Understanding Funding Options

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PhD programs are (usually) funded!
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Typically ~ 5 years of guaranteed funding + tuition remission
Length of Program and Program Costs

All students are fully funded for their first five years. The support covers full tuition and a stipend of at least $32,000 per year. This is a stipend for full-time work for 12 months, and students can do no substantial outside work for pay. Every year a serious effort is made to increase the stipend. Regardless of the source of support, all students have the same opportunities and must meet the same requirements. All students are expected to play an active role in the undergraduate teaching functions of the Department. The department does not guarantee funding beyond the fifth year. However, most clinical students have no difficulty obtaining funding through a combination of teaching, grants and other independent funding sources.
Caveats

Different types of funding require different time commitments

Sometimes funding is restricted to academic year

Often still have to pay some fees

Conference travel not always covered
Types of funding

- Research Assistant
- Teaching Assistant
- Fellowships
Research Assistant

Funded by a mentor’s grant

May have specific research responsibilities

Time commitment varies based on mentor expectations

Can help build research for CV, publications
Teaching Assistant

May or may not have choice of courses/ instructors

May or may not teach discussion sections

Time commitment varies based on instructor expectations

Can help build teaching experience for CV
Fellowships

Allow for independent research

Application process varies (but may require substantial time)

Excellent for CV
Fellowships

Importance of mentorship

Deadlines (some require “internal review”)

Many universities have own awards for additional funding

Taxes can be complicated with fellowships
NSF: https://www.nsfgrfp.org/

Hertz: https://www.hertzfoundation.org/the-fellowship/about/

Ford: https://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/FordFellowships/PGA_171962

Knight-Hennessy Program (Stanford): https://knighthennessy.stanford.edu/

F31 (NRSA): https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Funding/Training-Career-Development/Award/F31-Individual-NRSA-PhD-Students-MDPhD-Students-MSTP-0

F31 for students from underrepresented groups: https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Funding/Training-Career-Development/Award/F31-Individual-NRSA-Diverse-PhD-Students-Diverse-MDPhD

Gilliam Fellowship (from Howard Hughes Medical Institute): https://www.hhmi.org/science-education/programs/gilliam-fellowships-advanced-study

APA Dissertation Award: https://www.apa.org/about/awards/scidir-dissertation
Types of funding

- Research Assistant
- Teaching Assistant
- Fellowships
Other Financial Considerations

Cost of living

Transportation

Tools (e.g., computer, programs)

Family (supporting family members, childcare)

Renting vs. buying
Other Financial Considerations

Stipends often don’t increase at the rate of inflation

Consider making a **budget** to assess expenses
Costs of Applying

Application fees
GRE fees
Transcripts
Interviews
Application Fees

Many schools offer fee waivers, but the process is not straightforward
- As "easy" as emailing grad coordinator
- Some require proof of financial need
- Some not available to international students
- https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z5H2lR02X0zB8vOXfkj0AKN0iwt9z25dkqEQFWjk/edit#gid=0
GRE Fees

Many schools are getting rid of GRE requirements (yay!)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f6ZyVGn-opa_ijRyntHxfJJaSNya4h-bwEDeDGInv4/edit#gid=266572339
(credit to the SPLAT lab https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/splat-lab/faqs/)

Capitalize on “free” schools when taking the GRE
Transcripts

Check if you can send unofficial transcripts (at least prior to acceptance)
Interviews

Vary widely based on program/ university

Some will allow a remote option (unsure if that affects acceptance rates)

Know what is covered (e.g., airport food, extra day?)

Know your options (e.g., will they book travel vs. reimburse)

BUDGET
Questions to Ask Programs

Amount of stipend/ tuition remission
  Typical type of funding
  Other Fees
  Pay Cycle

Years guaranteed
  Match w/length of program
  Options to be funded longer
Questions to Ask Programs

Do graduate students typically take out loans

Housing (costs, do grad students share rooms)

Options for conference travel

Fellowship opportunities (& expectations)
Questions for me?

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