How to Appeal Your Financial Aid Offer?

**Who should appeal?** If Eastman is where you want to be, and the cost is standing in the way, that is a basis for an appeal. We give priority to appeals that are based on financial need, beginning with those for whom there is a gap between the cost of attendance (COA) and the student aid index (SAI) plus the aid offered (COA – SAI – scholarship/student loans = gap).

We will also consider appeals based on changes in circumstances (job loss, for example). If the income reported on the FAFSA for 2022 is significantly higher than in 2023, for example, you should contact our Financial Aid Office about this change.

And finally, while we don’t request competing offers, we will review an appeal based on them if you send them to us (as long as all other requested information has also been provided). But ultimately, the question behind the appeal is not whether another school is less costly for you, but how close we are to making Eastman affordable for you if it is where you would prefer to enroll.

**Before appealing your financial aid offer, consider the following facts and questions:**

Eastman is not able to meet the demonstrated need for all students. There may be a gap between your FAFSA-generated SAI + the aid in your package and the total cost of attendance. This can be the basis of an appeal, but it should be pursued with the understanding that we will not necessarily be able to close the gap entirely.

61% of Eastman students are taking out the standard student loans, which results in post-baccalaureate student debt of approx. $25-27K.

Before starting an appeal, consider the additional amount you will be requesting, keeping in mind that we put forward as strong an offer as we can, to begin with, and have very little wiggle room to work with.

Be sure you have submitted your FAFSA and CSS Profile to Eastman School of Music (school code 008124 and 2224 respectively). We use this information to get a better picture of your family’s finances and to ensure you are taking advantage of all other resources available to you. We don’t consider an appeal without these documents.

**The role of faculty:** at Eastman, *the faculty are not involved in financial aid decisions*. While they play a critical role in rating auditions, and are certainly hoping it is possible for you to attend, decisions about scholarship levels are determined by the Director of Admissions and the Director of Financial Aid, based on a budget established by the Dean of the School and the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

To start an appeal, send an email to financialaid@esm.rochester.edu or call 585-274-1070.