

Financial Aid for Study in Japan

Kinds of Financial Aid

Federal and State Aid

Funded by taxpayer dollars or other means of revenue. It is generally need-based, but it can also be merit-based. It may take the form of scholarships, grants, loans, or work-study. You may use federal aid toward study abroad if the sponsoring institution approves the credit earned by the student.

Institutional Aid

Funded by the student's sponsoring educational institution, based either on need or merit. This is generally a scholarship or tuition waiver, and it is awarded only to students enrolled at the institution. It is sometimes restricted for use only on the home campus or in the home state, and might not be available for study abroad.

Private Aid

Funded by a private source not the sponsoring institution. It is usually available as scholarships or loans and is usually awarded directly to the student, who then uses it to attend the institution of choice. Private aid may have specific restrictions, and so may or may not be available for study abroad. Private loans are offered by private lenders. Lenders provide different types of private loans, depending on the student's level of study.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Form

In order to apply for state and federal assistance, you must fill out the FAFSA each year. When the FAFSA is submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, the information is forwarded to the state student assistance agency. Each state has a different FAFSA submission deadline, but if you submit the form by February 15, you will be in time for all state deadlines. You can download the FAFSA application or apply on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

All types of federal financial aid for study abroad are usable as long as you are eligible and your institution has approved the courses taken abroad for credit.

Qualifying for Financial Aid for Study in Japan

To qualify for financial aid for study abroad:

You must be enrolled in a degree program.

You must be enrolled for a certain number of credit hours while receiving aid.

Study abroad credit must be approved for credit by your home institution before you leave.

You must show a study abroad budget, and your home institution must document the cost of each study abroad program.

The 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act allows you to use “reasonable costs of study abroad” to determine how much aid you should receive. Students attending low-cost institutions can qualify for more aid if the cost of study abroad is higher.

Here is a sample budget of a typical KCP semester program:

Round trip airfare*	\$1,500*
Tuition (KCP Direct)**	\$2,310
**Academic credit is given for an additional \$255-\$425 fee, depending on the sponsor institution you choose. Tuition covers airport pick-up (for students enrolled in a KCP-arranged housing option), onsite orientation, textbooks, most costs of excursions and activities, and minor medical insurance.	
Housing	
Dormitory (no meals included)	\$3,300
Homestay (includes breakfast and dinner)	\$3,500
Meals	
Dormitory meal package: breakfast and dinner*	\$750*
Homestay (lunches)*	\$350*
Other	
Personal expenses*	\$500-\$750*
Transportation fees for class or school activities when not covered by program cost*	\$35*

*Amounts for these items are approximate.

Continuing Financial Aid for Study in Japan

If you want to continue to receive aid while abroad:

You must show satisfactory academic credit each term, normally by earning passing grades for a full-time load of courses taken abroad for credit.

You must reapply for federal/state aid each year you want to receive aid.

Using Existing Financial Aid for Study in Japan

Federal aid can legally be used for virtually every study abroad option as long as the program you attend has been approved for credit by your home institution. Many state aid programs follow the same rules and regulations as the federal government. If your state does this, you should also be able to use state aid for study abroad programs approved by your home campus. Even if you have not received aid in the past, you should consider applying for aid for your study abroad program.

Each college and university is allowed some latitude in deciding how aid programs will be administered and how the cost of attending school will be determined. This allows administrators to take into account special circumstances when awarding aid. Here are some things to know if you are investigating whether state or federal aid can be used for study abroad:

Your college or university must first agree that the credit earned abroad is approved.

The credit does not have to satisfy major requirements, but you need to be able to use it for general education or elective credit.

Once your home institution approves the program, it is necessary to have a written agreement between your school and [KCP International. KCP will submit this agreement to your university once you are registered.

Send your financial aid office the appropriate KCP budget for your study abroad program. Federal law allows the use of aid to cover all reasonable costs of study abroad including: round-trip transportation, tuition and fees for the program, living costs, passport and visa fees, health insurance, and so on. All of these costs will be included in the budget.

If your study abroad program costs more than your home institution tuition, ask your financial aid office to consider the higher costs and give you more aid. Make sure they have a copy of the budget.

If you have never borrowed a Federal Family Educational Loan (Stafford, PLUS, Direct Loan) before, federal law requires that you be in school for 30 days before you can receive your loan money. You are also required to have special counseling about borrowing money for college; your loan cannot be disbursed to you until you have received this counseling.

Academic Credit

Usually, it is not difficult to arrange transfer credit toward U.S. degrees, since KCP courses are offered at recognized institutions. However, it is the responsibility of the student's home institution to approve the amount of credit to transfer. At the end of the program, every participant receives an official university transcript. In addition, course descriptions are available for all programs to help evaluate transfer credit.

Scholarships

Scholarships that can be used for study abroad may be awarded on the basis of personal attributes (ethnic or religious background, parents' field of employment, children of veterans, descendents of immigrants from specific countries), or on academic focus, major, or career path. The challenge for you is to locate appropriate and relevant funding. You may find further scholarship and financial aid information at your school's study abroad office. Here is a starting list to help you:

Bridging Scholarships for Study in Japan Sponsored by the Association of Teachers of Japanese, these scholarships provide assistance of up to \$4,000 to qualified students for study at an eligible program in Japan.

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia Offered through the Institute of International Education, these awards provide funds for study abroad in East and Southeast Asia ranging from \$3,000-\$7,000, depending on the length of the study abroad program.

Gilman International Scholarship Program Offered through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and administered by the Institute of International Education, this program provides awards for study abroad, for U.S. citizens or U.S. national students who are receiving federal need-based aid under Title IV: Pell Grants, Federal Work-Study, Stafford Loans, Perkins, Loans, and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. Awards are up to \$5,000, depending on length of program.

Millennium Scholars Program Offered through the Millennium Society, these awards are for students in an accredited, undergraduate, degree-granting college or university that offers a cross-cultural environment, be between the ages of 17 and 25, and have verifiable need for financial assistance.

Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships Funded by the Rotary Club Foundation, these scholarships are awarded for study or training in another country where Rotary Clubs are located. These awards are available: Cultural Ambassadorial Scholarship, Academic-Year Ambassadorial Scholarship, and the Multi-Year Scholarship.

Websites

www.iefa.org

International Education Financial Aid. IEFA provides financial aid information for students wishing to study in a foreign country. At IEFA, you will find a comprehensive listing of grants, scholarships, loan programs and other information to assist students in their pursuit to study abroad.

www.finaid.org

Information about aid, advice about finding aid, and a special section on financial aid for study abroad. A good general resource is the Financial Aid Information Page.

www.embark.com

A site for finding colleges and financial aid. It includes sources of financial aid, advice for students, and specific information for high school, college, graduate, transfer and international students. Information for parents as well.

www.fastweb.com

Do your own free search using this web site, which has a database of over 180,000 scholarships and loans.

www.collegeboard.org

News and up-to-date information on financial aid, a scholarship search, and links to financial aid resources.

www.collegenet.com

An excellent resource for information on financial aid and scholarships. It includes factual information, defines the types of financial aid, and answers questions about the FAFSA, scholarships, private aid and other forms of alternative financing.

www.ed.gov/directloan/students.html

The federal government's Direct Loan website, with information on accounts, entrance counseling, and loan consolidation.

www.freschinfo.com

Do a free scholarship search.

www.gocollege.com

Links to a free scholarship search, as well as information about government loans.

www.srnexpress.com

The Scholarship Resource Network Express offers a free scholarship search, information on federal and state financial aid, and a link to an online student loan finder.

www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm

U.S. News offers information on the various types of financial aid available, how to decipher your financial aid award letter, and a link to the Department of Education's guide on Student Financial Assistance.