

Introduction to Financial Aid



WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL

12th Year Campaign





About the Washington Student Achievement Council



We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington.



What Will I Learn Today?

What is Financial Aid

Types of Financial Aid

When You Should Apply for Financial Aid

How to Apply for Financial Aid

Scholarships

Help and Resources



What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is money to help pay for college or career school. Grants, work-study, loans, and scholarships help make college affordable.



Financial Aid Is An Umbrella



Grants

- Income-based, federal, state and institutional.

Scholarships

- Merit and income-based, from public, private, and nonprofit sources.

Loans

- Income-based, federal and private.

Work Study

- Income-based, federal, state and institutional.



Grants

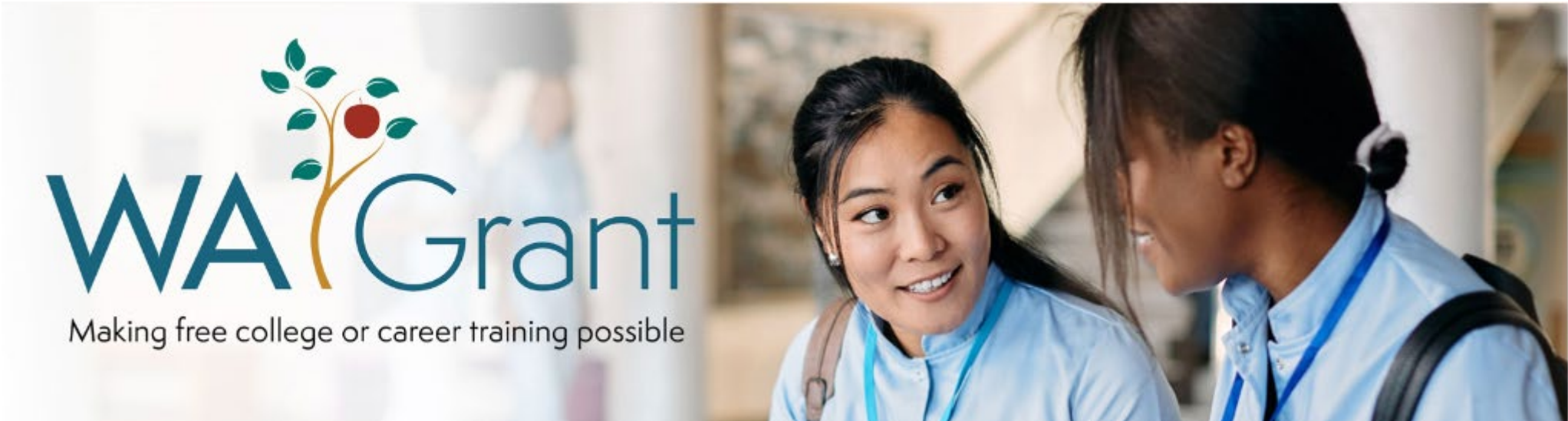
A grant is gift aid that often based on financial need and does not need to be repaid (unless, for example, you withdraw from school and owe a refund).

Washington College Grant

Pell Grant



Washington College Grant (WA Grant)



Washington State has made a groundbreaking commitment to financial aid for low- and middle-income people of all ages with the **Washington College Grant** (WA Grant). This grant gives eligible people more money for more types of education like certificate programs, job training, apprenticeships, or college.



Washington College Grant

With the WA Grant (Washington College Grant), more families are eligible for financial aid than ever before.

Family Size	Full Award	Partial Award
 Eligible Student Family of 1	Income \$43,500 or less	Income Up to \$72,500
 Eligible Student Family of 4	\$83,500 or less	Up to \$139,500

Award amounts vary based on income, family size, and the school or program attended.





College Bound



Combines with other state financial aid to cover the average cost of tuition (at public rates), some fees, and a small book allowance = **commitment**.



Can be used at about 60 two and four-year public and private colleges and universities.



collegebound@wsac.wa.gov

2026-27 College Bound
Refresher and Key
Updates

10/22/2026

1:00-2:30pm

Hosted on Zoom



Scholarships

Scholarships are gifts that don't have to be repaid and are designed to help students pay for college. They can be a one-time gift or renewable. One of the largest scholarships in WA is the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship.

You can start your scholarship search by going to thewashboard.org

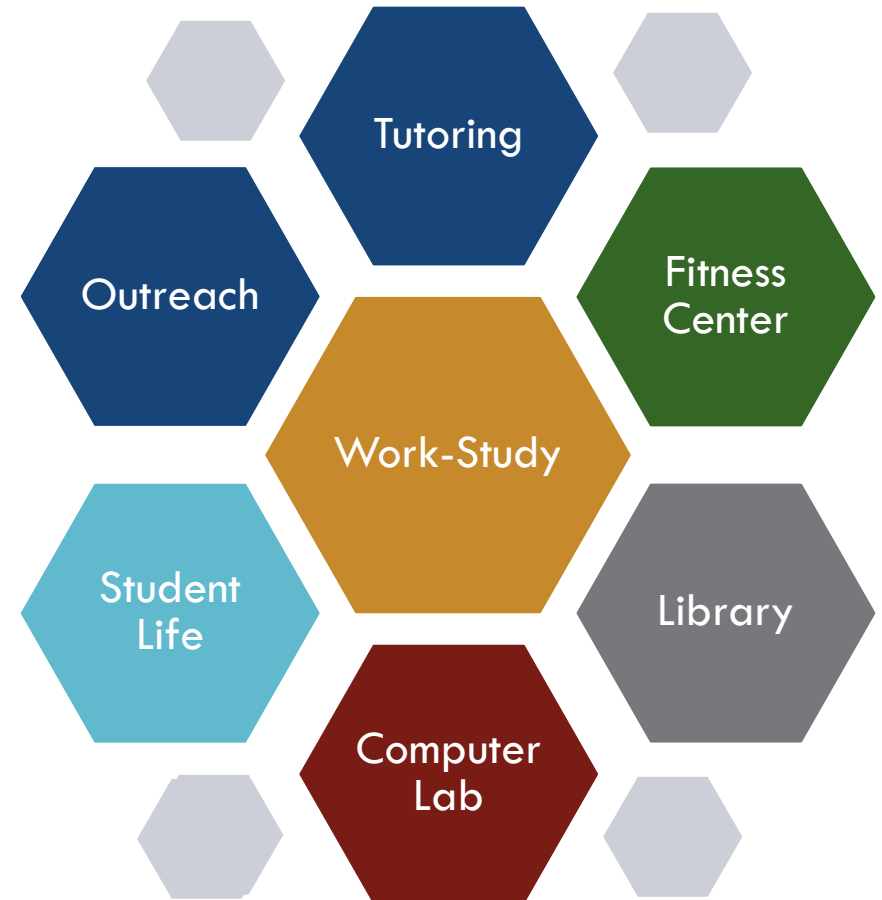


WASHINGTON STATE
OPPORTUNITY
SCHOLARSHIP



Work-Study

Work-Study provides part-time jobs for students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. These jobs are typically on campus.





Loans

A student loan is money you borrow for your education, and pay back over time. Unlike grants or work-study you do have to pay back your loans. You do not have to accept all the loans offered to you.

Unsubsidized Student Loans

- Interest begins accruing as soon as the loan is disbursed, including while you are enrolled in school.

Subsidized Student Loans

- Interest is paid by while you're enrolled at least half time in college.



Sources of Financial Aid

Federal

Typically can be used at most schools in most states.

State

Typically for residents to attend most colleges in the state.

College

Offered by a specific school to attend that school.

Organizations

Offered by non-profits, business, churches, etc.



Federal Financial Aid Programs

Pell Grant

Federal Work-Study

Unsubsidized/Subsidized Student Loans

Parent Loans

Complete the Free Application for
Federal Student Aid
(FAFSA) to be considered for Federal
Student Aid





Examples of Washington State Financial Aid

Washington College Grant

College Bound

State Work-Study

Passport to Careers

Opportunity Grant

Complete the Washington Application for
State Financial Aid
(WASFA) or FAFSA to be considered for
Washington State Financial Aid



Anyone uncomfortable with submitting a
federal FAFSA form can use the WASFA to
apply only for state aid only.



State Financial Aid Calculator

This tool calculates potential awards from the Washington College Grant and Pell Grant programs.

There may be more aid available to you from other state and federal programs, private scholarships, or directly from the college you attend.

The only way to know for sure how much financial aid you can receive is to complete a FAFSA or WASFA financial aid application

 Financial Aid Calculator

Enter family information

The following information is used to determine your WCG award.

Please note: if you are considered a dependent student, you should use your and your parents information; if you are considered an independent student, you should use your and your spouse's (if married) information.

1. How many people are in your family, including yourself?
2. How many members of your family, including you, will be attending college in the academic year for which you are applying (Note: only include those family members you used in question 1 above)?
3. How much combined annual income does your family make, to the nearest \$500?

To learn how your award is calculated, see: <https://wsac.wa.gov/wcg-awards>.

[← Back](#) [Estimated family contribution →](#)

portal.wsac.wa.gov/a/aid-calculator



FAFSA/WASFA: Rule of One

FAFSA

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid
- [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov)

OR

WASFA

- Washington Application for State Financial Aid
- wsac.wa.gov/WASFA



Important Information for the Class of 2027

2027-28 FAFSA and
WASFA will open
October 1st 2026

Class of 2027 will
complete the 2027-
28 FAFSA or WASFA
using 2025 income
information



Apply Every Year



FSA ID – The First Step to the FAFSA

Social Security
Number

Their own mobile
phone number
and/or email
address

Create an Account (FSA ID)



Parents



Students



Borrowers

Whether you're a student, parent, or borrower, you'll need to create your own account to complete federal student aid tasks.

What You Can Use Your Account For

- Filling out the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form
- Signing your *Master Promissory Note (MPN)*
- Applying for repayment plans
- Completing loan counseling
- Using the *Public Service Loan Forgiveness Help Tool*

Items Needed to Create an Account

- Social Security number
- Your own mobile phone number and/or email address

Get Started

or

Log In

Create an Account (FSA ID)

Step 1 of 7

Personal Information

I understand that I'll be required to certify that the information I provide to create an account (FSA ID) is true and correct and that I'm the individual I claim to be.

If I'm not the person I claim to be, I understand that I'm not authorized to proceed and that I should exit this form now. If I provide false or misleading information, I understand that I might be subject to a fine, prison time, or both.

First Name



Middle Initial



Last Name



Date of Birth

Month

Day

Year



Social Security Number



Note: A user can only have one account associated with his or her Social Security number.



Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)



info@wsac.wa.gov | (360) 753-7800
917 Lakeridge Way SW | Olympia, WA 98502



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WASFA QUESTIONNAIRE

The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) is for people who don't file a federal FAFSA application. People who complete a WASFA are applying for state aid. There are various reasons to complete a WASFA instead of a FAFSA:

- A person may not be eligible for federal aid due to:
 - Citizenship or immigration status, including being undocumented.
 - Defaulted federal student loans.
 - Repayments owed on federal grants.
- A person may choose not to apply for federal aid due to:
 - Family members who do not want to file the FAFSA.
 - Other personal reasons.

After you complete the WASFA, the college(s) or program(s) you choose will determine whether you meet **state residency requirements** and **state financial aid eligibility**. State financial aid could include Washington College Grant, the College Bound Scholarship, Passport to Careers, National Guard Grant, or State Work Study.

The following questions will confirm if the WASFA is the correct application for you.

[Start](#)

<https://wsac.wa.gov/WASFA>



WASFA Account Creation – The First Step to the WASFA

You will need
your own email
address

The WASFA is
available in
English and
Spanish

You will need
internet access

CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT

Please complete the following registration form

* - Required Field ? - Help and Hints ! - Error Information

Email Address *

? Please ensure that this is a valid, permanent personal email address, not a school issued email, that you check regularly.

Confirm Email Address *

Create Password *

? Passwords should contain 8-16 characters, include at least one upper case and one lower case letter, and one number or any of the following symbols ! @ \$ % * () ? . Do not include common words or names, and combine uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols.

Confirm Password *

Secret Question *

? If you forget your password you can use your secret answer to verify your identity.

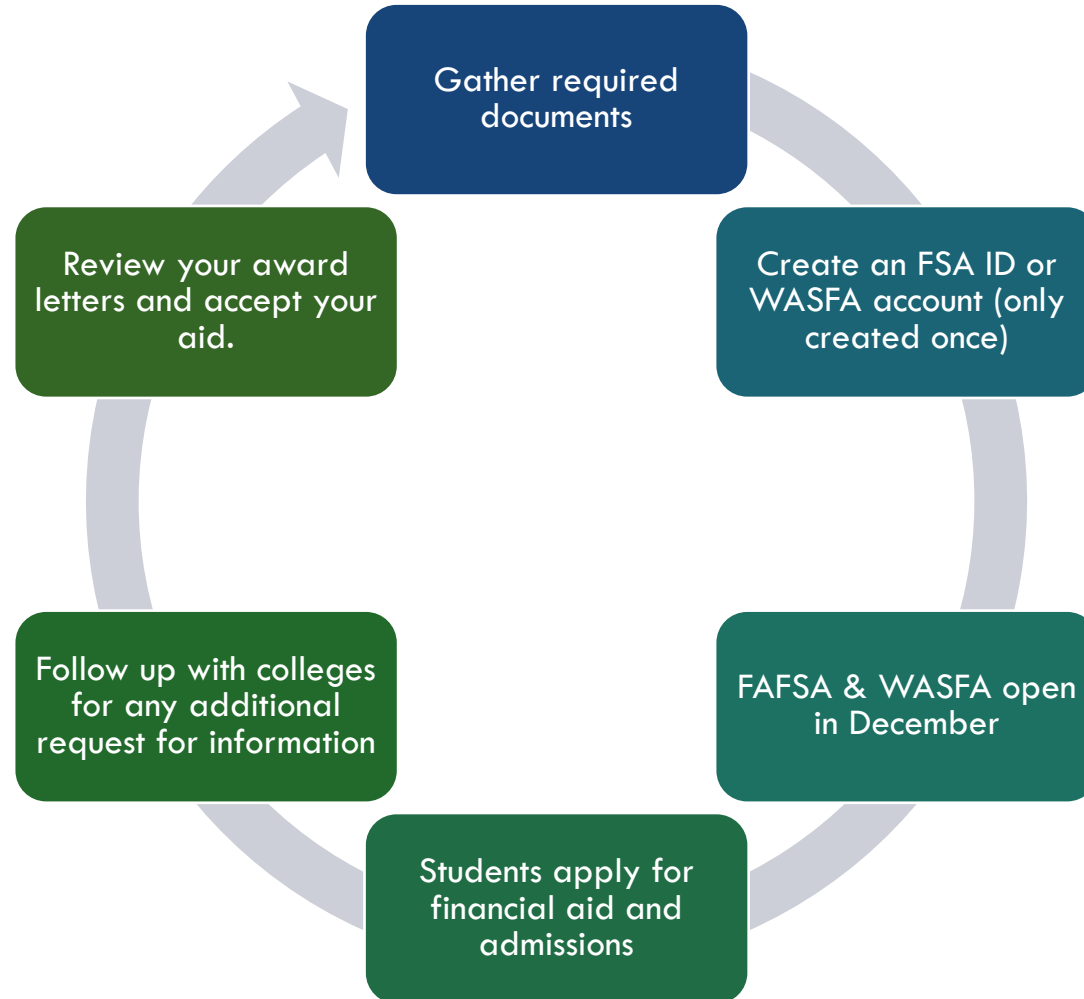
Secret Answer *

First Name *

? If you have a Social Security or DACA Card, your first/last name should match that document. If you don't have a Social Security or DACA Card, your first/last name should match the name you



Financial Aid Timeline





What Do I Need to Apply for Financial Aid

Your driver's license or state ID. (If you have one)

Your income information

- This includes bank statements, a W-2 or pay stub, and a 2022 tax return if applicable.

Your parent most likely will need to provide information, if you are 24 or younger.

- This includes bank statements, child support statements, W-2 or pay stubs, and a 2022 tax return if applicable.

FAFSA Filers Should Also Have Access to:

- Your FSA ID and your parent(s) will also need to create an FSA ID.
- Your Social Security Card or green card.
- Parent's Social Security Number (if they have one).



Is a Student Dependent or Independent*

Dependent Student

Requires Parent Information

A student who does not meet any of the criteria for an independent student

*for financial aid purposes

Independent Student

Does Not Require Parent Information

An independent student is one of the following:

- at least 24 years old
- married
- a graduate or professional student
- a veteran
- a member of the armed forces
- an orphan
- a ward of the court
- someone with legal dependents other than a spouse
- an emancipated minor
- someone who is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and self supporting



CSS Profile



<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

Additional profile that some colleges use to award institutional aid.

The CSS Profile is free for domestic undergraduate students whose family income is up to \$100,000. The fee for the initial application is \$25. Additional reports are \$16.



Class of 2027 Financial Aid Nights

Students, let us help you take your next steps!

Sessions are offered in English and Spanish

Join us this fall:

- Wednesday, Sept. 30th @ 5:30pm
- Tuesday, Nov. 17th @ 5:30pm
- Tuesday, Dec. 1st @ 5:30pm



**WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL**
12th Year Campaign

FINANCIAL AID EVENTS




Calendar of upcoming financial aid events

Today

<

>

August 2026

Month

SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THU 30	FRI 31	SAT Aug 1
		• 8am Centralia Collg • 10pm Seattle College	• 9am Skagit Valley Co	• 6pm WSU Understan		
2	3	4 • 4pm Start Now for Fe	5	• 12pm Skagit Valley Co	7	8
9	10	11 • 9am Skagit Valley Co	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 • 2pm Financial Aid an	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 • 8am Centralia Collg • 12pm Skagit Valley Co	26	27 • 8am Centralia Collg • 12pm Skagit Valley Co	28	29
30	31	Sep 1	2	3	4	5

Washington State Financial Aid Events

Events shown in time zone: (GMT-07:00) Pacific Time - Los Angeles

Add to Google Calendar

Google Calendar

CLASS OF 2027

Financial Aid Nights



Join the 12th Year Campaign to learn more about paying for education after high school and take your first step creating your FSA ID or WASFA account.

Hosted on Zoom in English and Spanish



**WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL**
12th Year Campaign

TO REGISTER GO TO [HTTPS://WSAC.WA.GOV/FINANCIAL-AID-EVENTS](https://wsac.wa.gov/financial-aid-events)

CLASE DEL 2027

Noche de Ayuda Financiera



Únase a la campaña del duodécimo año para obtener más información sobre la ayuda financiera y dé el primer paso para crear su FSA ID o cuenta WASFA en este evento.

Esta presentación está disponible en inglés y español



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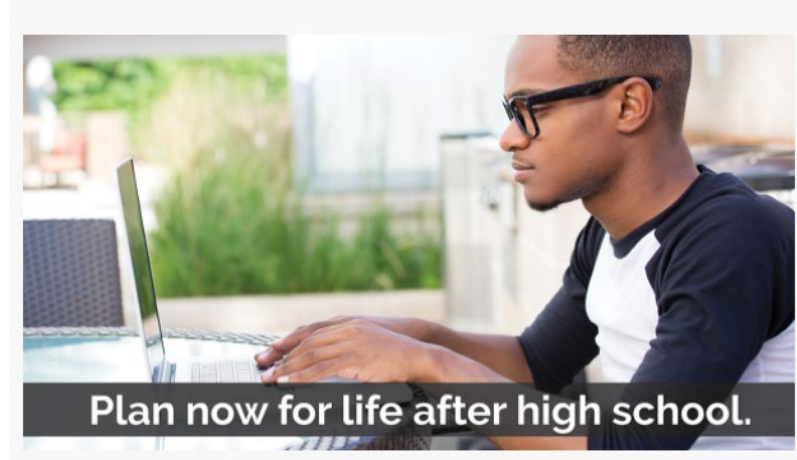
REGISTRATE EN [HTTPS://WSAC.WA.GOV/FINANCIAL-AID-EVENTS](https://wsac.wa.gov/financial-aid-events)



Resource: www.wsac.wa.gov/actionplan

One-stop site for juniors and seniors

Career exploration resources to application information

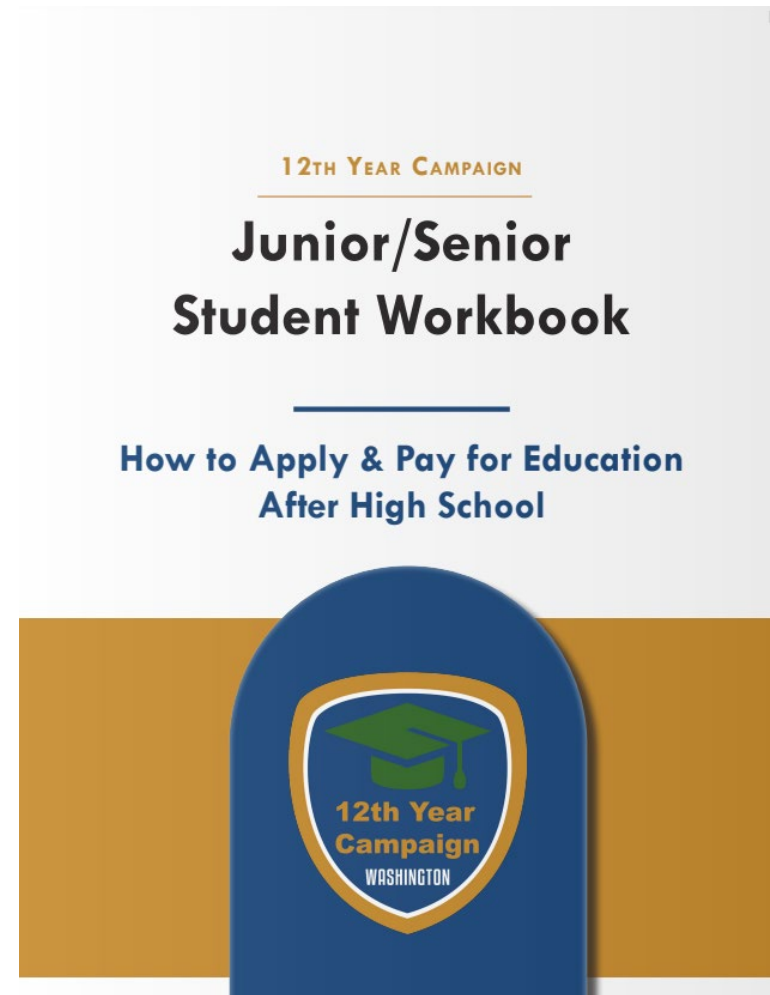




Resource: 12th Year Campaign Resources and Events

Free virtual financial aid completion events to help you take the next step!

Free resources that support you with financial aid, college admissions and more.



<https://wsac.wa.gov/actionplan>



Resource: Financial Aid Padlet For Students

Financial Aid Resources for Students
Welcome to our student padlet of financial aid resources. These resources will help you with completing financial aid and admissions applications.

How to Apply For the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)

Step #1 - Create an FSA ID



studentaid.gov

Federal Student Aid

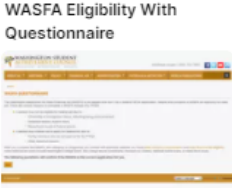
This is your first step! Whether you're a student, parent, most families will need to create their own account to complete federal student aid tasks. Some students may have already completed this process. You can create an FSA ID anytime before you start your FAFSA. There are resources below to help you create your FSA ID.

Step #2 - Apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)



How to Apply For The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)

Step #1 - Determine WASFA Eligibility With Questionnaire



wsac.wa.gov

WASFA Questionnaire

You can use this tool to assess yourself for WASFA Eligibility.

Step #2 - Apply for the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)



wsac.wa.gov

WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid) | WSAC

The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) is for people who don't file a federal FAFSA application. People who complete a WASFA are applying for state aid. There are various

Stuck or Need Help

A Step-By-Step Guide To Completing The 2022-2023 FAFSA



nitrocollege.com

This is a break down of the 2022-2023 FAFSA, question by question. In this interactive guide (screenshots included), Nitro College clarifies why each question is asked, and how to best answer each one accurately.

12th Year Campaign and Partner Events



12th Year Campaign Events

The 12th Year Campaign can help you with two important steps you need to take to go to college: applying for college and applying for financial aid. The first step is to file a FAFSA or WASFA financial aid

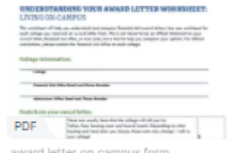
Award Letters

Key Components to Understanding Your Award Letter



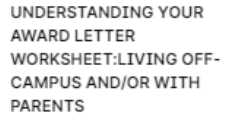
award letter worksheet - key components 1

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AWARD LETTER WORKSHEET: LIVING ON-CAMPUS



award letter on campus form

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AWARD LETTER WORKSHEET: LIVING OFF-CAMPUS AND/OR WITH PARENTS



Other Financial Resources

Washington State Aid Calculator



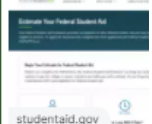
portal.wsac.wa.gov

WSAC Aid Calculator

Many undergraduate cover some or all their costs with the Washir Grant (WCG) and Fed Grant (Pell).

To get an estimate, you enter information about size and income. You optionally enter the family contribution (EFC), completed FAFSA to estimate an

Federal Student A Estimator



studentaid.gov



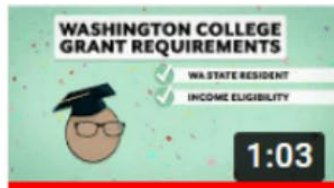
<https://padlet.com/christinaw12/t6jfitu7m8in10xc>



Washington Financial Aid for Education and Training Videos

Informational videos about education after high school in the following languages:

- English
- Mandarin
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese



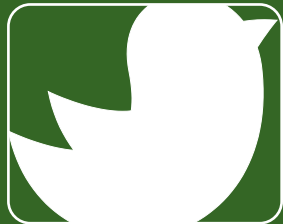


We Are Here to Help!



Online:

- wsac.wa.gov
- www.thewashboard.org
- wastate529.wa.gov



On Twitter:

- [@WSACouncil](https://twitter.com/WSACouncil)



On Facebook:

- www.facebook.com/WSACouncil



Questions

