

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Sloan Scholarship Award:

What are the scholars' requirements at the Sloan UCEM at Illinois?

As a condition of the scholarship, scholars will be required to participate in academic and professional development activities directed by the [Sloan University Center of Exemplary Mentoring \(UCEM\) at Illinois](#). The time commitment for these activities averages approximately 5 hours per month. See a [detailed timeline](#) of expectations and requirements for UCEM scholars. Scholars are also expected to submit assignments and report required activities in [Illinois Compass 2G](#) (Blackboard) in a timely manner. Failure to complete scholar requirements may result in a delay or termination of award payments.

What is the difference between a "Sloan Scholar" and an "Illinois Sloan Scholar"?

The Sloan UCEM at Illinois offers two levels of Sloan Scholarships, which are award supplements on top of the full offer package from the home department:

Sloan and Illinois UCEM Scholarships of \$40K

- \$40K award is funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and paid via the Graduate College after the scholar's UCEM applications have been received and approved by the [Sloan Graduate Scholarships Programs](#) manager (NACME).
- Students will receive \$10K in semester installments during year one of enrollment as a doctoral student, \$10K in semester installments during the academic year after the completion of qualifying exams or unit-approved benchmark, and \$20K in semester installments during the academic year following completion of your preliminary examination.

Illinois Sloan Scholarships of \$10K

- \$10K award is funded by the home department (\$5K) and Graduate College/Provost (\$5K) and managed via the Graduate College after the scholars' UCEM applications have been received and approved by the [Sloan Graduate Scholarships Programs](#) manager (NACME).
- Students will receive \$5K in semester installments during year one of matriculation as a doctoral student and \$5K in semester installments during the academic year after the completion of qualifying exams or unit-approved benchmark.
- Illinois Sloan Scholars are considered institutional-match scholars by the Sloan Foundation, and differ from Sloan Scholars only in the source (and level) of funding. Illinois Sloan Scholars are eligible to attend all programming for Sloan Scholars.

Is the award money taxable?

According to [IRS Publication 970](#), the following uses of scholarship funds are taxable and must be reported to the IRS: room and board, travel, research, clerical help, equipment and other expenses not required for enrollment or attendance at an educational organization. The University of Illinois, the Graduate College and the Illinois UCEM do not offer tax advice. Consult a tax professional with your questions.

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How can the Sloan funds be used?

All Sloan Scholars and Illinois Sloan Scholars will work with their mentors to decide how best to use funds in their academic and professional development.

Sloan and Illinois UCEM Scholarships of \$40K

- \$10K of the \$40K must be used for professional travel to national and international conferences and laboratories of collaborators or mentors, conference registration costs, and conference lodging and meals. An audit of professional travel fund usage will be conducted before disbursement of benchmark #2 payments. Unused professional travel funds remaining after benchmark #2 will be held in reserve for use until PhD completion.
- The remaining \$30K can be used for academic development and be taken as a stipend, in addition to the institution's funding package. Allowable expenses include living/child care expenses, including during the summers, insurance, transportation, computer equipment, supplies and software, books/journals, graduation expenses, dissertation publication costs, direct research costs including lab supplies and equipment. Any equipment and software purchased remains the property of the scholar, and does not belong to the institution.
- Sloan Scholars are required to submit multi-year spending plans and an annual expense reports to the Foundation, which have been pre-approved by the Illinois UCEM office.

Illinois Sloan Scholarships of \$10K

- \$10K funds can be used for academic and professional development and other expenses that will aid in degree completion. Allowable expenses include professional travel to national and international conferences and laboratories of collaborators or mentors, conference registration costs, conference lodging and meals, computer equipment, supplies and software, books/journals, graduation expenses, dissertation publication costs, direct research costs including lab supplies and equipment. Any equipment and software purchased remains the property of the scholar, and does not belong to the institution.
- The Illinois Sloan Scholarship funds may not be used for living expenses.
- All funds should not be spent in the first year - the student may spread out expenses throughout his/her graduate study.
- All expenses must be approved by the Illinois UCEM office. Scholars are required to submit annual expense reports to the Foundation.

How does the scholar manage Sloan funds?

In general, scholars will receive their award directly and are expected to self-manage their funds (a significant responsibility). Yes, there will be fluctuations in payments depending on award distribution stage. Students will need to anticipate that reduction and keep their expenditures within their income.

During orientation, Sloan Scholars are advised to set up a separate checking or linked savings account (distinct from their regular checking account) to manage the funds. Note that Sloan payments will appear as a different source than the department assistantship payments.

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Each scholar should meet and discuss with his/her faculty advisor and/or UCEM Director to plan carefully a budget for the duration of the scholar's degree program. Use of the Sloan funds should take into account the institutional sources of support and the student's prospects for other competitive fellowships. The budget should include cost projections for attending professional development conferences towards the end of their degree.

Once a budget has been developed, Sloan Scholars must complete the [Multi-Year Spending Plan form](#), obtain the UCEM Director's signature, and submit to the Illinois UCEM, which will maintain these records on behalf of the Sloan Graduate Scholarships Program Manager (NACME).

Scholars are required to submit an expenditure report to the Illinois UCEM office by *June 15* of each academic year. The expenditure report will enable the Illinois UCEM to track and report to the Sloan Foundation how the scholarship award was used, by expense type.

Can Sloan funds be used to reduce a Sloan Scholar's teaching load?

When nominating a Sloan Scholar, the academic department agrees to provide support for the duration of the program, provided the student is making satisfactory academic progress toward the degree. Departmental support may take the form of a waiver-generating fellowship, assistantship, or both. The customary stipend level for departmental awards varies from field to field.

For example, the department may offer a standard stipend package including a 50% FTE teaching assistantship per semester. Pending approval from the scholar's department, UCEM program, Graduate College and NACME, the scholar (40K awardee) may choose to reduce his or her teaching assistantship from 50% FTE to 25% FTE for one or two semesters, which would result in reduction of pay from the teaching assistantship. The Sloan Scholar must have accumulated or anticipate sufficient funds from Sloan payments to cover the shortfall due to the reduced stipend level. Note: A department or faculty member cannot reduce the standard stipend package after the Sloan scholarship has been offered nor require a scholar to reduce his or her teaching assistantship. A Sloan Scholar choosing to apply funds to reduce his or her teaching load to 25% FTE in a subsequent semester must obtain advanced approval from their home department and the UCEM office. Please note this teaching load reduction scenario is purely optional, must be initiated by the scholar and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students are still subject to departmental teaching requirements for graduate students, if any.

What if a scholar decides to transfer disciplines, withdraw from the doctoral program, or move to another institution?

In the event that a scholar decides to switch disciplines, s/he must report this decision to the UCEM Program Director and to NACME. A decision to transfer majors or disciplines outside of the approved disciplines for the UCEM program may result in the cancellation of the award. UCEM Scholars, who transfer to another institution or withdraw from the doctoral program, are not eligible for scholarship payments and forfeit the award and any remaining balance thereof, and their outstanding balances will be cancelled. Unexpended Sloan Scholar funds revert to the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

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How are the Sloan Scholars and Illinois Sloan Scholars affiliated with the Sloan Foundation?

Sloan UCEM Scholars must submit their UCEM application to the UCEM Program Office and to NACME. Upon final approval by the Sloan Foundation, all UCEM scholars are officially registered as “Sloan Scholars”. The Sloan Foundation tracks the career development of all its scholars.

Sloan UCEM Scholars are also required to submit expenditure plans, academic progress reports each semester, and annual expense reports to the Illinois UCEM Office and NACME. Upon graduation, Sloan Scholars are required to submit the [Graduate Contact sheet](#), informing the Sloan Foundation of their updated contact information and post-graduation plans.

Sloan money will be transferred by NACME to the UIUC Graduate College for managing payment to scholars. The payment plan in the Sloan grant, approved by NACME, is to distribute 25% of the 40K in the first year, then 25% after benchmark 1 and 50% after benchmark 2.

Can a Sloan UCEM Scholar transition to graduate school over the summer?

The Illinois UCEM strongly encourages incoming scholars to apply to and participate at the [Summer Predoctoral Institute \(SPI\)](#). The SPI provides incoming graduate students from U.S. populations underrepresented at Illinois with an early introduction to graduate study and an opportunity to work with a summer research advisor in their department. SPI will assist participants in becoming socialized into the departmental culture, as well as afford them an opportunity to prepare for the rigors of their graduate program. **Submit your application by April 15, 2020.** Sloan departments and units are expected to support a student’s SPI application, should the admitted student choose to participate.

What are other benefits of being a Sloan UCEM Scholar?

All Sloan UCEM Scholars are eligible to attend the annual [Institute on Teaching and Mentoring](#), a four-day conference that has become the largest gathering of minority doctoral scholars in the country. Attendance at the Institute is sponsored by a separate grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to the Institute’s sponsor. Scholars are guaranteed support to attend the Institute twice over the course of their graduate school career. Funds may be available to support attendance in addition to the guarantee of support for two years.

The purpose of the Institute is to provide scholars with the skills necessary to succeed in graduate study and to prepare them for success as faculty members at colleges and universities. In addition, the Institute provides scholars and their faculty mentors with opportunities to share knowledge about research and academia, to meet other scholars and faculty from throughout the country, and to link to a larger community of scholars and faculty in various academic fields. Programming is divided, in part, into tracks for students at varying periods, i.e., upon enrolling, near qualifying exams, at the dissertation stage, and at the early post-graduate stage.

How to cite the Sloan Award?

Sloan UCEM Scholars (Sloan Scholars and institutional-match scholars) are encouraged to include this scholarship in any list of the honors and awards earned. The scholar may cite the Sloan award in his/her biography or curriculum vitae, and on any personal social media page, as “Sloan Scholar, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation’s Minority Ph.D. (MPHD) Program, awarded in (Year of Award)”.

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Connecting with other Sloan Scholars on Social Media

At the Illinois Sloan UCEM

[Facebook](#) group for UIUC Sloan UCEM Scholars and Affiliates

[Twitter](#) for important relevant news at the Illinois Sloan UCEM

[Slack workspace](#) for UCEM Women of Color in STEM. Open to all graduate women of color in Sloan units.

At the national level

Join the wider community of Sloan Scholars at other UCEMs and share your experience or get advice from someone who has traveled the same path at [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

Once you have graduated, you will belong to an even larger community of Sloan Scholar Ph.D. graduates who are part of the [Alfred P. Sloan Scholars Mentoring Network](#). More information on the SSMN will be sent to you as you near completion of the Ph.D. degree.

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