



Colleague® Self-Service Financial Aid

Show the pathway to financial aid via self service



Essential capabilities:

- An intuitive, interactive checklist of financial aid programs and processes
- A mobile-friendly way to apply for and accept financial aid
- A dashboard-like view of an applicant's status accessible by students, counselors, and financial aid administrators alike

With tuition rising at alarming rates, getting financial assistance is more important than ever. But applying for financial aid can present many obstacles to students who are already challenged with many new circumstances. It's a complex process with multiple requirements, documents, and action items that must occur in a specific sequence.

Too often, students waste time submitting documents they don't need—and miss essential steps. This puts an extra burden on counselors who must field a high volume of calls, answer basic questions, and figure out which documents must actually be reviewed.

Colleague® Self-Service Financial Aid gives students the clarity they need. This intuitive, self-service solution features several tabs and web forms that guide students, step-by-step, through the process for applying for and accepting the financial aid they need in order to achieve their academic goals. Additionally, counselors see the same information students see—so they can provide relevant, timely support.

Understanding the process keeps students on track

For many students, getting financial aid means they can stay in school and pursue their academic dreams. Colleague Self-Service Financial Aid gives students access to their current status, next steps, and important details—so they know what they need to do and when they have to do it. This easy-to-use application helps students:

- Understand the aid they've been offered and how to proceed
- Use an online tool that makes it easy to complete administrative processes
- Focus on their academic journey instead of dealing with process barriers

Stay organized with a checklist

Colleague Self-Service Financial Aid displays a financial aid checklist that specifies all the steps and their proper sequence that students need to pursue financial aid in a particular year, including:

- Receipt of the FAFSA and/or CSS Financial Aid PROFILE® applications
- Any outstanding documents required
- Actions the student needs to take to proceed through the awarding process
- The review status of the application at the financial aid office
- Ability to accept/reject awards at term and annual levels
- Ability to modify loan amounts at term and annual levels
- Ability to request a new loan
- Ability to review, electronically sign, and print their award letter

In addition, the helpful checklist also shows a student's total current amount of federal financial aid loan debt, according to the National Student Loan Data System, as well as helpful links to sites such as Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Entrance Counseling, or Master Promissory Note (MPN). And, if students need to reach a staff member, the solution shows the contact information for the student's financial aid counselor to make it easy for students to reach the right person.

Guide students and staff through required documents

While students can quickly determine what they need to complete their aid package here, a parallel benefit is that staff members can also see the details of completed and incomplete documents on the Required Documents page. This helps advisors understand when they need to move the application along in the process and when to nudge students for more material. If they have questions, a link connects them to the student's financial aid counselor, so they get the answers they need quickly.

Define award programs and lead students to action

On the My Awards page, students and staff can see available awards and award amounts for a specific financial aid year, as well as which awards are loans that require payback and which ones aren't. This makes it easy for students to select the awards they want to accept or reject—either individually or all together. They also can change loan amounts if necessary, and agree to certain award criteria based on their enrollment status.

Speed processes with online options

Once a student has accepted an award, they are directed to the Award Letter page. Here, students can legally commit to their financial aid package with an electronic signature. To ensure that students follow the right process and get all the appropriate financial aid, a redirect sends them back to the My Awards page if outstanding awards have not yet been accepted.

Accommodate students' preference for mobile

Colleague Self-Service Financial Aid is designed to be used with mobile devices to meet students' expectations for simple access to information. While users can access the solution on non-mobile platforms, its mobile capability presents a fast and reliable way to explore and engage the process for students used to self-service applications.

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