

Funding Graduate School Through Service



National Service can be a great way to jump-start your career and have a positive impact on communities across the country—even the world! These opportunities frequently include a variety of coveted benefits such as living stipend or salary, health insurance, student loan deferment or forgiveness, skills development, housing assistance, and even retail discounts! Perhaps one of the most exciting benefits offered through programs such as the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, or Teach for America is the potential to receive tuition assistance for graduate school.

How does this work? Well, it varies by program, so read on to learn more about how a service opportunity could lead to funding for your graduate degree!

Peace Corps

The Award (Paul D. Coverdell Fellowships):

- Available at over 200 programs and more than 120 partner universities
- Awards vary by university and offer reduced or full tuition waivers for Master's and Doctoral degrees as well as professional certificates.

Requirements:

- Complete an internship in an underserved community in the U.S.
- Other requirements are determined by each university.

How to apply:

- RPCVs submit an application to both the school and their Coverdell program of choice.

AmeriCorps

The Award (Segal AmeriCorps Education Award):

- Funding typically ranges from \$1000 up to \$5000.
- Can be used to repay qualified student loans OR for current educational expenses such as graduate school

Education Award Matching Program:

- Nearly 200 schools match the Segal Education Award.
- Matches begin at \$1000, but can be as high as 100% tuition coverage.

Urban Teachers:

- 4 year (3 are salaried), AmeriCorps-affiliated teaching program
- Pursue a master's degree while serving.
- Urban Teachers members are also eligible for the Segal Education Award to help fund their degree.

Teach For America

The Award:

- Over 100 Graduate School Partners offer a variety of fee waivers and scholarships to Teach for America Members.
- Additional merit and needs-based available at some universities

The Requirements:

- Must be a current or former TFA Corps member

How to apply:

- Corps members can search available programs and each university's application process [here](#).

Tips for applying for graduate school funding after/during service

- Read each school's instructions carefully. Deadlines and requirements will vary by university.
- Start researching or even applying to programs during your service.
- Connect with universities directly to get more information.
- Keep a clear record of your service activities. In Peace Corps, this is completed through your Description of Service.
- Whether in your application, an essay, or statement of purpose, be sure to clearly explain how your service influenced your decision to attend graduate school.