

Critical Factors for Financial Assistance

- A very strong academic record
- The student's ability to do solid research and/or work experience, as reflected in the statement of purpose essay and the letters of recommendation
- Very high standardized test scores
- Interacting with faculty members doing research in the same field as the student can make a difference
- Academic publications and attracting external funding are a plus

Types of Financial Assistance

- Fellowships, being entirely based on merit, require a very strong academic record, standardized test scores and are extremely competitive
- Other scholarships tend to be specific to universities and are based on merit as above; very competitive
- Athletic scholarships, based on athletic performance in addition to decent grades

Various Types of Assistantships

Based on excellent academics and standardized test scores

Maximum 20 hours per week

- Teaching: Speaking skills test scores should be high
- Research: Identify a faculty in the same research area and interact with the faculty
- Administrative: Work in accounts office, labs, cafeteria at the campus

Other types of funding

- Scholarships and fellowships: - Agencies and foundations often have a range of scholarships that are available even for international students. Explore these through online databases or Student Services. Some require complex applications, such as the National Science Foundation
- Campus jobs:- Part-time employment on campus can be authorized by the international student service office
- Internships :- Available at various companies and organizations
- Optional Practical Training (OPT):- After graduation, this allows students to work for a maximum period of 29 months - 12 months on full time OPT on a F-1 student visa
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT):- A requirement for graduation, and is part of the curriculum
- Full time CPT for 12 months reduces the OPT period

Internships

- Opportunity to observe the candidate by the hiring organization
- Provides summer vacancy replacement
- Provides opportunity for employment for students who interned with the company

On-line resources:

- <http://www.educationusa.state.gov>
- <http://www.iefaf.org/>
- <http://www.fundingusstudy.org>
- <http://www.edupass.org/finaid>
- <http://www.globalslc.com/>
- <http://www.internationalstudent.com>

Print resources:

- Funding for United States Study (2008-09 edition)
- Peterson's Graduate and Professional programs
- Getting What You Came For
- Graduate Admissions Essays

(All these print resources are available at USIEF libraries)

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