

Invest in the Oregon Opportunity Grant



What is the Oregon Opportunity Grant?

The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program for low-income college students. It is available to eligible students attending Oregon colleges and universities for up to four years at full-time enrollment and currently provides financial support to more than 36,000 students a year.

As leaders of Oregon's institutions of higher education – the Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities, Oregon Community College Association, and the Oregon Council of Presidents – together with the Oregon Student Association – we know education creates opportunities and we urge lawmakers to increase the minimum investment of the Oregon Opportunity Grant for the 2023-25 biennium to \$400 million.

Why do we need to increase the OOG?

- Funding for student aid has failed to keep pace with the soaring costs of food and housing across Oregon.
- An investment of \$400 million would nearly double the number of students at the current award levels.
- OOG recipients show remarkable progress through college and university, compared to other low-income students (those who qualify for the federal Pell grant but whose expected family contribution [EFC] is above the OOG limit).
- Students with the OOG are slightly more likely to return after their first year in college and are more likely to earn a certificate or degree than other low-income students. Students with the OOG who complete a degree are also able to complete their degree slightly faster than other low-income students.
- In addition to supporting students from the lowest income families, students who receive the OOG are more often from underrepresented and underserved groups: students of color, women, rural, and especially first-generation college students.
- Oregon's two financial aid programs, the Oregon Opportunity Grant and Oregon Promise, delivered \$657 per full-time student in 2020. That's well below the U.S. average of \$830, and less than half of the \$1,489 provided in Washington State.

It's time to increase college access, affordability, and completion for Oregonians and provide marginalized communities with a realistic possibility of social mobility by making a down payment and increasing the Oregon Opportunity Grant funding to \$400 million.

