



Learn How to Find Grants to Pay for College

Description

Most students go for loans instead of grants because of the strange web of information and roller coaster ride of fulfilling the requirement.



But in reality, this is not the case; you can have a college grant if you know what you are looking for and the right approach to get the money to pay your fee.

The process is not as painful as most students think; the straightforward method starts from choosing the right option. First, you need to know about the different types of grants offered and their eligibility criteria. Then, once you find the most suitable grant, you must stick to the plan and apply with will and grit to get one for your future studies and career. The process of finding a grant for your college shall start from understanding the difference between a grant and a scholarship.

Scholarships and Grants

People mostly confuse these two words and often use them interchangeably. The student loan is borrowed money you have to pay later after completing your studies and embarking on your career. But, as you all know, a student loan is not the only option for college money. Many institutes and organizations are also offering free money to the students to complete their studies without being worried about paying it back.

The scholarships and grants are free money for your study, and you are not supposed to pay it back to the authority, college, or organization. The difference between the two is:

Scholarships

You get money for your study from an organization or college based on your ability, hobby, or distinction in your study. The primary factors here are your ability and needs that make you eligible for ample money to cover your study expenses. Some scholarships are purely for the students who have done great in their academic career and are willing to pressure further studies. Colleges take applications from distinctive students and award scholarships to the most promising students.

Grants

Unlike scholarships, the grants are purely based on needs, and there is nothing special that you have to do to be eligible for this. Organizations and colleges offer various grants for students from different backgrounds, ethnicity, or financial background that makes them stand in the eligibility criteria. The grant is for the student to peruse study without paying back a single cent. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants will make you understand the concept more clearly.

Step by Step Process to Secure a Grant

Most colleges and institutes offer federal, state, or other grants for the same purpose, of course. These grants are there to provide financial help and support for the students in need. You must do the following steps to increase the chances of getting a grant to waive all the study expenses.

Step 1: FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a form you need to fill out to inform the institute about your eligibility. This form will let the college know that you are a need-based eligible candidate to get the grant for further studies. It would help if you didn't leave any relevant column empty, and proofreading the form before submitting it will always give you an upper hand to correct any mistake.

Step 2: Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The financial aid award letter is given when you submit FAFSA to the college. This letter is your chance of getting admission and a grant in that college. It will help to remain vigilant and responsive towards receiving and processing these letters to move towards the next phase.

The grants award system works on the first-come, first-serve principle. Therefore, there are chances that you are highly eligible for the grant, but you are deprived because of your laziness or late response. This step will require you to provide Expected Family Contribution to your studies. The students with high EFC will end up getting a loan, but you must remain true to yourself and try again and again to get what will get you through the process.

Step 3: Federal Grant Options

There are various options available for students in the federal grant category. You need to choose the right one that suits you best and perform what is required in any of them. You don't have to pay back the grant money later. But some grants require your services to balance the account.

Teach grant is one of the options that will require you to teach in a school or so for three to four years to settle the amount. Otherwise, the other options don't require anything in return from you if you are eligible for the funds according to your need base criteria. The following list will help you know what to explore in federal grants.

- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)
- Academic Competitiveness Grant
- TEACH Grants
- National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants

Step 4: Grants from your School

FASFA is not the only option to check your eligibility for the grants. If you can spare some money, you can create your CSS profile by paying the application fee of \$25. You will also have to pay an added \$16 for every school you choose to get a grant from.

This in-depth option can increase the chances of your grant from the school that you think is right for you and have a history of awarding grants to students with the same background. Talking to some alumnus or searching the need base criteria of the school will give you an advantage over other students striving for the same grant.

Step 5: State Grants

If you have proceeded with all the steps mentioned above and still didn't get lucky, you don't have to be disappointed. However, there is a lot more to come in the grant category. Your state also offers the same grants for the students as offered by the federal government.

You need to go on the website and look for the financial aids and grants for the students offered by the state. When you have chosen three to five different options, try your best to get one for you to pay your fee for the entire program. These grants are also based on need base; that's why you don't have to outshine the other students in studies or results.

Step 6: Explore Special Grants

If you still didn't get any luck, you can find some other option as well. The following grants will give you some hope to get what you need to pursue your studies.

- Grants for International Students
- Grants for women
- Grants for Minorities
- Grants for National Organizations

Final thoughts

The most important thing for getting the scholarship or grant is to find the fully funded options and learn about their eligibility criteria. Prepare your document with care and attention once you find the one fabricated for your hobbies, abilities, needs, or ethnicity. You must provide them with everything regarding their eligibility criteria to increase your chances of getting the money for studies. Remember, consistency with the right approach is the key to obtaining free money for your studies.

Category

1. Education

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