

Presbyterian Study Grant



Presbyterian Mission
**Financial Aid
for Service**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological grant program includes Presbyterian Study Grant, and supplemental grants intended to promote diversity and relieve poverty. Presbyterian Study Grant (PSG) serves students preparing to lead and serve as a minister or Christian Educator. To be designated a Presbyterian Study Grant recipient a student must be:

- A MDiv student seeking ordination as a teaching elder, or
- A MACE student planning to serve as a Christian Educator with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The applicant must demonstrate readiness for ministry through practice of spiritual disciplines in seminary life and have displayed to their home church the gifts they bring to congregational leadership. MDiv students must be recommended by the CPM in the Presbytery of care.

No more than 120 students are awarded per academic year. PSG can be awarded up to three times to students who have not completed the first professional degree (required for certification or ordination).

Eligibility

Presbyterian Church (USA) members who are:

- MACE students are not required to be Inquirer/Candidate, but must be an active member of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation
- MDiv (also Dual Degree) students entering years 1 and 2 **must be an Inquirer or Candidate**
- MDiv (also Dual Degree) students entering year 3 **must be a Candidate**
- Enrolled full time at ATS accredited institution
- Limited to MDiv and/or MACE
- Demonstrate Financial Need

Range of Award

\$1,000 - \$6,000

Deadline

May 16: Student portion of on-line application completed

Awards

No later than August 30

The Process at a Glance

These steps will be completed by the applicant.

- 1 Visit www.pcusa.org/psg
- 2 Complete the FAFSA. Apply for financial aid at the seminary you plan to attend.
- 3 Gather information needed to complete the application.
- 4 Complete the remaining application elements in the online application system by May 16th.
- 5 Third party application elements due by June 1st

These steps will be completed by the office of Financial Aid for Service

- 6 Applications are read by a reading committee.
- 7 Awardees are selected by the reading committee and notified by August 30th.



For the Applicant:

- 1 Complete the FAFSA. Apply for financial aid at the seminary that you plan to attend.**

We use information from the FAFSA to determine need. Your financial aid counselor will have the opportunity to receive the information and evaluate whether it accurately represents your circumstances. After the seminary has provided you with aid, the financial aid counselor reports the cost of your education, expected family contribution, and any scholarships and grants you receive. This is the information we use to determine need.
- 2 Gather the information needed to complete the application.**
 - Name and address of the worshipping community you attend
 - Name and email address of your pastor or session member (MaCE applicants Only)
 - Name and email address of a faculty member at the seminary or the Director of Admissions (first year students only), or an advisor from a degree program completed by the student
 - Name and email address of your liaison, the moderator of the committee/commission on preparation for ministry, or the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery
 - Information about where, when, and what you have studied to date
 - General information about your interests and goals
 - The name and email address of your financial aid counselor at the seminary that you plan to attend in the fall
- 3 Set up an online account. Visit www.pcusa.org/psg and click apply now**

Start your application here after you have completed the FAFSA.
- 4 Complete the remaining application elements in the online application system by May 16th.**

This includes writing an essay. You can find more details about the essay requirements on the next page of this guideline.
- 5 Third party application elements due by June 1st**

Check the status of your third-party application elements by logging into your account at <https://apply.mykaleidoscope.com/login>. It is the responsibility of the student to follow up with designated parties. If they have not received an email they may need to check their junk folders. Contact help@mykaleidoscope.com for online application support.

For the Office of Financial Aid for Service

- 6 Applications are read by a reading committee.**

A reading committee will meet in August to select students for awards. Readers will be instructed to
- 7 Awards announced by August 30.**

Selected students will be eligible for up to \$6,000 in funding, dependent on need.



Essay Guidelines

The essay accounts for 40% of the overall score for your application and is the single most important document in your application. Composition of reading committees is at the discretion of the Coordinator for Financial Aid, but will normally include recent graduates, and may be supplemented by representation from those engaged in preparation for ministry, education at related schools, and both ruling and teaching elders distinguished by their contributions to and interest in theological education.

Essay Topic for First-Time Applicants

What do you believe God is calling you to do in ministry?

Essay Topic for Renewal Applicants

Previously awarded students will reflect on the essay that supported their application in the original year of award and write about how their understanding of their call has evolved.

Resume

In prior years, students prepared resumes. The application was organized with the resume first, then essay, then endorsements by congregational leader, CPM (if required), and Faculty. Preparing a resume can be helpful to students. It organizes information that you will be asked to submit in the application, and it can be helpful to send to your endorser after you have asked, and the endorser has agreed, to write a recommendation for you.

In 2020-2021, in the first year of the online application, readers expressed frustration over the lack of the resume in the online presentation of the application. The critique was that students were simply listing, without any helpful context, activities, interests, and prior employment.

Here are some helpful elements of context that I hope you will consider:

- How much time was committed?
- What was your role?
- What did you learn about yourself, or your gifts?

There is a question about personal commitments. Sometimes students are apprehensive about elements of the application that seek information about interests and activities they do not have time for due to personal commitments. Readers found the personal commitments prompt helpful last year and suggested that we give more prominence in this application to sharing personal commitments.



Endorsement Overview

Students should be mindful that providing an endorsement is not a requirement for the endorser.

Students are responsible for soliciting endorsements. We strongly recommend that students provide endorsers a resume and/or essay and the program guidelines.

Endorsements should never be completed by a person completing another endorsement for you—even if the endorser could be the same person in more than one context. This effectively deprives the student of a third voice supporting their application. Endorsements should not be completed by the student's parents, spouse, or sibling.

This grant requires two endorsements for all students. One from a faculty member and one from a colleague in ministry, mentor or another person who has observed the student in a ministry or Christian education context. The online application will ask for contact information from these endorsers and they will receive an online form to complete.

MDiv students are required to provide contact information for a CPM moderator or liaison. Financial Aid for Service will contact the student's presbytery to confirm status under care.

MaCE students are required to provide contact information for a congregational official who can confirm church membership.

Faculty Endorsement

May be completed by a faculty member at the seminary or the Director of Admissions (first year students only), or an advisor from a degree program completed by the student. Do not wait until the last minute. Faculty members and Admission Directors have expressed frustration at the volume of last-minute requests from our application system for students who never requested that they prepare a recommendation.

Church Membership Confirmation (MaCE Only)

This element of the application can be completed by a pastor, a session member of the student's home church. The form will document membership at a PC(USA) congregation or New Worshiping Community.

Committee for Preparation for Ministry Validation

All MDiv and MDiv/Dual Degree students must provide contact information for an official at the student's presbytery that can confirm their status under care. This validation can be completed by the moderator of the committee/commission on preparation for ministry. Alternate endorsers include Presbytery staff responsible for resourcing the CPM the executive, or the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Office of Financial Aid for Service will reach out to the presbytery contact after the student's application is complete and the deadline date has passed.

If the student will be a first or second year MDiv student in the fall, the student must be enrolled by the Presbytery as an Inquirer by September 1. After the student has completed two years of study in an MDiv program, the student must advance to candidacy no later than November 1 of the year of application to be considered for award.

The student who is not eligible but will become eligible due to an anticipated action by the Presbytery completes the application and is considered for award. If selected, the student's award will be in an administrative hold until the Presbytery updates Financial Aid for Service.



Deadlines & Extensions

The goal of Financial Aid for Service is to present as many applicants as possible to the PSG reading committee. We consider deadline extensions on a case-by-case basis with the goal of presenting a complete application to the selection committee.

Confidentiality of Evaluations

Do not share your user ID/password, or any application links sent to your email after you have started the application.

Information collected to support your application is maintained by the office of Financial Aid for Service. The church membership/pastor endorsement form, work product of the college or university the student attends, and the reading committee are confidential and will not be released to the student and/or parent/guardian. Applications are viewed only by staff members with responsibility for the Presbyterian Mission Agency scholarship program, reading committee members, and financial aid staff at the student's selected college or university.

Study Abroad

The Presbyterian Study Grant may not be used for study abroad.

Supplement Grants Awarded in Addition to PSG (Based on Need):

People of Color	up to \$2000
Native American	up to \$2000
Immigrants to the United States	up to \$2000

Disclaimer

Grant or scholarship aid provided by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may not be used for study abroad or internships. PSG and supplemental awards cannot be used to reduce institutional grants or scholarships but may be used to reduce work/study or student loans. PSG and the supplemental grants are restricted to the common requirements for MDiv and MACE degrees.

Aid for international students is managed in consultation with the partner denomination through World Mission.

Mailing Address/Contact Information

Financial Aid for Service
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Toll Free: 800-728-7228 ext. 5097
Email: finaid@pcusa.org





Searching for Student Aid

A new and exciting feature of the online application powered by Kaleidoscope is that at the end of the application, you may find more scholarship programs offered by other Kaleidoscope partners. You are welcome to apply. This will probably be a feature of greater utility for undergraduates than it will be for seminarians. The more specialized and advanced education is, the harder it becomes to find opportunities for aid. Kaleidoscope will probably be no more, and no less useful than scholarship search engines.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Get a free email account to use for scholarship searches
- Visit fteleaders.org and fteleaders.org/fundfinder
- Enlist the help of friends and family, church and presbytery

You might be thinking: that's all very specific or incredibly vague. There are a lot of scholarship search engines out there. Only Fund for Theological Education fteleaders.org is theological education-specific. Everything else is just search algorithms or listing services. Give your scholarship search email to search engines. Save *your* email for applications. It will help you prioritize, and it will quarantine spam that is generated by advertiser supported sites.

Never, never, *never* pay for information about scholarships, or pay for anyone to manage your application process.

Links

MDiv Students

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/>

Christian Education students

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/christianeducators/>

Church Call System

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/>

Donate!

Presbyterian Study Grant is entirely supported by donor restricted gifts. We bear grateful witness to the faith of generations of members in the future of the Presbyterian Church. Please pray for our students and give to ECO E052102 as you are able.

presbyterianmission.org/donate