

## How do I apply for financial aid from the Graduate Institute?

- If you are a **new student** applying for financial aid, you should do so when completing your application for admission.  
If you are applying for a **Master Program**, please note that the admission evaluation process is “need blind”: the academic evaluation committees do not know which applicant requested financial aid and have no access to this or any related financial information in the file. Financial aid applications are evaluated only after all the admission decisions have been made and can no longer be altered.  
If you are a **PhD candidate**, you are eligible for financial support regardless of your financial situation. When completing your application form, doctoral candidates should not fill in the fields relating to financial situation, **which only apply to Master candidates**. Departments rank the files of all the PhD applicants they admit based on academic excellence, originality of the research project and fit with the department’s research priorities.
- If you are a **current Master student holding a scholarship and/or a tuition fee reduction**, you will need to apply between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 30<sup>th</sup> in order to renew your existing financial aid awarded in the previous year.
- If you are a **current Master student with no financial assistance**, you may not apply for financial aid for your second year.
- If you are a **current PhD student with or without financial assistance and whose program started before September 2022**, you may apply for financial aid
  - Please refer to [this page](#) for more information on renewals and new applications for current students.
  - Please make sure that you have read and understood the Directive found on that same page. This directive is valid for Master students and current PhD students (who have started their PhD program before September 2022). Please come back to us if anything remains unclear on this [Email address](#).
  - Please submit your request between 1st April and 30 May. Late applications are not considered.
- Financial aid may take the form of a tuition fee reduction, and/or a full or partial scholarship. Scholarships provide a monthly stipend during the academic year.
- The financial aid package for incoming PhD students whose program starts on or after September 2022 and who obtain a 4-year financial package includes a full scholarship stipend of CHF 2’000/month during 10 months and a tuition fee reduction. Please note that a

full tuition fee reduction does not exempt the student from paying the annual fee of CHF 1,000 (CHF 500/semester). These conditions are valid when scholarships are disbursed. For further information regarding TA/RA ships, please visit this [page](#)

### **When do I apply for a scholarship if I am an incoming student or a current student?**

- **Prospective/incoming Master students:** apply for financial aid during your application for admission. The Admissions Office will notify you about the outcome of both applications.

It is not possible to apply for financial aid during the late application round (1st March).

Note that the evaluation process of your application for admission is “need-blind”: the academic evaluation committees do not know which applicant requested financial aid and have no access to this or any related financial information in the file. Financial aid applications are evaluated only after all the admission decisions have been made and can no longer be altered.

- All students who decide to attend the Institute need to confirm their admission by paying a pre-registration fee of CHF 1,000, deducted from your first tuition invoice. This guarantees your place in the programme and your financial aid package, if awarded. Please note that all students, even those awarded a maximum tuition reduction, are expected to pay the CHF 1,000 pre-registration fee. It will contribute towards financing scholarships for others, in a spirit of solidarity and unity.
- If you are a **current student holding a scholarship and/or a tuition reduction or a continuing PhD student (whose program started before September 2022)**, apply for financial aid **between 1st April and 30 May**.
- If you are a **PhD student with no financial aid package and whose program started on or after September 2022**, you may apply for financial aid. Within the limits of the available budget, the PhD Admission and Financial Committee may allocate financial assistance (in the form of a full or partial scholarship and/or a tuition reduction). This is a one-year financial assistance, renewable, available to PhD researchers of two kinds: either PhD researchers who have been admitted with no funding; or exceptionally, PhD researchers with a 4-year financial aid package who seek a 5<sup>th</sup> year funding. The Committee’s decision-making process when selecting 1-year

scholarship holders assesses requests based on academic excellence and the potential of research projects.

### **What is emergency/special aid and who is eligible for this type of aid?**

Emergency aid is available to all currently enrolled students who have encountered an unexpected hardship and need punctual financial help. First year students are considered only in exceptional circumstances. More information on this [page](#).

### **If I have already received a full or partial scholarship, do I need to re-apply?**

Yes, all Master students who have received financial aid and who wish to renew it for the following year should submit their renewal request between 1st April and 30 May. It is in your interest to complete your file as quickly as possible. Incomplete applications will not be considered. This also applies to PhD students whose program started before September 2022.

### **What is the process to renew my scholarship and what are my chances to receive a scholarship with the same conditions as the previous year?**

- **Master students:** the probability is very high, as long as your financial situation remains comparable and your academic progress is satisfactory. You also need to reside in Switzerland or neighbouring France and your presence will be checked throughout the academic year. If approved for an exchange program, you may reside outside this region for the duration of your exchange.
- **PhD students:** you can expect to receive at least the same amount during the subsequent years, unless your financial needs change. We expect you to explore other possible sources of funding:
  - Apply for a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position at the Institute
  - Apply for an Excellence Scholarship for foreign scholars (if you are entering your second year)
  - Apply for research funding, per consultation with the Research Office

## **How is my scholarship going to be disbursed? When will it come into effect and what if I don't have a bank account?**

The scholarship is generally allocated for a period of 10 months, from September to June.

If necessary, you may contact our [accounting services](#) at the start of the academic year to arrange disbursement over 12 months (from September to August). The amount will be adjusted accordingly.

If you do not have a Swiss bank account when you arrive, the first disbursement can be made in cash. Subsequent disbursements will be transferred directly to your local bank account.

You will find information on opening a bank account [on this link](#). You may also consider opening a postal account.

Be aware that when reassessing a student's financial aid award in view of additional income, the calculation is made on the basis of CHF 2,000/month (full scholarship) or CHF 1,000/month (partial scholarship) over 10 months, regardless of your actual disbursement plan, which might be spread over 12 months.

## **How does my academic performance influence the decision regarding the attribution of a scholarship package? Will my past academic record have any influence on my financial aid application for the first year?**

Demonstrated financial need is the first criterion in the financial aid evaluation process for Master students and PhD students whose program started before September 2022. Once your financial need has been confirmed, your past academic performance is the second evaluation criterion.

Current Master students applying for renewal must be regularly enrolled at the Institute and making satisfactory academic progress, in accordance with the [academic policies and regulations](#).

## **If I haven't applied for financial aid in the past or if my scholarship application was refused or if I am a PhD student with no financial aid package, can I apply for the incoming academic year?**

If you are a Master student with no previous financial aid award from the Institute, you may not apply for financial assistance for your second year of studies. If you are a PhD student whose program started before 2022, you may still apply; however, you should be aware that new awards to continuing PhD students are generally approved only in view of remaining institutional funds.

If you are a PhD student admitted on or after September 2022 and have received no financial aid package, please note that some one-year financial aid and research assistantships are offered each year by the department. Because financial aid is limited, it is not automatically renewable.

### **What happens if I fail my studies or need to temporarily suspend my studies?**

If you interrupt your studies, your financial aid will cease, with immediate effect.

If you obtain an approved leave of absence, you may re-apply for a financial aid renewal for the following academic year upon your return. The Financial Aid Committee will assess your complete renewal application. Renewals are not, however, automatic.

If your leave of absence is for the autumn semester only, your financial aid will be re-activated for the spring semester.

### **Once I receive a scholarship package, are there any requirements that I need to meet in order to remain eligible for aid?**

Yes, a financial aid package can be cancelled or suspended if you no longer fulfil the conditions on which it had been awarded. Students who have not satisfied their curriculum requirements in the first semester, who have breached the Academic Regulations or violated the [Code of Conduct](#), may have their financial aid removed in the second semester.

If you are a Master student or a PhD student whose program started before September 2022, you are also required to notify the Scholarships Office of any change in your personal or financial situation.

The decision to cancel or suspend financial aid is made by the Direction of Studies.

### **What happens if I get a job at the Institute or elsewhere?**

All beneficiaries of financial aid awarded by the Institute and who are enrolled in a Master program or a PhD program which started before September 2022 and who wish to take a remunerated job or internship, either at the Institute or elsewhere; or who accept any other form of financial aid from an external source during the academic year, are required to inform the [Scholarships Office](#) immediately. Your situation will then be re-assessed and the financial aid award might be reduced as a consequence.

Accumulating revenue from different sources is allowed only if the

combined total of both the Institute's financial aid and the additional income does not exceed CHF 32,000, as specified in the directive on financial aid. Otherwise, financial aid from the Institute will be decreased accordingly.

Be aware that when reassessing a student's financial aid award in view of additional income, the calculation is made on the basis of CHF 2,000/month (full scholarship) or CHF 1,000/month (partial scholarship) over 10 months, regardless of your actual disbursement plan, which might spread over 12 months. If applicable, the tuition fee reduction will also be adjusted.

Any modifications in your financial situation arising between submitting your application and the end of the financial aid period must be notified immediately to the Scholarships Office.

### **What if I go on an exchange programme or if I have an internship abroad? How will my scholarship package be affected?**

Consult the Academic Regulations and your Academic Advisor to ensure that an overseas internship is compatible with your enrolment and curriculum requirements.

If you go overseas for an exchange semester or for an approved unpaid internship, all conditions for your financial aid package remain identical. If your internship is paid, you must inform the [Scholarships Office](#) and your financial aid might be adjusted.

Current Master and PhD students whose program started before September 2022 and who have been approved to participate in an exchange programme can apply earlier and will receive a decision by mid-May. The financial aid information is often required for visa purposes.

### **Are there donors that I could contact to receive a scholarship?**

Our donors do not wish to have direct contact with financial aid applicants. Doing so would jeopardize your chances of obtaining a sponsored scholarship.

If the Institute accepts your financial aid application and you are awarded a scholarship, the Financial Aid Committee will verify if you meet the criteria for a one of our sponsored scholarships. If accepted by the donor, the student will be informed.

Your scholarship from the Institute will then be transformed into a scholarship from one of our donors.

This procedure allows us to raise funds for our "Special/Emergency Aid".

## **How can I obtain proof of funding for visa purposes?**

You may use your financial aid letter, which clearly indicates the award amounts. You may also use the attestation that you received from either the financial aid office or the donor. The attestation is usually sent by e-mail and should suffice for visa purposes; however, a hard copy is available upon request.

## **For Master students and PhD students whose program started before September 2022, what kind of proof is requested as a proof of income? What does “gross wealth” mean?**

We normally require the income declaration for the latest fiscal year for you, your spouse (if applicable) and/or your parents. However, if this document is not available in your country or due to some exceptional circumstances, you may also provide us with proof of your and your parents'/spouse's income in other forms: for example, an employment contract indicating salary; recent salary slips; bank statements indicating available funds; savings; annuities; investments; family contributions; pensions; alimony, maintenance and child support; invalidity insurance; widower pension; etc.

If a fiscal/income tax declaration is unavailable, please send us a letter explaining the reasons or exceptional circumstances.

If you obtain any other type of grant and/or loan, please provide us with this documentation.

“Gross wealth” includes all the assets that you and your family own: for example, material goods and real estate/land; liquidity in the form of bonds; and interests. These assets can generate a regular income or have the potential to generate future income.

## **I am an independent student and my parents are not helping me financially. What proof of income should I submit?**

Under Swiss law, parents are required to provide financial support for their children enrolled in full-time education, until the age of 25. Therefore, if you are under 25, you will be considered financially dependent on your parents. You need to document your parents' income, even if these rules do not apply in your country.

If you are 25 or over, you may be considered as an independent student, if you can confirm that your parents do not contribute financially to your

education and other expenses. Please note that you may be asked to provide evidence to this effect.

Even if you are over the age of 25 years old, we strongly recommend that you provide us with your parents' financial documents, as this will give us a clear overview of your family's financial situation.

Incomplete financial aid applications are not evaluated by the Financial Aid Committee and generate an automatic refusal decision.

**I have been offered a scholarship package but will not be able to enrol at the Institute this year. Will I need to re-apply for a scholarship if I apply again the following year?**

Yes. Your financial aid application is valid only for the academic year for which you have been admitted.

**For Master students who are applying for financial aid, what happens if I would need to re-enter my details in my application form?**

During the application process, you can update your details before you validate and submit your online application form. Afterwards, updates must be sent to the [Admission](#) and the [Scholarships office](#).

**I am enrolled to the LL.M programme or the MIDS. What kind of financial aid is available for me?**

Please visit your LL.M programme's website for this information. Note that the financial aid office at the Graduate Institute does not evaluate requests from LL.M students. This includes the LL.M in International Law, the Geneva Academy and the MIDS.

- For the LL.M, you will find information [here](#).
- For the MIDS, you will find information [here](#).
- For the Geneva Academy, you will find information [here](#).

Special/Emergency aid is not available to students enrolled in the LL.M program, the MIDS or any other program that is not a regular Master or PhD program from the Institute.

**What happens if I miss the application deadline?**

You will not be considered for financial aid for the coming years as you will not have received financial aid during your first year of Master studies. PhD

students whose program started before September 2022 may apply during the renewal period (April 1st to May 30th).

### **How can I be sure that my application has been received and treated?**

New applicants can track their status via the online follow up module linked to their application. Current students can also check the status of their financial aid application on the [follow up](#) (available only in April-May).

### **How long does it take to receive a response regarding financial aid?**

New students receive their financial aid decision along with their admission letter. Current students receive an e-mail response at the end of June.

### **Can I apply for a scholarship and try to obtain another scholarship externally?**

Yes, and we strongly encourage you to do so. Please remember to inform us accordingly, as your external funding must be documented. Failure to do so may result in our financial aid award being revoked.

### **I am a US citizen or eligible national, can I apply for US Direct Loans as well as financial aid from the Institute simultaneously?**

Yes. If you receive a full scholarship and a tuition fee reduction, your financial aid award will total CHF 27,000. Therefore, you may still apply for Direct Loans. The total of your financial aid package and the loan should not exceed approximately CHF 32,000, which is the maximal Cost of Attendance as defined by the US Loans Office. Accordingly, you would be eligible for a maximum of CHF 5,000 in Direct Loans.

### **What can my scholarship stipend be used for?**

Your scholarship stipend should cover your current living expenses during your studies.

Master students are required to reside in Switzerland or neighbouring France in order to receive their monthly stipend. Their presence will be periodically and randomly checked during the academic year.

Click here for an [estimation of living costs](#). This will give you an idea of what to expect and how to plan your budget. Please note that this is only an estimate and it is valid for a student with no dependents.

### **If I receive financial assistance from the Institute, may I travel during the academic year and continue receiving my stipends?**

Yes, you may travel during the academic year but your residence in Switzerland or neighbouring France will be periodically and randomly checked. You may be asked to present yourself at the Institute at any time during the academic year. Your presence is not required during the winter break (mid December to mid February).

### **If I am unsuccessful in obtaining a scholarship, are there any other options or alternative support measures for me?**

Yes, you can explore other options of funding which may be available in your country. You may also contact private donors and foundations that welcome direct student contact (not the Graduate Institute's donors).

If you are Swiss citizen, please consult this [page](#).

In addition, you can also seek employment by visiting our [Internships and jobs page](#). Please note the [General Rules](#) for working in Switzerland. Our Career Services department is here to assist you.

### **What if I don't have the means to pay my tuition fees on time?**

Please [send an e-mail](#) asking for a deadline extension or instalments. Include your reasons, desired payment schedule and how you plan to cover your tuition and living costs.

### **How many times can my scholarship package be renewed?**

As long as you are successfully completing your studies, you may apply as many times as necessary. Master students can apply for their second year of study (up to 4 semesters) and PhD students whose program started before September 2022 may apply for subsequent years, although they are encouraged to seek alternative funding.

**Who can I get in touch with if I didn't find an answer to my questions regarding financial aid?**

Please contact the [Scholarships office](#) for any questions regarding your financial aid package or any other type of financial aid available at the Institute (including our donors). Contact the [Admission Office](#) regarding your application.