

**Topical Heading**

Federal Student Aid

**Program Title**

# Academic Competitiveness Grants (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grants

**Also Known as**

Academic Competitiveness Grants; AC Grants; ACG; National SMART Grants; SMART Grants; ACG/SMART Grants

**CFDA # (or ED #)**

84.376

**Administering Office**

Federal Student Aid (FSA)

**Who May Apply (by category)**

Individuals

**Who May Apply (specifically)**

Undergraduate students enrolled or accepted for enrollment in participating schools may apply.

**Type of Assistance (specifically)**

Academic Competitiveness Grants and SMART Grants are performance-based grants awarded through participating postsecondary institutions to students with financial need. Recipients must be U.S. citizens who attend school full-time and are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant (see # 84.063, also under topical heading "Federal Student Aid"). Recipients must meet other eligibility requirements depending on their year in school, such as: complete a rigorous high school program; major in mathematics, science, technology, engineering or selected foreign languages; or maintain a required minimum grade point average (GPA). Participating institutions either credit the grant funds to the student's school account, pay the student directly (usually by check), or combine these methods.

Individual award amounts are based on the student's cost of attendance, Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and other aid. A current or prospective student applies for federal student aid by submitting the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), which can be completed electronically by using FAFSA on the Web (see link below). The student should also contact the postsecondary schools that he or she is considering to obtain consumer information and policies and aid procedures applicable to each school. Students receive the notification of the aid award from the postsecondary school. See the Web sites listed below for more information.

**Appropriations**

Fiscal Year 2006 \$790,000,000

Fiscal Year 2007 \$850,000,000

Fiscal Year 2008 \$920,000,000

Note: Current estimates of aid awarded in FY 2008 are \$440 million for ACG and \$260 million for SMART Grants. Any funds not used in any fiscal year can be carried forward for use in subsequent fiscal years. A rescission of \$525 million in unneeded prior-year balances was enacted in FY 2008. This does not affect the availability of the mandatory FY 2008 appropriation of \$920 million.

**Fiscal Year 2008 Awards Information**

*Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.*

Amount of Aid Available: \$700,000,000

Number of New Awards Anticipated: 638,000

Average New Award: \$787 for ACG; \$3,291 for SMART Grants

Range of New Awards: \$750–\$4,000

**Legislative Citation**

*Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)*, as amended, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1, Sec. 401A

**Program Regulations**

34 *CFR* 691

**Program Description**

The Academic Competitiveness Grant and SMART Grant programs were created in the *Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2006*, which became effective July 1, 2006. The program awards need-based Academic Competitiveness Grants to first- and second-year undergraduates who completed a rigorous high school program. The program awards SMART Grants to third- and fourth-year undergraduates majoring in certain technical fields or foreign languages deemed vital to national security.

**Education Level (by category)**

Postsecondary

**Education Level (specifically)**

Undergraduate degree-seeking.

**Subject Index**

Grants, Low Income, Student Financial Aid

**Contact Information**

Name Federal Student Aid Information Center

Toll-free 1-800-4FED-AID or 1-800-433-3243

**Links to Related Web Sites**

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov>