

EDUCATED FINANCIAL CHOICES...

...start with you!



EDUCATION FINANCE COUNCIL

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What are Grants?

"Grants" are a type of financial aid that is available to students interested in continuing their education after high school. Grants help students pay for their education expenses and do not have to be paid back. You may receive a grant award based on your financial need or based on certain "skills" or "merits" that you possess (i.e., academic, athletic, musical or other achievements).

The Federal Government makes available several grant programs, including:

- **Pell Grants** are awarded to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need. The amount awarded depends on financial need and the student's Cost of Attendance, status as a full-time or part-time student, and whether the student plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.
- **Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)** are awarded to undergraduates with exceptional financial need, often in addition to the Pell Grant.
- **Academic Competitiveness Grants (ACG)** award up to \$750 to first-year undergraduates and up to \$1,300 to second-year undergraduates who are eligible for a Pell Grant, have successfully completed a "rigorous" high school program, and who meet other eligibility requirements.
- **National Science & Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (National SMART) Grants** award up to \$4,000 to third- and fourth-year undergraduates who are eligible for a Pell Grant, majoring in physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering or in a foreign language determined critical to national security, and meet other eligibility requirements.

To become eligible for Federal grant aid, **you must apply**. The Federal Government has established an official process for applying for Federal student financial aid. To apply, you must fill out the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) – the FAFSA form. The Government uses the information you submit through the FAFSA to calculate how much student financial aid you are eligible to receive.

While the FAFSA form allows you to become eligible for Federal student aid, **it is important to know** that you will also need to fill out the FAFSA to qualify for some of the student financial assistance programs that are available in your State or through the institution you will attend. **Be sure to track and meet deadlines.** If you miss deadlines, you may miss out on the opportunity to receive the financial aid for which you are eligible.

As with other forms of financial aid, keep in mind that you do not need to pay for help searching for and applying for grant funds. People are willing to help you **for free**.