

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

*Information for Admitted International Financial Aid Recipients*



## WELCOME!

On behalf of the admission and financial aid offices, congratulations on your admission to Northwestern! As an international aid recipient, you will likely have a number of questions prior to your commitment. We have outlined some topics here to help you get started, but we also want you to know that we are here to assist you now and throughout your time at Northwestern.

## Cost of Attendance

Northwestern uses standard costs for the academic year to help determine your financial aid eligibility. Please visit [our financial aid website\\*](#) for a full breakdown and explanation of these costs. Be sure to review the section that explains the difference between direct and indirect costs. This will also help you plan a budget for your first year at Northwestern.

\*2026-2027 cost of attendance will be finalized in Spring 2026

## Start-Up Grant

As a first-year student, we recognize that you will have costs necessary to help get you established as a Northwestern student. After you commit to Northwestern, we will email additional information in mid-May regarding your eligibility to receive a one-time start-up grant to help with costs like SEVIS fees and a computer purchase your first year. For more information on the start-up grant, please email [Bradley Lone](#), [bradley.lone@northwestern.edu](mailto:bradley.lone@northwestern.edu).

## Travel Costs

Your financial aid includes one round trip flight per year, which we will book and pay for you. This does not appear on your financial aid notice. For Northwestern's winter recess, you will have the option to either have us book an additional flight home and back to campus or you can select the continuous housing option on your housing application. You will need to decide your preferred at the time you submit your housing application. For more information on travel assistance, please email [Christina Smith](#), [christina.smith@northwestern.edu](mailto:christina.smith@northwestern.edu).

## Housing and Meals

We use the cost of a basic double room and full meal plan for the room and board amount. Should you select a more expensive single room, your out-of-pocket expenses will increase. Be sure to select the continuous housing option on your housing application if you need to stay on campus over the winter recess period. Your financial aid will cover this additional cost. University housing remains open for all students during Thanksgiving and Spring break.

## Student Employment

Working on campus is not a requirement to receive your grant assistance. However, many international students have chosen to work and been able to find work on campus to help them cover their personal costs. On-campus employment will not impact your financial aid eligibility. On-campus jobs will not be available until a student has enrolled and must be pursued and secured by the individual student. To learn more, visit [Northwestern's International Student Career Planning Guide](#).

## Health Insurance

International students are required to enroll in the NU/Aetna health insurance plan. For students receiving need-based financial aid, the cost is covered by Northwestern in the form of a grant and is already included in your financial aid. To learn more, visit our [Student Health Insurance website](#).

## Books for 'Cats

The Books for 'Cats program provides eligible students with required course materials at no cost, ensuring they have what they need to succeed academically at Northwestern. Students who qualify will receive details in their financial aid package inviting them to participate.

## Aid Renewals

You will complete a financial aid application each year, and you can expect your financial aid eligibility to remain consistent in future years as long as your family's financial circumstances, household size, and the number of siblings enrolled in college remain similar from year to year.

## Contact Us

If you have any questions please let us know!

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