

# 5 Ways

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To Strengthen  
Graduate Enrollment  
With Research &  
Digital Insights

## About This Resource

These five tips will help your institution strategically choose—and use—the right tactics and data to stand out from your competition while delivering targeted messages to graduate and adult learners wherever they are.

## About Encoura

Encoura provides custom technology solutions that combine Eduventures® research, data science, strategic enrollment services, and multichannel marketing to serve over 2,000 higher ed institutions.



# Eduventures® 2025 Master's Market Update:

## Strategies to Strengthen Graduate Enrollment

Eduventures research shows the master's market is at a turning point: demand is softening, competition is rising, and outcomes matter more than ever.

- **Nearly two-thirds of master's prospects** expect higher salaries from their degree – their top motivation.
- Programs with **five-year earnings above \$82,000** captured 92% of market growth in the last decade.
- New policies like the **end of Grad PLUS loans in 2026** will add pressure for accountability.

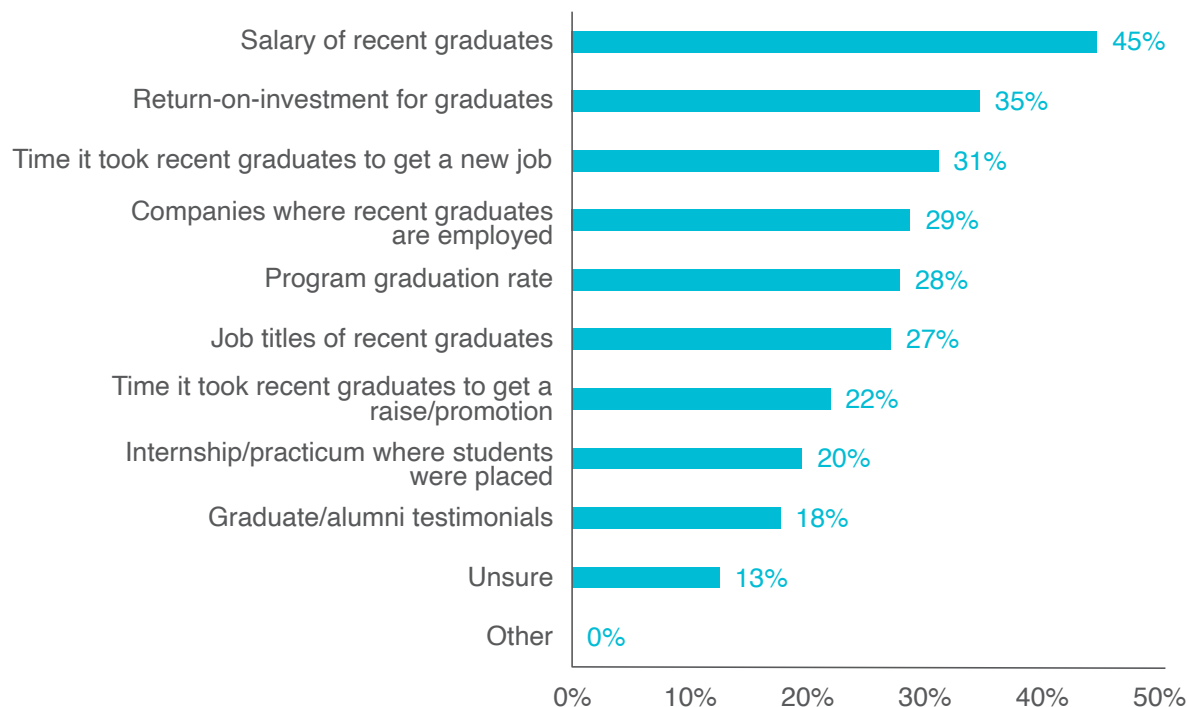
The following five strategies, rooted in the latest Eduventures research, highlight how institutions can strengthen their graduate programs, attract right-fit students, and demonstrate value in a crowded market.



# 1. Lead With Outcomes That Matter

In a crowded market, your story needs to resonate — and show proof. When it comes to evaluating master's programs, almost half of master's prospects want to see the actual salaries of recent program graduates. To build trust, institutions can share program-specific data and alumni success stories with their prospects.

## Helpful Outcomes for Evaluating Potential Programs Among Prospective Master's Students



## 2. Focus on Offering Programs From High-Earning Fields

A particular focus should be on earnings. Why? Because this is what prospective master's students are looking for (and what policymakers are increasingly interested in). Programs with **five-year earnings above \$82,000 grew by 40%** between 2014–2023, compared to just 4% growth in lower-earning fields.

Continue evolving your program portfolios to meet student and employer demand. Earnings data should play a critical role in how stakeholders judge program viability and prioritize growth areas. With this insight, institutions can then concentrate digital marketing on the programs that offer the strongest outcomes and long-term sustainability.

**Encoura Solution:** *The Eduventures® Program Exploration Study helps you spot program gaps, growth opportunities, and areas to step back – using earnings, market data, and more to guide decisions.*

### 3. Differentiate in a Competitive Market

Overall **master's completions grew 24% from 2014 to 2023**, but softening demand means schools must work harder to be heard.

Institutions can stand out by aligning messaging with student career goals and specific outcome data at the right time in their decision-making process – giving prospective students the confidence to apply to your institution.

**Encoura Solution:** *Multichannel digital strategies – from connected TV to residential targeting – help deliver message directly to households and devices students use most. You have seconds to grab attention, so focus your ads on outcomes that will resonate with adults.*

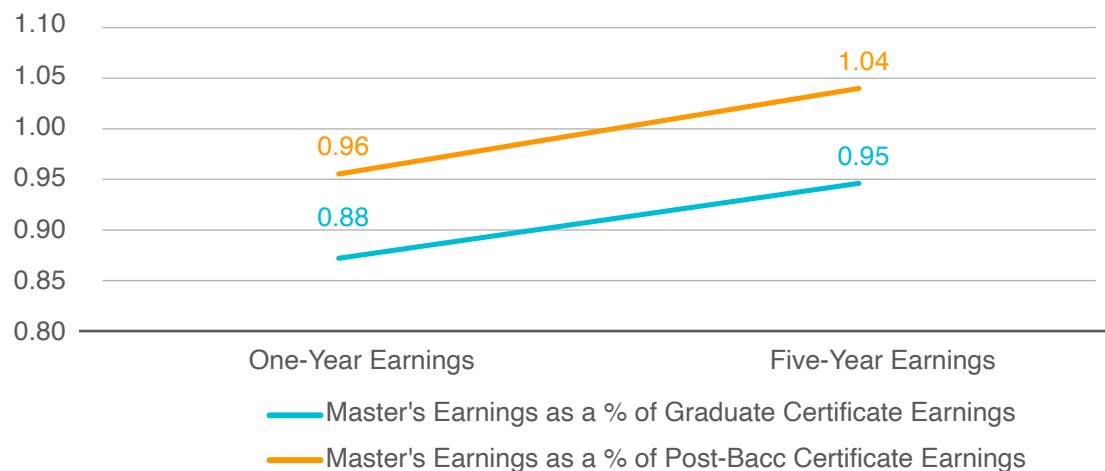
## 4. Address the Non-Degree Question

Those pursuing graduate non-degree offerings see higher initial earnings; however, master's graduates grow their earnings faster and cut into the initial earnings premium enjoyed by their graduate, non-degree peers.

**Graduate certificate earners see just \$8,901 in five-year earnings growth compared to \$14,058 for master's graduates.**

Use digital storytelling like video, testimonials, and dynamic ads to help prospects see the long-term value of a master's degree over short-term alternatives.

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## 5. Prepare for Policy Shifts

Policy makers are placing increasing attention on both earnings and debt; new risk-sharing proposals use the two metrics to understand program-level return-on-investment (ROI).

**Grad PLUS loans will end in 2026 capping graduate borrowing.** A new “earnings premium” accountability metric — comparing the median earnings of program graduates to working adults without a comparable credential — could make underperforming programs ineligible for federal financial aid.

All this reinforces the importance of showing transparency around program outcomes.

**Encoura Solution:** *Digital campaigns reinforce trust and quickly communicate by sharing evolving data points and graduate pathways in real time.*



# Putting Insights Into Action

Eduventures research confirms that graduate enrollment success will hinge on outcomes, transparency, and alignment with student goals. Institutions that act on these insights will be best positioned to thrive in the next decade.

Encoura Digital Solutions, backed by Eduventures research, can help you:

- Showcase program ROI in compelling ways.
- Reach the right graduate and adult prospects at the right time.
- Support your enrollment strategy across the full funnel.



**Learn More About Encoura  
Digital Solutions**

[encoura.org/digital](https://encoura.org/digital)