and Development, Student Assistance Programs, Parklawn Building, Room 8-34, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.
- Talk to the department chairperson or dean at the school where you plan to pursue graduate study to learn about:
 - departmental or institutional grants and scholarships
 - teaching and research assistantships
 - fellowships or traineeships
 - internships and summer jobs
 - employment funded by a grant
- Explore other references on paying for college, including the library and web sites:
 - Council of Graduate Schools: www.cgsnet.org
 - Student Gateway to the U.S. Government: www.students.gov
 - U.S. Department of Education: www.studentaid.ed.gov
 - Minnesota Office of Higher Education: www.getreadyforcollege.org