Cost and Funding

Cost
The cost of attending graduate school at a major university can be significant: between approximately $23,000 and $45,000 per year for tuition, housing, living expenses, etc. There are many different resources available that can help support or cover these costs. At UW–Madison, funding support for graduate school may be available in the form of assistantships, fellowships, and traineeships. You can find the average expected cost of attending UW–Madison by visiting the Office of Student Financial Aid website at financialaid.wisc.edu/cost-of-attendance.

Funding Landscape at UW–Madison
Overall, over 82% of doctoral students and 54% of master’s degree students enrolled full-time in graduate programs receive some form of (non-loan) funding for their graduate studies. At UW–Madison, the most common types of funding for graduate studies include: Graduate Assistantships (Teaching, Project, or Research Assistantships), Fellowships, and Traineeships. Most often, graduate programs own these positions and award them to support students in their program. Since graduate programs vary widely in the types of funding resources available for students, you should check the program’s website or contact your program’s Graduate Coordinator to ask about how funding is awarded to incoming students.

You can learn a lot about the funding landscape in your intended program(s), such as what percent of students in the program are supported and what types of support they received, by visiting grad.wisc.edu/academic-programs. Choose your intended program, scroll down, and look at “Program Profile.”

Most students who are awarded Graduate Assistantships, Fellowships, and Traineeships receive a monthly stipend, remission of full tuition, and eligibility for health insurance programs for a reasonable premium. Health insurance options are among the country’s best group health insurance plans. Monthly stipends vary depending on the appointment types and the amount of time involved. The graduate coordinator in your program will be able to provide you with information about what is typical for students in that discipline.

Graduate Research Scholars (GRS) Fellowships
Graduate Research Scholar (GRS) communities are organized by the various schools and colleges within UW–Madison to support highly-qualified underrepresented students. Members of the GRS communities receive funding in the form of fellowships. Strong faculty and peer support augment the funding provided by these fellowships. GRS fellowships are supported with funding from the State of Wisconsin Advance Opportunity Program (AOP) and the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF). To learn more about these fellowships, the GRS communities, and to check your eligibility, please visit grad.wisc.edu/funding/graduate-research-scholars.

Applying for Funding
Beyond your graduate school application, there are generally no additional materials you need to submit to be considered for funding. Funding decisions happen at the program level. You should pay close attention to the deadlines your program has for submitting your application. Some programs have an earlier deadline for students wanting to be considered for fellowships. Find your intended program’s funding opportunities and deadlines at grad.wisc.edu/academic-programs.

Funding Offers
If you are admitted to a program, you may receive a funding offer. A “funding package” is an offer of financial support put together by your program for a specified number of years. A funding package may include a combination of different types of appointments, like Teaching Assistantships, Fellowships, and Research Assistantships. When you are comparing offers from different institutions, you should consider the following factors:

• What is the cost of living in the area?
• What is the quality and cost of the health insurance you will receive?
• Is full tuition remission included in the funding offer?
• What is the quality of the fit between your areas of interest and those of the faculty?
UW–Madison Resources

Grants Information Collection
grants.library.wisc.edu
Links to print and electronic resources to help students find fellowships, scholarships, and grants for graduate study

Office of Fellowships and Funding Resources
grad.wisc.edu/funding
Funding and fellowship information

Wisconsin Scholarship Hub
wisc.academicworks.com
Research scholarship opportunities available at UW–Madison

International Fellowships Office
iris.wisc.edu/funding
Fulbright scholarships, Foreign Language Area Studies, and other fellowships focused on global study

Office of Student Financial Aid
financialaid.wisc.edu

Searchable Funding Databases

Pivot
pivot.proquest.com/funding_main

FastWeb
www.fastweb.org

Examples of agencies offering pre-doctoral fellowships

The National Academies
sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/fellowships

National Science Foundation Fellowship Program
www/nsfgrfp.org

Ford Foundation Fellowships
sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/fordfellowships

National Physical Science Consortium
www.npsc.org

National Institutes of Health (NRSA Predoctoral Fellowships)
grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm