

Finding Funds for College

Some advice and helpful resources to help guide you on your search for additional resources to help fund your education. A little time spent searching could pay off in the end!

Where to look

Federal Aid: This is aid such as Pell Grant, FSEOG Grant, Perkins Loan, Federal Work Study, and Direct Loans and requires the submission of the FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid each year. Submit as early as October 1st. Most schools have a FAFSA Priority application deadline (OSU's is February 28) for priority consideration. fafsa.ed.gov

State Aid: In Oregon, this aid includes the Oregon Opportunity Grant (for OR residents) and many additional opportunities that can be found on the OSAC Oregon Office of Student Access and Completion. Start checking for the application in December. getcollegefunds.org

Institutional Aid: This includes Scholarships based on your OSU Major/Department. OSU now offers an online searchable database (Scholarship Management System) that can help refine your search. Start looking in fall term to see what is waiting for you! <http://oregonstate.edu/admissions/static/scholarships/index.php>

Private Aid: Scholarships and aid given by outside agencies such as:

- Churches
- Labor unions
- Service groups like Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, P.E.O., Zonta, Soroptomist, etc.
- Community interactions (bank, credit union, grocery store, department store, coffee house)
- Parent's place of employment
- Professional organizations in your major, i.e. "Society of Women Engineers"
- Local city or county library for scholarship books
- National, State, and Local Foundations
- Or found on the Internet by searching using various criteria listed below in "How to look for Outside Scholarships"

Employment: You may look for a part time job on campus or in the community. You do not need to be awarded work study funds in order to obtain an on-campus job. And just think of the sense of accomplishment working your way through college will give you!

hr.oregonstate.edu/student-employment

How to look for Outside Scholarships

When you are searching for opportunities, mix and match different criteria that make you who you are, such as:

- Major
- Gender
- Culture
- Nontraditional student (single parent, older than average, returning to school)
- Merit and GPA versus Financial Need
- Learning disability
- Undergraduate versus graduate student
- Unique trait (first generation, a twin, red hair, left-handed, bilingual, children of disabled parents, etc.)
- Interests, hobbies, and passions
- Volunteering and community service
- Faith, religion, spirituality
- Scholarships for specific things like textbooks, computers, childcare, etc.
- Veteran/Military status, and/or have a parent who served



INTERNET SEARCHES

Each search engine has different advantages. Google is one of the largest, followed by MSN and Yahoo, which means that they will search a larger portion of the Internet than other search engines. You should always try your search on multiple sites to find the most available information.

By default, the search engine tries to locate pages which have exact matches for all of the words entered in your search query. If that fails, it then tries to locate pages which contain any words in your search query. If that happens a short message is displayed at the top of the search results indicating this has been done. Here are a few ideas for improving the results of searches.

- Use specific words rather than generic categories.
- Use quotation marks to search for specific phrases.
- Boolean search: You can use the following boolean operators in your search: AND, OR, NOT. These operators MUST be in capital letters. Example: (contact AND us) OR (about AND us)

Keep trying until you find what you are looking for! Searches will vary so don't be afraid to experiment!

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How to get organized

When beginning a scholarship search realize a couple of things:

- It is hard work, but hard work can pay off
- You will get told no
- There are two main parts of obtaining scholarships; searching and applying, both of which take time.

You have searched for scholarships, now organize your data:

- Start a three ring binder with eight dividers labeled as:
- Scholarship Log, Scholarship Applications, FAFSA, Personal Statement or Essay, Resume, Community Service Log, Letters of Recommendation, Official Transcripts
- Put due dates on your planner, calendar, phone, computer, etc.

Gather other documents to assist in the application process:

- Personal statement or essay (short and long term goals)
 - Sell yourself
 - Talents, strengths, gifts
 - Obstacles AND HOW YOU OVERCAME THEM, what did you learn about yourself?
 - Experiences that have shaped who you are today
 - You can focus on who you are, where you come from, what you represent, and what you believe. Then, based on where you are applying, you can then focus on who you want to become or the impact you want to make, and why you are pursuing scholarship funds.
 - Review it! Use the OSU Writing Center to help you review it! What was your impression of it, did it impress you, would you give a scholarship to you?
- Letters of recommendation
 - Get to know your professors, academic advisors, and community leaders
 - Ask for these letters 3-5 weeks before they are needed
 - Ask for at least 5 to 10 copies on official letterhead from the person
 - Help the person writing you a letter
 - Provide them with a letter of what you are asking for, especially when specifics need to be addressed
 - Look on the web for “tips for writing letters of recommendations” that pertain to you and provide this to them
 - Give them your scholarship essay and your resume
 - Write a thank you note!

Other things to keep in mind:

- You will need some large mailing envelopes and some note cards to send thank you notes. A Dollar Store is a great resource for this.
Send thank you notes to all places that have helped you in this process; your academic advisor for a letter of recommendation; the places you have applied to even if you do not receive a scholarship.
- If someone wrote you a letter of recommendation, and you end up receiving a scholarship, consider sending them another thank you note.

Opportunities for Veterans

Oregon State University welcomes Veterans! We are pleased to assist you in making a smooth transition from military life to that of a student. We are dedicated to providing you with the tools and services you need to succeed at Oregon State University.

Our Veterans website studentlife.oregonstate.edu/veterans provides detailed information regarding procedures and requirements related to applying for and utilizing GI Bill benefits to help you attain your educational goals. We encourage all students to pursue diverse sources of funds which include any military benefits, private scholarships, as well as student aid that may be available from completing the FAFSA.



SCHOLARSHIP SCAMS

Many students are falling prey to scholarship and financial aid scams. According to the Federal Trade Commission, unscrupulous companies guarantee or promise scholarships, grants or financial aid packages. Many use high pressure sales pitches at seminars where you're required to pay immediately or risk losing out. Some unscrupulous companies guarantee that they can get scholarships on behalf of students or award them "scholarships" in exchange for an advance fee.

The FTC cautions students to look and listen for these lines as signs of possible scams:

"The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."

"You can't get this information anywhere else."

"I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship."

"We'll do all the work."

"The scholarship will cost some money."

"You've been selected" by a "national foundation" to receive a scholarship or "You're a finalist" in a contest you never entered.

The FTC works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. Visit ftc.gov or call toll-free at 1-877-382-4357.

More information can be found at:



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