

For financial aid information, visit [saic.edu/sfs](https://saic.edu/sfs)

Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate

# 2025/26 Financial Aid Instructions and Award Guide



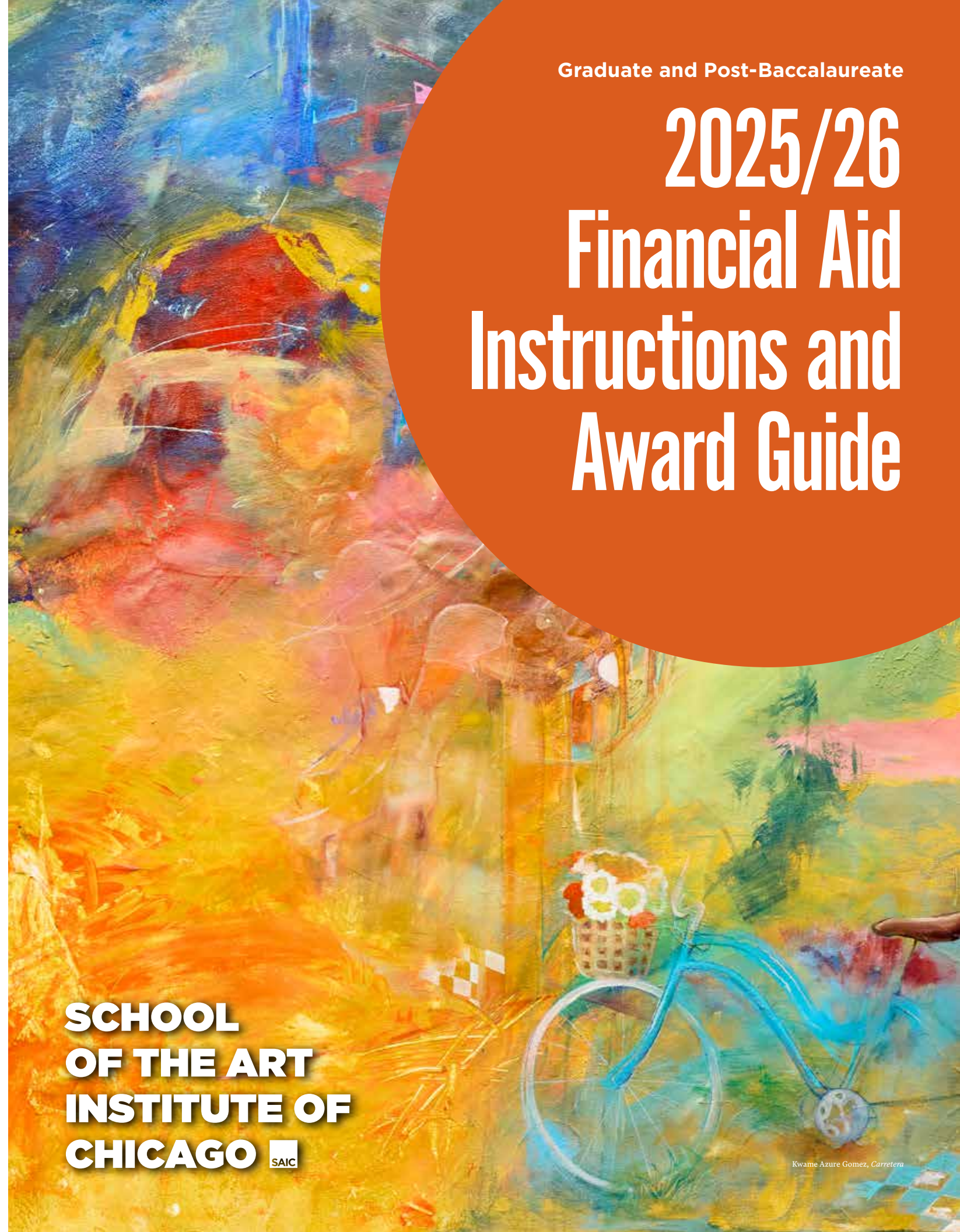
Julian Tyus  
Site #016M07-0



**Student Financial Services**  
36 South Wabash Avenue, suite 1200  
Chicago, IL 60603  
312.629.6600  
[saic.sfs@saic.edu](mailto:saic.sfs@saic.edu)

**SCHOOL  
OF THE ART  
INSTITUTE OF  
CHICAGO** 

Kwame Azure Gomez, *Carretera*





# Welcome

## Student Financial Services

36 South Wabash Avenue, suite 1200  
Chicago, IL 60603  
312.629.6600

[saic.sfs@saic.edu](mailto:saic.sfs@saic.edu)

[saic.edu/sfs](http://saic.edu/sfs)

Office Hours: Monday-Friday,  
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

While appointments are not necessary, please feel free to schedule one with us at [saic.edu/sfs](http://saic.edu/sfs).

## An Important Message

**Welcome to the Student Financial Services Office at SAIC!**

**Our staff is dedicated to partnering with students and their families in financing an education at SAIC and obtaining scholarships, grants, loans, and student employment eligibility to ensure you are offered the best possible financial aid package you are eligible to receive.**

After reading your entire financial aid award offer, you should next complete your annual Figure Your Costs budgeting worksheet ([saic.edu/fyc](http://saic.edu/fyc)) to become familiar with your expenses and financial resources. Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan borrowers and first-time Federal Direct Stafford loan borrowers must complete two loan steps listed in this instruction guide. Details at [saic.edu/faoffer](http://saic.edu/faoffer).

A payment guide will be sent during the summer and is currently available on our website. Our SFS advisors are happy to assist you throughout the financial aid and payment processes.

Please feel free to contact our office by email at [saic.sfs@saic.edu](mailto:saic.sfs@saic.edu) or call us at 312.629.6600 with any questions or assistance you may need. Appointments are not necessary but welcome! Online appointments can be scheduled at [saic.edu/sfs](http://saic.edu/sfs) in the "Contact Us" section.

### Next Steps:

1. **Accept or decline Federal Direct Stafford loan(s) offer—Page 8**
2. **Apply for Federal Direct Grad PLUS (Post-Bacc not eligible) or private loans if needed—Page 8**
3. **Complete Figure Your Costs Budgeting Worksheet—[saic.edu/fyc](http://saic.edu/fyc)**
4. **Submit documents if requested by the Student Financial Services office (See "Tasks" in Self-Service)**



# FAFSA

Free Application for Federal Student Aid  
SAIC School Code 001753

## FAFSA.GOV

[saic.edu/applyfa](http://saic.edu/applyfa)

Students should re-apply every year as soon as possible after Oct 1 for the upcoming academic year using the FAFSA to receive maximum consideration for available funds. You will receive a confirmation from the federal government once your FAFSA application has been processed. Review the information and make corrections online. SAIC uses the SAI (Student Aid Index) each year as listed on the processed FAFSA known as the FSS (FAFSA Submission Summary) to determine federal, state and institutional aid eligibility.

## Verification

[saic.edu/verification](http://saic.edu/verification)

The federal government chooses some FAFSA applications for a process called verification. Through verification, certain data elements listed on the processed FAFSA must be verified by the Student Financial Services office before your financial aid can be disbursed to your student account at SAIC. Students are notified on their processed FAFSA, in their financial aid offer packet and in Self-Service if they have been selected for verification and what documents or actions are needed.

## Verification of Federal Income Tax Information:

If income tax information cannot be automatically transferred to the FAFSA, the Student Financial Services office may request copies of IRS transcripts to verify income. Tax filers may obtain a PDF copy of their transcript in real-time at [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) or they can order one by calling 1.800.908.9946. Students or parents who were required to file federal income tax returns but did not, according to IRS guidelines are not eligible to receive federal or state aid.

## Verification of Other Information:

Students chosen for verification must submit specified documents. Students and/or parents (if applicable) may need to complete a Verification Worksheet supplied by the Student Financial Services office or, in some cases, simply certify (sign) informational statements. The specific requirements for the student are listed in Self-Service in the Tasks section and are also sent by email and mail to the student with their award offer or under separate cover.

Financial aid (including loans and Federal Work-Study payments) may not be disbursed until this process has been completed. Students who secure Federal Work-Study positions must complete verification before submitting a work authorization.

## Verification Deadlines

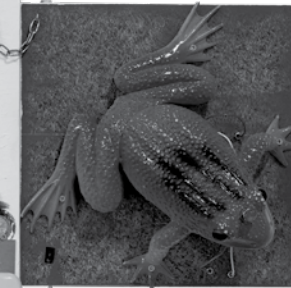
Students should complete the verification process, if selected, by the SAIC suggested priority date of June 1, 2025 for fall and January 1, 2026 for spring. For purposes of the Federal Direct Stafford and PLUS loan programs, verification must be completed before the last day of attendance; for all other types of aid, verification must be completed before June 30, 2026. Students who miss the required deadlines risk losing their eligibility for funds.

## Submitting Required Documents to SFS

[saic.edu/sfsdocsubmit](http://saic.edu/sfsdocsubmit)

See this website for information on safely and securely uploading your scanned or electronic documents using our preferred upload site or submit using other options.

**Please do not submit sensitive documents by email, such as social security numbers, birthdates or other personally identifiable information.**



Bárbara Baron  
*Spirit Finger/Halcyon Bootleggin', 2023*

# Grants (need-based) and Scholarships (merit-based)

## Gift Aid that does not have to be repaid

[saic.edu/sfs](http://saic.edu/sfs)

### SAIC Merit Scholarships

SAIC merit scholarships are awarded during the admission process. Inquiries about the merit process should be directed to the Admissions office at 312.629.6100 or [admiss@saic.edu](mailto:admiss@saic.edu). Merit requirements and terms are located at [saic.edu/merit](http://saic.edu/merit) and are included with merit scholarship award offers.

### SAIC Need-Based Grants

Need-based SAIC grants are awarded to students who demonstrate need through their FAFSA application. Grants are awarded to students who meet the SAIC awarding requirements and donor-established criteria.

### Third-Party Assistance

Students receiving assistance in paying their tuition and fees must notify the Student Financial Services office prior to the start of each semester. Examples of third-party assistance include 529/college savings plans, veteran's benefits, rehabilitation programs, or employee assistance programs. A student's initial award package may have to be adjusted according to federal, state, and institutional awarding policies to accommodate this assistance.

**Please be sure to send this information/payment to the Student Financial Services office and NOT to the Bursar's Office, as this will delay processing of these funds.**

Note: The total of all gift aid (scholarships, grants, etc.) cannot exceed the amount of tuition each semester at SAIC.

### Outside Scholarships

[saic.edu/outsidescholarships](http://saic.edu/outsidescholarships)

SAIC provides helpful information about outside scholarships and scholarship search engines at the website above, including a list of outside scholarships researched by SAIC staff members. Information is also listed regularly on the Student Financial Services Facebook and Twitter/X pages at [facebook.com/SAICsfs](https://facebook.com/SAICsfs) and [x.com/SAIC\\_SFS](https://x.com/SAIC_SFS).

Students should inform the organization sending the funds to SAIC that their name and student ID number should appear on all correspondence related to the scholarship, grant, or award. SAIC is required by law to consider these awards as a part of the student's financial aid package (529 plans are not included). It may be necessary for SAIC to adjust the award package to meet federal, state, and institutional awarding policies. Scholarship letters that provide detailed information will allow the amount to be listed as "Anticipated Aid" on the student's bills and statements. This will decrease the amount due (if any) to SAIC before classes start. Instructions for having outside scholarship funds sent properly to the Student Financial Services office are also located on our website.

*Due to funding constraints, reductions to federal and state funding may occur. SAIC cannot provide additional funding if this should happen.*

### Veteran's Benefits

[saic.edu/sfs](http://saic.edu/sfs)

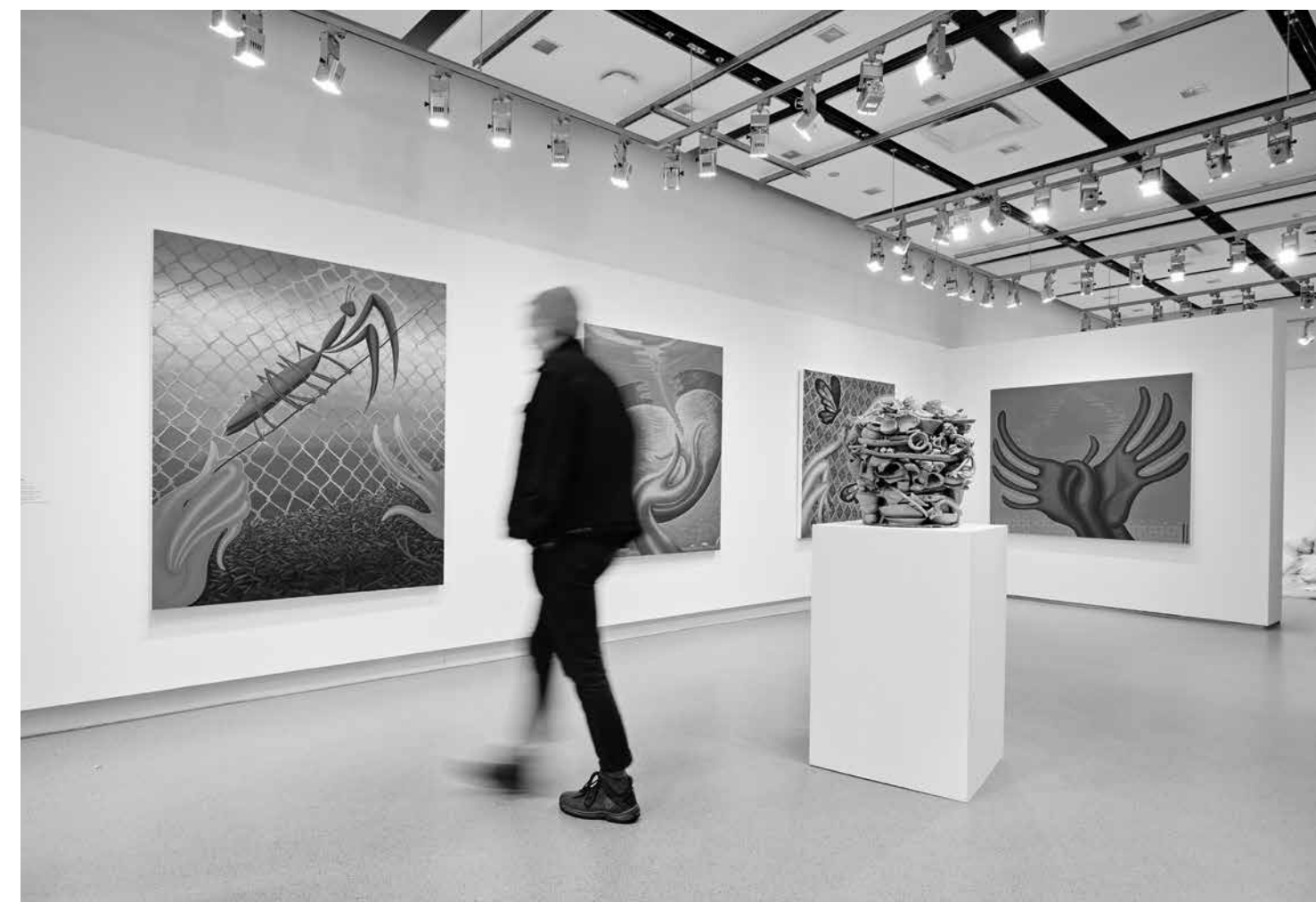
A student who is a veteran of the U.S. military service, or an eligible dependent, may be eligible to receive Veteran Affairs Educational Benefits through a variety of programs including Post 9/11 (Chapter 33), Vocational Rehabilitation, and Yellow Ribbon. The SAIC Registrar is the Certifying Official for SAIC.

All students who are receiving a VA Benefit from any program of the VA education benefit programs should notify the SAIC Registrar and the Student Financial Services VA representative to discuss the process.

### 529 College Plans

[saic.edu/529](http://saic.edu/529)

A 529 Plan is an education savings plan operated by a state or educational institution designed to help families set aside funds for future college costs. Students should complete the paperwork required to receive funds from their provider four weeks before the payment due date each semester. Students should start the request process by July 15 for fall and December 15 for spring. Visit the above website for more information.



paintings by Josiah Ellner



# Student Loans

Self-help aid that needs to be repaid

[saic.edu/loans](http://saic.edu/loans)

SAIC participates in the Direct Lending program for Federal Stafford and Federal Direct PLUS Loans.

**Because Post-Baccalaureate students are considered 5th year undergraduates by the federal government, they are not eligible for Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loans. Graduate students are not eligible for Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford loans (only unsubsidized). Half-time enrollment status is required as defined by your specific program at SAIC.**

## Federal Direct Stafford Loans

The Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan (eligible Post-Bacc students only) is awarded based on need while the Federal Direct Unsubsidized loan is not. Both are awarded by academic level and amount per federal regulations and are listed in the chart below. Annual limits for Federal Direct Stafford Loans are determined by academic level and student need. Post-Baccalaureate students can receive the Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan for no more than 12 full-time semesters or the equivalent including loans previously borrowed. Details on annual limits can be found at [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov).

Interest rates on federal student loans are set by Congress and are adjusted annually on July 1 each year. Interest rates are fixed. The 2025-26 rate was not available at the time this publication went to print. For Post-Baccalaureate students, for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, the Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loan interest rate is 6.53%. For graduate students, for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford loan interest rate is 8.08%. For all loans, an origination fee

of approximately 1% is deducted by the federal government before disbursement. Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans begin accruing interest 6 months after the student drops below half-time enrollment or graduates. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans begin accruing interest upon disbursement and must be paid quarterly, though this amount can be added to the principal of the loan. Repayment begins six months after the student drops below half-time enrollment or graduates. Additional information including 2025-26 interest rates (when they become available) can be found at [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov).

## Federal Direct Stafford Loan Exit Information

[saic.edu/loancounseling](http://saic.edu/loancounseling)

Per federal regulations, students who have borrowed Federal Stafford loans must complete an online Federal Direct Exit Counseling Session when they withdraw, cease to attend on at least a half-time basis or graduate/complete their program of study. This should be completed at [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov). Completing the required online Federal Direct Exit Counseling Session does not put a student into repayment.

*Due to federal and state legislation, loan terms and conditions are subject to change.*

## Maximum Federal Direct Stafford Loan Amounts (Per Year)

	SUBSIDIZED/ UNSUBSIDIZED DEPENDENT/ INDEPENDENT	ADDITIONAL UNSUBSIDIZED DEPENDENT	ADDITIONAL UNSUBSIDIZED INDEPENDENT
POST-BACCALAUREATE	\$5,500	\$2,000	\$7,000
GRADUATE	NA	NA	\$20,500

Please note: All students have a total or aggregate limit for borrowing Federal Direct Stafford Loans over the course of their entire education.

### FEDERAL DIRECT STAFFORD AGGREGATE LOAN LIMITS

Dependent Post-Baccalaureate (5th Year Undergraduate) Students	\$31,000 (of which no more than \$23,000 can be subsidized)
Independent Post-Baccalaureate (5th Year Undergraduate) Students	\$57,500 (of which no more than \$23,000 can be subsidized)
Independent Graduate Students	\$138,000 (of which no more than \$65,500 can be subsidized)

# Additional Loans

[saic.edu/loans](http://saic.edu/loans)

## Federal Direct PLUS loan (Graduate Students Only — Post-Baccalaureate students not eligible.)

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan is available for graduate students who have no adverse credit history.

Post-Baccalaureate students are not eligible. Borrowers are eligible to receive up to the cost of attendance, less any other financial aid.

Federal Direct PLUS loans must be repaid and have a fixed interest rate that is determined each award year beginning July 1. The 2025-26 rate was not available at the time this publication went to print; however, the 2024-25 interest rate is set at 9.08%. An origination fee of approximately 4% is deducted by the federal government before disbursement.

Once a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Application is completed at [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov), a credit check will be run and, in most cases, provide you with an immediate credit decision.

**PLUS Denial Options** — If you have adverse credit history and have been denied a PLUS Loan, you may still receive a Federal Direct PLUS Loan by obtaining an endorser who does not have adverse credit history or documenting to the U.S. Department of Education extenuating circumstances relating to your adverse credit history. Borrowers who have been denied and are later approved through these options are required to complete a Federal Direct PLUS counseling session online at [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov). Borrowers who choose to appeal the credit decision are encouraged to call the Direct Loan Support Center at 800-557-7394 as simple credit issues may be able to be resolved immediately by telephone.



Yue Li, Across Generations—Living Room, 2020





# Student Loans Accept or Decline Each Year\*

[saic.edu/loans](http://saic.edu/loans)

## Private (or Alternative) Education Loan

Private education loans are offered by private lenders and are available to students to assist with their educational and living expenses after federal loans have been exhausted. These loans are credit-based and should only be used as a final funding option. Most students need a creditworthy co-signer. The creditworthiness of the co-signer may affect the interest rate of the loan.

## Searching for a Private Lender

Students can research lenders for their best possible private loan options by contacting them or searching the Internet. Students may find the website *finaid.org* helpful in understanding the loan process. This website is informational only and is not endorsed by SAIC.

## Loan Repayment

[saic.edu/studentloanrepayment](http://saic.edu/studentloanrepayment)

Loan repayment is an important part of a student's life after graduation. There are a variety of different loan repayment programs to fit your circumstances as well as loan deferment and loan forgiveness options. You will want to familiarize yourself with this information at SAIC's loan repayment website above. Also, be sure to utilize our free student loan counselors at our financial literacy and loan management partner, Student Connections.

## Federal Direct Stafford Loan

### Decline or decrease your Federal Direct Stafford Loan Offer:

If you choose not to accept/use or to decrease the Federal Direct Stafford loan(s) that have been offered on your award letter, email SFS as soon as possible at [saic.sfs@saic.edu](mailto:saic.sfs@saic.edu) from your SAIC email to officially cancel or decrease your loan.

### OR

Accept your Federal Direct Stafford Loan Offer by following the steps below.

### ACCEPT

1. Complete an Entrance Loan Counseling session - One-Time Only Required.
2. Complete Federal Direct Stafford Master Promissory Note - One-Time Only Required.

*\*Once accepted per the steps above, Federal Direct Stafford loans do not need to be re-accepted each year.*

## Federal Direct Plus Loan

### CREDIT APPROVAL REQUIRED

For graduate students only (Post-Baccalaureate students are not eligible.)

1. Request a Federal Direct PLUS Loan.
2. If credit is approved, complete an online Federal Direct PLUS Loan Master Promissory Note.

## Private Loan

### CREDIT APPROVAL REQUIRED

1. Determine a private lender of your choice.
2. Complete required steps as instructed by your lender. A co-signer is required in most cases.



SAIC recommends that all applicants complete the loan process to determine their eligibility to borrow through the programs listed above no later than the following dates:

### Loan Step Completion Deadlines

July 1	Fall/Spring
January 1	Spring
May 1	Summer

## Notification of Disbursement

[saic.edu/disbursements](http://saic.edu/disbursements)

For those students who have completed eligibility requirements, Federal Direct Stafford, PLUS and Private loans begin disbursing approximately 10 calendar days before each semester begins. Grants and scholarships begin disbursing after all add-drop sessions of each semester are complete and attendance is confirmed. Typically, this is the 4th week of the fall and spring semesters and the second week of August for the summer semester.

A detailed disbursement timeline calendar is available at the website above.





## Student Employment

**Self-help earnings paid directly to students. Jobs are not guaranteed. Students employed through SAIC's student employment programs work part-time. Typically, no more than 20 hours per week is advised.**

**saic.edu/capx**

The Career and Professional Experience (CAPX) office assists students in their search for employment. Available on-campus student employment jobs are listed on an online database called Handshake, which can be accessed at the website above. CAPX may be reached by phone at 312.499.4130 or email at [careers@saic.edu](mailto:careers@saic.edu) and is located at 116 S. Michigan Ave., suite 1400.

Jobs are competitive and filled based on the needs of each department. Jobs and earnings are not guaranteed. Students must complete all necessary payroll documents by the third day of employment in an on-campus department in order to meet federal employment regulations. Students are paid bi-weekly and earn at least federal minimum wage. Additional information and documents are available at [saic.edu/studentpayroll](http://saic.edu/studentpayroll).

### Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)

The Federal Work-Study program provides students the opportunity to earn money for their education. Students may work part-time, no more than 20 hours per week. The amount of the award is dependent on the student's need according to the FAFSA and available funding through SAIC. FWS eligibility is reflected on a student's award offer. An Earning Eligibility Report can be requested by a student in Self-Service. Students are responsible for securing employment and can use the services available in CAPX to assist them in their search for FWS positions. FWS students are given priority consideration during the hiring process for most fall and spring jobs with the exception of special positions and Teaching Assistant (TA) jobs. International students are not required to have FWS eligibility.

### SAIC Institutional Employment

The SAIC Institutional Employment program is available to students who do not have Federal Work-Study eligibility. Much like the FWS program, students work to earn money for their education. Institutional Employment is available to all students during the winter and summer terms. See [saic.edu/studentpayroll](http://saic.edu/studentpayroll) for details.

*Note: Student employees at SAIC are required to be located within the United States during dates of employment.*

Longtan Yang

## Re-evaluating Your Financial Aid

**saic.edu/reevaluateyouraid**

If your finances change after filing the FAFSA and receiving an award offer, you should contact the Student Financial Services Office to discuss how your aid package may be affected. Examples of changes may include loss of employment, loss of untaxed income, separation, divorce, death, or if you feel there was important information about your situation that you were unable to provide on the FAFSA. Please contact a Student Financial Services Advisor to discuss your next steps.

## Financial Wellness

**saic.edu/financialliteracy**

**Inceptia is a free resource that makes it simple for you to take control of your finances and manage your student loans.**

- Get free personalized guidance related to your student loans, including tracking and repayment options.
- Gain financial literacy know-how that empowers you to be money smart.

## Using Self-Service

**saic.edu/selfservice**

- Step 1. Sign into Self-Service at [saic.edu/selfservice](http://saic.edu/selfservice)
- Step 2. Click on Student Homepage in the top center of the page.\* Then go to:
- Step 3. Financial Account to request your Statement of Account (after July 7, to view Fall 2025 tuition and fee charges, account activity, access Transact\*\*.)
- Step 4. Financial Aid to see your financial aid award, your need summary and estimated cost of attendance
- Step 5. Other Services to request a Financial Aid Advance and approve Work Authorization Contracts for those students who have been offered an on-campus job or a paid internship after the interview process.

\* If you need assistance logging into Self-Service, go to [password.artic.edu](http://password.artic.edu) or contact the CRIT department at 312.345.3535 or at [crithelpdesk@saic.edu](mailto:crithelpdesk@saic.edu).

\*\* For family members who do not have access to Self-Service, but need access to Transact, students can set up a Payer account in Transact to allow them to make payments, view eBills, balance due and 1098-T statements, and enroll in payment plans and Auto-Pay.





# Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) Policy

[saic.edu/fasap](http://saic.edu/fasap)

Students must meet satisfactory progress requirements as defined by federal regulations. Students can learn about the SAIC FASAP policy at [saic.edu/fasap](http://saic.edu/fasap). The information listed there will help students learn how to maintain their financial aid eligibility according to the SAIC FASAP policy.

FASAP looks at two factors: whether the student is in good standing and the student's pace of completion. FASAP will be measured three times a year, after the completion of the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters.

- Graduate students must complete 100% of all attempted credits each semester.
- The FASAP Policy is separate from the Academic Satisfactory Progress Policy and the Merit Scholarship Satisfactory Progress Policy.

# Financial Aid Adjustments Based on Enrollment

[saic.edu/adjustingyouraidforenrollment](http://saic.edu/adjustingyouraidforenrollment)

Your initial award package is calculated based on the standard number of credit hours required for your degree or certificate program. This is reflected on your award offer and in the Anticipated Aid section of bills and Statements of Account.

- You should submit an Early Aid Adjustment form, available at the website above, as soon as possible, if your actual enrolled credit hours will be different than the credit hours listed on your award offer, in the Anticipated Aid section of bills and Statements of Account and in Self-Service.
- After the add/drop period, financial aid packages are adjusted based upon actual enrollment for the semester for those students who did not submit an Early Aid Adjustment form.
- Financial aid will be disbursed to your account once aid has been adjusted, if necessary, your attendance has been confirmed, and your financial aid file is complete.

# Refunds and Financial Aid Advances

[saic.edu/refunds](http://saic.edu/refunds)

- If, after final adjustments at the end of the add/drop period, you have a credit balance remaining on your student account, a refund will automatically be processed unless sourced by a cash type payment. See the website above for details.
- If you anticipate having a credit balance during the first few weeks of the semester, you are eligible to receive 50% of your anticipated balance up to \$2,000. You may request an advance through Self-Service, or at the website above, up to 2 weeks before each semester.
- If you have a refund or an advance, you will be notified through your SAIC email address.
- To receive an advance or refund which will be deposited to your bank account, you must enroll in Direct Deposit Refund through Self-Service by clicking on the Transact link. Transact is SAIC's online payment and refund system.



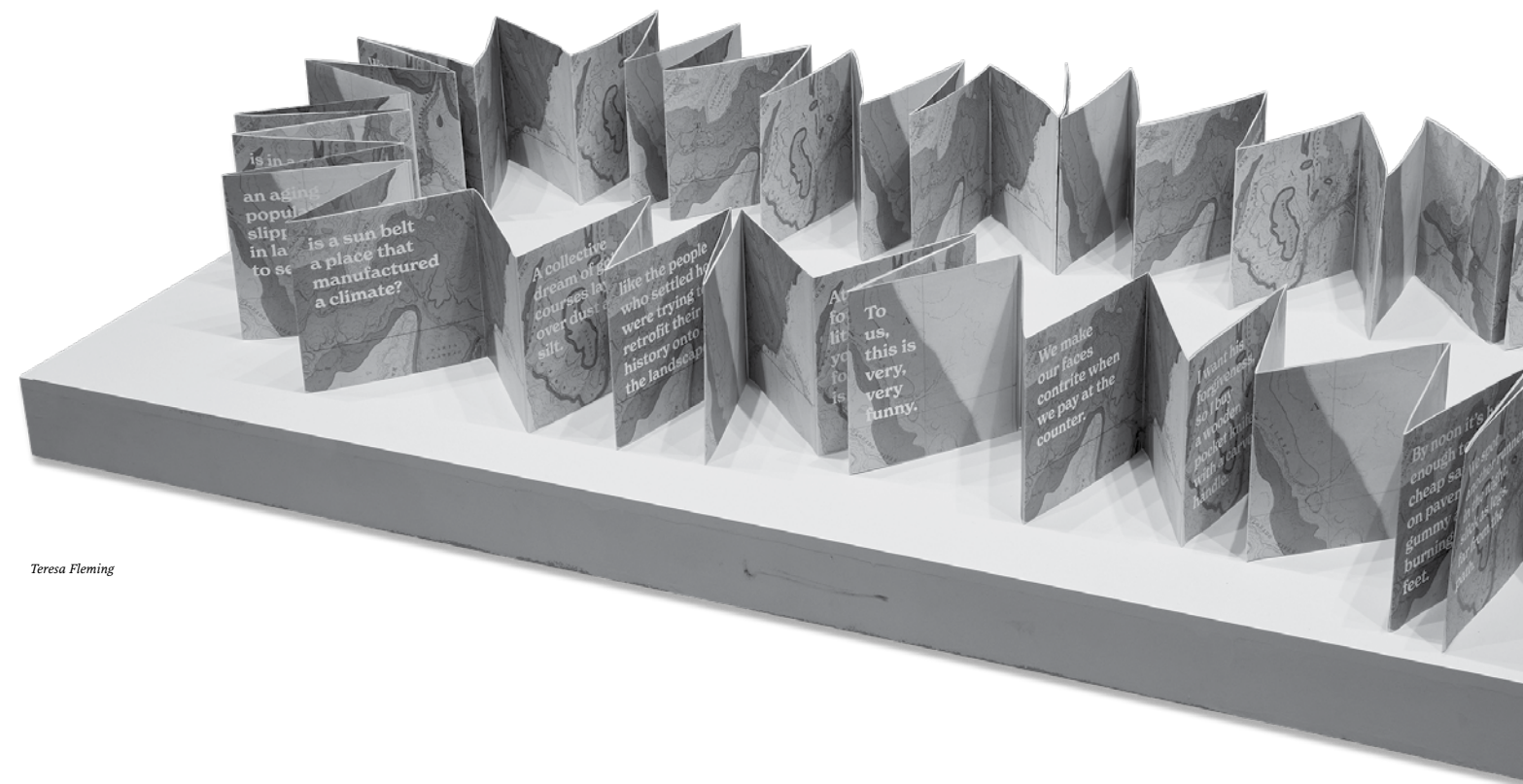
Nakiyah T.M. Jordan performing a reading of a prose poem at the show she curated titled *PENDULUM*, 2023



Arda Asena, hold



Complete this worksheet to determine your estimated cost of education at SAIC and to ensure that you have secured the resources you need. Payment-in-full or payment arrangements must be made by August 15 for fall and January 15 for spring. An electronic copy is available online at [saic.edu/fyc](http://saic.edu/fyc).



Teresa Fleming