

## **FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDY ABROAD: Q & A**

### **Q: Can I afford to study abroad?**

**A:** The answer to this question varies depending on each student's situation. If you have savings or parental help, or if you are willing to borrow loans that will require a co-signer with good credit, then you should be able to afford to study abroad as long as you meet the criteria to get a private student loan (NDSU has a list of possible lenders that can be found at <https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/finaid/loans/altloans/>). You are encouraged to research the different programs and to consider exchange programs and/or programs outside of Western Europe and the Pacific in order to keep program costs down.

### **Q: What kind of financial aid is available to help pay for study abroad?**

**A:** Students studying abroad fall and/or spring semester typically utilize loans, both federal and private, for funding. Students interested in a study abroad experience during the summer are often limited to private loans because most have already utilized their full federal loan eligibility during the academic year. Some scholarships are also available through Study Abroad Services.

### **Q: What's the difference between a federal loan and a private loan?**

**A:** A federal loan does not require a co-signer or a credit check – it is awarded after the student completes the FAFSA. There are two types of the Federal Direct Loan, subsidized and unsubsidized. The Subsidized Direct Loan is available to qualified undergraduate students and the federal government pays the interest while the student is enrolled at least half time. The Unsubsidized Direct Loan is available to undergraduate and graduate students and is interest-bearing from the time it is disbursed. Private student loans are also interest-bearing and require a credit check and a co-signer with good credit for approval. Additionally, private loans require the FAFSA to be completed as well as a separate online loan application through the lender's website.

### **Q: How do I apply for scholarships?**

**A:** Scholarships specifically designated for studying abroad can be found on the Study Abroad website. Funding is limited and deadlines apply. For more information, contact your Study Abroad Advisor.

### **Q: What if I have early costs associated with my study abroad program? How do I pay for them?**

**A:** Often times, students use savings or receive help from parents to cover their early costs such as deposits, a passport and airfare. Borrowing a private loan during the semester prior to studying abroad may also be an option. A Financial Aid Counselor will help you determine your available options.

### **Q: When should I meet with a Financial Aid Counselor to discuss my financing options for studying abroad?**

**A:** After you have chosen your program and started your application on the study abroad website, the portal will have a link for you to request an appointment with a Financial Aid Counselor. Most students request an appointment about 3 months prior to their departure to discuss the costs and aid available.

### **Q: What if additional costs come up while I'm abroad and I'm unable to pay?**

**A:** You will need to contact both your Financial Aid Counselor and your Study Abroad Advisor to see if these costs can be considered. If so, you would most likely be borrowing private loan to cover the added costs.

### **Q: How will the increased costs of study abroad impact my loan debt?**

**A:** Once you know both how much you need to borrow and what the interest rate is, you can use a loan calculator to estimate your monthly payments after graduation here <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml>. Additionally, it is important to evaluate your overall federal student loan debt regularly on the clearinghouse at [www.nslds.ed.gov](http://www.nslds.ed.gov)

### **Q: How will I be able to access my financial aid once I'm out of the country?**

**A:** If you depart prior to your financial aid disbursing, you have two options:

- Sign up for Direct Deposit - this allows your financial aid refund to transfer automatically from your NDSU student account to your designated personal bank account.
- Grant Power of Attorney to a close family member – this will allow your family member to sign a paper financial aid refund check in your absence and deposit it into your bank account.

### **Q: Who can I speak with if I have more questions?**

**A:** There are two counselors in Financial Aid and Scholarships who will be happy to help you.

- Faculty-led Programs: Tammie Reger phone: 701-231-7535 e-mail: [Tammie.Reger@ndsu.edu](mailto:Tammie.Reger@ndsu.edu)
- Affiliate, ISEP, Direct & Exchange Programs: Kristie Myers phone: 701-231-8061 e-mail: [Kristie.Myers@ndsu.edu](mailto:Kristie.Myers@ndsu.edu)