

FINANCIAL AID

MIT makes financial support available to graduate students from a variety of sources and in several different forms—fellowships, scholarships, traineeships, teaching and research assistantships, on-campus employment, and federal loans. Many forms of support are granted solely on the basis of merit, while others are granted on the basis of financial need or a combination of merit and need.

Unfortunately, neither a department nor the Institute itself has the financial resources to provide support for all deserving students. Thus, we advise all prospective students explore sources of aid available outside MIT to find means of financing their graduate programs.

Information on fellowships and other financial aid resources (<https://oge.mit.edu/student-finances>) is available from individual departments as well as from the Office of Graduate Education (OGE). Information on graduate student loans (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/loans/loans>) is available on the Student Financial Services (SFS).

Fellowships, Assistantships, and Taxes

At MIT, a fellowship award to a graduate student covers full or partial tuition, and may also provide a stipend to help cover living expenses. In the context of graduate study, a scholarship covers full or partial tuition only. Although most awards are made on the basis of academic merit, financial need is a factor in some instances.

Many individual, foundation, corporate, and government granting organizations provide external fellowship support for students. Students should apply directly to the granting organization for funding based on eligibility. Application deadlines typically fall between October 1 and May 1 of any given year.

Generous donors have provided MIT with permanent funds in support of fellowships (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/finding-fellowships>), many of which have unique restrictions. MIT offices administer a number of these endowed internal fellowships through annual processes. Students who seek financial support from any of the fellowships administered by MIT should inform their academic department. The award process typically runs concurrently with the timeline for application for admission.

In accordance with a resolution of the U.S. Council of Graduate Schools (endorsed by most graduate schools), a student has until April 15 to accept or decline a fellowship offer. If a student does not reply to an offer by this date, it may be cancelled.

More information on both external and internal fellowships (<https://oge.mit.edu/gpp/assistance/awards>), including links and tips for applying, is provided by the OGE.

Every student with a fellowship for graduate study at MIT must register as a full-time graduate student for the period of the fellowship. There are some fellowship limitations that apply to nonresident doctoral students (<http://oge.mit.edu/gpp/degrees/thesis/nonres>), which can be viewed in the Graduate Policies page under Terms of Status. If a student withdraws from the Institute before tenure expires, the award must be relinquished, and the student will be required to refund any payment made in excess of tenure.

Teaching Assistantships

MIT employs about 1,300 graduate students each year as part-time or full-time teaching assistants (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/research-teaching-assistants>) to assist the faculty in grading undergraduate quizzes, instructing in the classroom and laboratory, and conducting tutorials.

The departments regard seriously the benefits of a teaching assistantship as a preparation for a career in university teaching. Each year, the Institute offers a prize, the Goodwin Medal (<https://oge.mit.edu/development/teaching/the-goodwin-medal>), to graduate students that display particularly effective teaching practices.

The units for which an instructor or teaching assistant may register as a student are determined by the department in light of the student's assistantship duties, program of study, and compensation. Teaching assistants receive stipends as well as tuition support for the services that they provide.

Appointments to teaching assistantships are made upon recommendation of the head of a department. A student who wishes to be considered for a teaching appointment should contact the departmental graduate administrator. Only full-time graduate students who are candidates for advanced degrees may be appointed. A Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>) is required for all teaching assistants who are US citizens or permanent residents.

Research Assistantships

Each year about 3,800 graduate students at MIT hold appointments as research assistants (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/research-teaching-assistants>). The principal duty of a research assistant is to contribute to departmental or interdepartmental research.

Most students welcome the opportunity to participate as a junior colleague of a faculty member in an ongoing research project that frequently influences their choice of thesis topic. Appointments to research assistantships are made by the department head to full-time students who are candidates for advanced MIT degrees.

The units for which a research assistant may register are determined by the department in light of duties and program of study. Research

assistants receive stipends and tuition support for the services they provide, and are compensated on the basis of time devoted to their research.

Students who receive primary financial support from fellowships or other sources may receive supplementary stipends as teaching or research assistants in accordance with Institute and departmental guidelines.

Taxes

Tuition payments made through fellowships as well as research and teaching assistantships are nontaxable.

Stipends provided to teaching assistants (TA) and research assistants (RA) are considered taxable income. TA and RA stipend payments to students who are US citizens and permanent residents are subject to withholding tax. MIT will issue a W2 form to all students from whom this tax has been withheld.

Fellowship stipends are also legally taxable income. However, tax regulations do not allow for withholding federal and Massachusetts income taxes from the fellowship payments for students who are US citizens and permanent residents. Thus, students should plan for the tax obligation; no W2 will be issued.

For international students, federal income tax is withheld from fellowship stipends at a flat rate depending on the student's visa type; Massachusetts income tax is not automatically withheld, and it is the student's responsibility to determine their state income tax amount and make estimated payments to the state, if necessary.

More information on tax rules for US and international graduate students (<https://oge.mit.edu/finances/taxes>) is found on the OGE website. A helpful two-page reference document [PDF] (http://vpf.mit.edu/sites/default/files/forms/HRPayroll_GradStudentInfo%202017.pdf) is provided by the Office of the Vice President for Finance.

Loan Funds

US Citizens

Graduate students may want to consider federal student loans first as these loans ordinarily have better terms and conditions. To establish eligibility for federal student loans, applicants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>) and the Graduate Information Finance Form (<https://sfs.mit.edu/forms/loan-forms>) on the MIT Online Financial Aid System (<https://fadata.mit.edu/NetPartnerStudent/Logon.aspx>). The maximum amount that you can borrow in a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan is \$20,500 per year. Application forms and details of the application procedure (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/loans>) may be obtained from SFS.

Students who need additional student loan funding (beyond the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan) may want to consider securing a Federal PLUS Loan or private alternative loan, which are not based on financial need. The Federal PLUS Loan and private alternative loans may be used to borrow the remainder of a student's expenses. Learn more about graduate loans (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/loans/loans>) on the SFS website.

MIT does not maintain a preferred lender list, and believes it is inappropriate to endorse or recommend one private loan over another as students and their families have different needs and priorities.

International Students

Students who are not US citizens or who do not hold a permanent resident visa are not eligible for federal loans. International students must be prepared to meet their expenses without help from loans from MIT. International students may consider applying for loans from private sources as explained in the previous sections. Most of these loans will require a US-based co-signer.

Student Employment

SFS maintains listings of on-campus and off-campus job opportunities (<https://studentjobs.mit.edu>) that are open to graduate students. Some positions are available directly through administrative offices on campus. Graduate students who hold full-time research or teaching assistantships (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/research-teaching-assistants>) or fellowships (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/guide/finding-fellowships>) and who are US citizens or permanent residents may typically work an additional 10 hours per week in such employment.

For international students, regulations regarding on-campus and off-campus employment depend on the student's visa type and other circumstances. Full details about student employment for international students (<https://iso.mit.edu/employment>) are available on the International Students Office website.

US graduate students who complete the FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>) and are eligible for Federal Work-Study (<https://pkgcenter.mit.edu/programs/social-impact-employment/federal-work-study>) may do paid community service. Wages are subsidized for students performing direct community service at approved nonprofit agencies.

Graduate Residents

Any graduate student at MIT may apply for a position as a graduate resident advisor (GRA) (<http://studentlife.mit.edu/beagra>) through Residential Education. The compensation for a GRA position includes a free room/apartment in the assigned residence during the appointment, plus a stipend of \$730 per semester (which is taxable).

Veterans Benefits

Students receiving veterans benefits (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/veterans-benefits/veterans-benefits>) must verify their enrollment each term in order to be certified. MIT graduate student veterans who take a minimum of 21 units per term (7 VA credits) are considered to be registered full time. See individual program descriptions for more information on unit requirements.

Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018

In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679 subsection (e), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology adopts the following additional provisions for any students using US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 GI Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from the VA.

MIT will not:

- Prevent nor delay the student's enrollment
- Assess a late penalty fee to the student
- Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding
- Deny the student access to any resources available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution, including but not limited to access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities

However, to qualify for the above provision, veteran students may be required to:

- Produce the Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class
- Provide a written request to be certified
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies

Veteran students are responsible for charges above and beyond those covered by their VA benefits. For detailed information on undergraduate (<https://sfs.mit.edu/undergraduate-students/veterans-benefits>) and graduate (<https://sfs.mit.edu/graduate-students/veterans-benefits>) veterans benefits, visit the SFS website.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA (<https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>) is available at the official US government website.