

How **UVA Wise** is transforming financial aid delivery to keep pace with a 400%+ surge in applications

THE SITUATION

The University of Virginia's College at Wise is a public liberal arts college serving approximately 2,250 students. Over the past four years, UVA Wise increased applications by more than 400% without adding enrollment staff. With 450+ scholarships to manage manually, financial aid awards that should have gone out in January weren't being delivered until April or May – creating a competitive disadvantage in recruiting admitted students.



We're exploring how **AI can support more strategic, 1:1 financial aid packaging** — leveraging data and predictive insights to create customized, equitable solutions that better reflect individual student needs. AI can allow us to maintain high-touch service for complex cases while improving consistency and equity.



Jeffrey Baylor
Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management



THE SOLUTION

In October 2025, UVA Wise expanded its partnership with CollegeVine, with plans to deploy a custom financial aid agent with two core responsibilities: automatically matching incoming students against 450+ scholarship criteria, and streamlining donor communication and reporting.

Key benefits of using AI for financial aid operations

Automate complex scholarship matching — AI evaluates students against hundreds of scholarship criteria instantly, replacing hours of manual review

Deliver award decisions faster — accelerate financial aid timelines so students and families get answers when it matters most

Provide consistent, accurate information beyond traditional office hours, helping families navigate time-sensitive financial aid questions

Free up counselors for strategic work — shift staff from repetitive data tasks to equitable, personalized financial aid packaging

Scale operations without adding headcount, enabling sustainable enrollment growth even as application volumes surge