

Imole Consulting's Guide to Researching Graduate School Programs



Researching graduate programs thoroughly is crucial to making an informed decision about the best fit for your career and academic goals. Here's a comprehensive list of things to research when considering a graduate program:

Program Specialization: Determine if the program aligns with your study interest. Look for programs that have a strong reputation in your chosen field.

Faculty: Research the faculty members' backgrounds, accomplishments, and expertise. Investigate if any faculty members have work that resonates with your artistic interests.

Curriculum: Review the course offerings and curriculum to ensure they cover a range of topics that match your interests and goals. Check if the program offers interdisciplinary or elective courses if that's important to you.

Student Work and Alumni Success: Explore the work of current students and alumni to gauge the program's overall quality and its ability to nurture talent. Check if alumni have successfully established careers in your chosen field.

Funding and Scholarships: Research funding availability, scholarships, assistantships, and other financial support. Understand the cost of tuition, living expenses, and potential opportunities for part-time work.

Location: Consider the program's location and impact on your long-term goals (post-graduation) and networking opportunities. Research the local events that align with your area of study.

Community and Networking: Evaluate the program's emphasis on building a strong artistic community. Research whether the program facilitates connections with visiting specialists, professionals, and other students. Look at their department's events page to get a sense of what they have done or will do in the future.

Application Requirements: Understand the application deadlines and required materials (portfolio, artist statement, recommendations, etc.). Confirm if there are any specific requirements unique to the program, such as tests for international students.

Admission Statistics: Look into the acceptance rate, number of applicants, and class size to assess your chances of admission.

Rankings and Reputation: Research the program's national or international list rankings. Consider the program's reputation within the industry.

Teaching Opportunities: Check if the program offers teaching assistantships or opportunities for you to gain teaching experience.

Residency and Exhibition Opportunities: Find out if the program offers residencies, exhibitions, and opportunities to showcase your work.

Duration and Flexibility: Determine if the program offers full-time or part-time options. Find out how long it takes students to complete the degree requirements on average and what support students receive when they face challenges that prevent them from completing it at the pre-determined timeline. Consider whether the program's structure and timing align with your personal commitments and career goals.



Cultural Fit: Reflect on the program's philosophy, mission statement, and overall atmosphere to see if it aligns with your values.

Accreditation: Ensure that the program is accredited by a reputable accrediting body.

Application Process: Familiarize yourself with the application process, deadlines, and additional requirements. Find out if they offer application fee waivers or any other financial support needed to submit your application if you're experiencing challenges.

Visit the Campus/Program: If possible, attend open houses, tours, or information sessions to get a feel for the program and its facilities. You can also participate in virtual sessions and do online tours posted on the school's website or YouTube channel.

Talk to Current Students/Alumni: Reach out to current students and alumni to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives. Conduct informational interviews to learn more and ask insightful questions.

Personal Goals: Reflect on your personal and artistic goals to ensure the program aligns with your aspirations.

Remember that the decision to pursue a graduate school degree is significant. Take your time to research thoroughly and gather as much information as possible before making your final choice.