



# National Science Foundation

---

## Graduate Research Fellowship Program

### *Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials*

2016

---

Directorate for Education & Human Resources

Division of Graduate Education

**NSF 16-104**

(Replaces NSF 13-085)

## FOREWORD

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states that the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

The Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) is NSF's oldest program, dating to the Foundation's first fully funded year of 1952. Since then, GRFP has supported over 50,000 US citizens, nationals, and permanent residents to pursue advanced degrees in science and engineering. Among its alumni are over 40 Nobel laureates, over 450 members of the National Academy of Sciences, thousands of science and engineering faculty, and many notable individuals in industry, government, and the non-profit sector. Additional information on the program may be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/grfp> and <http://www.nsfgrfp.org>.

This guide outlines the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and GRFP Institutions. The Guide incorporates all policies, rules and regulations, and the Terms and Conditions found in the Fellowship Offer Letter, the annual GRFP Program Solicitation, and the Notice of Grant Award. The current Guide applies to the 2016-2017 Fellowship year forward, unless otherwise noted or superseded by an updated version.

**As a recipient of federal funds, Fellows are expected to fulfill the academic and fiscal obligations of their Fellowship award, as outlined in the Guide. Failure on the part of a Fellow to observe all of the Terms and Conditions of the GRFP fellowship award constitutes sufficient grounds for its revocation by the Foundation.**

**Please note that the Fellowship Terms and Conditions are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the Fellow and the Grantee GRFP Institution to ensure compliance with current guidelines.**

Important updates in the Guide include:

- The Fellowship is active for the five-year Fellowship Period, irrespective of status of utilization of fellowship funding. Fellows will submit their plan to utilize the funding over the five-year Fellowship Period at the start of their Fellowship. Fellows have the opportunity to engage in the full range of professional development opportunities offered by GRFP during the five-year Fellowship Period.
- Professional development opportunities for Fellows are included ([GROW](#) and [GRIP](#)).
- Reserve Status may be used to accept a one- or two-year non-NSF international fellowship for study abroad only if the GRFP Institution approves the non-enrollment status and retains the Fellow on the Grants Roster Report. The GRFP Institution certifies the Fellow is actively engaged in appropriate full-time activities furthering graduate study and that the Fellow is accepted by, and will be enrolled at, the GRFP Institution following the non-enrollment period.

- Changes in the primary field of study within the first Fellowship year are not permitted. Acceptance of a Fellowship award is an explicit agreement that the Fellow will be duly enrolled in a graduate degree program consistent with the field of study indicated in their application by the beginning of the following academic year.
- The conditions for terminating the Fellowships of Fellows who have not complied with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions are defined.
- A reporting requirement for GRFP Institutions is re-instated: GRFP Institutions must submit the Grants Roster Report annually to confirm the Fellowship status of all Fellows and to certify compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award.
- GRFP Institutions must submit the Completion Report annually certifying the completion status of Fellows at the institution (e.g., in progress, completed, graduated, transferred, withdrawn) and degree, if awarded.
- The Fellows Abroad option has expired and is no longer included.

GRFP uses the GRFP FastLane Module (<http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>) as the official medium for completing GRFP administrative transactions and approvals.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	2
DEFINITIONS.....	8
COMMON ACRONYMS .....	10
NSF DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS.....	11
WEBSITES .....	11
ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE.....	12
FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES .....	13
Fellowship Acceptance .....	13
Fellowship Year .....	14
All Fellows.....	15
Satisfactory Academic Progress .....	15
Responsible Conduct of Research .....	16
Research Involving Human Subjects.....	16
Research Involving Vertebrate Animals.....	16
Legal Rights to Intellectual Property .....	17
Acknowledgement of NSF Support and Disclaimer.....	17
Use of NSF Logo .....	17
NSF Fellowship Service Requirement.....	18
Reporting Requirements .....	18
Submit Annual Activities Report.....	18
Annual Activities Report submitted upon Completion or Termination of the Fellowship.....	19
Fellowship Status Declaration .....	19

Change in Field of Study, Research Plan, or Degree Plan.....	19
Communication.....	20
Whistleblower Protection.....	20
AFFILIATION WITH GRFP INSTITUTION.....	20
Change of Affiliated GRFP Institution.....	20
Before Starting the Fellowship.....	21
Between Fellowship Years.....	21
During a Fellowship Year.....	21
FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS.....	21
Non-Enrollment Periods.....	22
Tenure Status.....	22
Reserve Status.....	23
Forfeit during Tenure Status.....	23
Medical Deferral Status.....	24
Medical Deferral for Fellows on Tenure: Paid Leave Option.....	24
Military Deferral Status.....	25
TENURE BEYOND MASTER’S DEGREE COMPLETION.....	25
FELLOWSHIP TERMINATION.....	26
FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION.....	26
Stipend Payment for Terminated and Completed Fellows.....	26
FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS.....	27
Stipend.....	27
Stipend Increase.....	27
Stipend Supplementation.....	27
Income Tax.....	28

Cost-of-Education (COE) Allowance .....	28
Tuition and Fees.....	28
Required.....	28
Optional/Refundable .....	29
Living Expenses.....	29
Workman’s Compensation.....	29
Veterans Benefits.....	29
Future Employment .....	29
Long-Term Fellow and GRFP Institution Responsibilities .....	29
FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES.....	30
XSEDE- Allocated Resources .....	30
Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities.....	30
Career-Life Balance Initiative.....	30
GRFP Professional Development Opportunities .....	30
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES .....	31
GRFP Institution Reporting Requirements:.....	31
Grants Roster Report.....	31
Program Expense Report .....	31
Completion Report.....	31
Sponsored Project Officer (SPO).....	32
Principal Investigator (PI).....	32
Coordinating Official(s) (CO).....	32
Financial Official (FO) .....	33
Academic/Research Advisor .....	33
Fellowship Awards.....	34

AWARD MANAGEMENT .....	34
Pre-Award Costs .....	34
ACMS\$ .....	35
No-Cost Extension .....	35
Grantee Approved No-Cost Extension .....	35
NSF-Approved No-Cost Extension.....	35
APPENDIX I: Sample Fellowship Offer Letter .....	37
Certifications by Fellow.....	40
APPENDIX II: GRF Program Solicitation Excerpts.....	42
Citizenship .....	42
GRFP Fields of Study.....	42
Ineligible Categories and Programs of Study .....	45
APPENDIX III: ACADEMIC/RESEARCH ADVISOR CONFIRMATION FORM .....	46
APPENDIX IV: CERTIFICATIONS BY FELLOW .....	47
APPENDIX V: XSEDE – ALLOCATED RESOURCES.....	48
APPENDIX VI: FACILITATION AWARDS FOR SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS WITH DISABILITIES (FASED) .....	48
APPENDIX VII: SAMPLE AWARD LETTER TO GRFP INSTITUTION.....	50

## DEFINITIONS

Active	Fellow within the five-year Fellowship Period; not Completed or Terminated
COE	Cost-of-Education allowance; 1-5 (½ COE) or 6-12 (full COE) months on Tenure
Completed	Fellow who has graduated within the five-year Fellowship Period or who has completed the five-year Fellowship Period before graduation
Completion Report	Report submitted by GRFP Institution certifying the completion status of Fellows at the institution (e.g., in progress, completed, graduated, transferred, withdrawn) and degree, if awarded
Continuing Fellow	Active Fellow with remaining years within the five-year Fellowship Period, certified by the GRFP Institution to be making satisfactory progress
Declare Fellowship Status	Fellow uses the GRFP FastLane Module to declare Fellowship status for the next Fellowship year (Tenure, Reserve, or Military/Medical Deferral)
Deferral	Only for Military/Medical reasons– there is no other deferral of the Fellowship
Expense Report	Report submitted by the GRFP Institution for the previous Fellowship year, certifying the Program Expense Report is in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award to the institution
Fellow	Active NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program Fellow
Fellow ID	Fellow Identification Number (starts with award year); e.g., 2016123456
Fellowship Terms and Conditions	Actions that must be completed by Fellows to maintain active Fellowship status and by GRFP Institutions to receive funding
Forfeit	Months of stipend not utilized by Fellows on Tenure



Grants Roster Report	Report submitted by GRFP Institution certifying the status and progress (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory) of all Fellows at the institution, affirming compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award
GRFP FastLane Module	Program website for all requests, administrative transactions, and approvals
GRFP Institution	Fellow's graduate, degree-granting institution
Month	14 or more days in a calendar month
New Fellow	Accepted Fellowship Offer and starting the first Fellowship year
Non-enrolled Period	Period of time approved by GRFP Institution when Fellow is actively engaged in appropriate full-time activities furthering graduate study and is not enrolled
Program Office	NSF organizational unit responsible for GRFP program management and oversight
Reserve	Active Fellow not receiving GRFP financial support during the Fellowship year, certified by the GRFP Institution to be making satisfactory progress
Satisfactory Progress	Defined and certified by GRFP Institution; includes Fellow compliance with GRFP reporting requirements and Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award
Status	Fellowship status is either Active, Completed, or Terminated. Active Fellows must be in one of the following statuses: Tenure, Reserve, Medical Deferral or Military Deferral
Stipend	Fellowship payment to Fellows on Tenure; prorated in whole-month increments
Tenure	Active Fellow receiving GRFP financial support during the Fellowship year, certified by the GRFP Institution to be making satisfactory progress

Terminated	Fellowship revoked (by NSF) for failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award or discontinued (by Fellow or GRFP Institution) during the five-year Fellowship Period
XSEDE	Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment; Cyberinfrastructure resource

## COMMON ACRONYMS

CO(s)	Coordinating Official(s)
FASED	Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities
FFR	Federal Financial Report
FO	Financial Official
GRFP	Graduate Research Fellowship Program
GRIP	Graduate Research Internship Program
GROW	Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide
Guide	NSF GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	White House Office of Management and Budget

PI	Principal Investigator
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SPO	Sponsored Project Officer

## NSF DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

(please check NSF website for the most current documents)

Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide

([https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=papp](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp))

GRFP Program Solicitation

([https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=nsf16588](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf16588))

Research Terms and Conditions, and associated NSF Agency Specific Requirements

(<https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>)

AAG Other Post Award Requirements and Considerations (Copyrights):

([https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=aag](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag))

## WEBSITES

National Science Foundation

(<https://www.nsf.gov>)

GRFP Program

(<https://www.nsf.gov/grfp>) and (<http://www.nsfgrfp.org>)

GRFP FastLane Module

(<http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>)

The NSF Program Office administers the GRF Program and is assisted at each GRFP Institution by an institutional representative designated as the Coordinating Official (CO). A directory of all GRFP Officials is available on the GRFP FastLane Module website. The CO is the first point of contact for all Fellowship questions. Unless otherwise noted in the Guide, a Fellow should consult the CO prior to e-mailing the NSF GRFP Office.

(<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/CoList.do?method=loadCoList>)

## ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE

GRFP operates on an annual cycle. All administrative actions are performed in the GRFP FastLane Module (actual deadlines will be communicated by the Program Office; the deadline time is always 11:59 PM, Eastern Time):

### **Before Fellowship Status Declaration period closes**

#### **February**     Program Office

- Open Fellowship Status Declaration Module for next Fellowship year

#### **March/April** Program Office

- Announce new Fellowships

#### **Feb/May 1**     New Fellow

1. Accept/Decline Fellowship Offer by May 1; failure to meet deadline results in revocation of the Fellowship offer
2. Re-certify program eligibility
3. Verify contact information, GRFP Institution, and start date (summer/June 1 or fall/September 1)
4. Submit annual Fellowship Status Declaration for the first Fellowship year and the plan for the 5-year utilization of the Fellowship award

#### Continuing Fellow

1. Prepare Annual Activities Report
2. Obtain signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form
3. Re-certify program eligibility
4. Submit Annual Activities Report
5. Verify contact information
6. Submit annual Fellowship Status Declaration for next Fellowship year

#### Academic/Research Advisor

- Verify satisfactory progress and sign Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form (for continuing Fellows only)

## **After Fellowship Status Declaration period closes**

### **May/June**     Coordinating Official (CO)

1. Certify progress (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) of all Fellows (except new Fellows)
2. Submit Grants Roster Report, certifying status of all Fellows

### Program Office

1. Approve Grants Roster Reports
2. Summer incremental funding of GRFP Institution Awards for all Fellows on Tenure

### **October**     Financial Official (FO)

- Submit Institution Program Expense Report

### Coordinating Official (CO)

- Submit Institution Completion Report

### **Anytime**     All Fellows

- Submit Change Requests for Field-of-Study, GRFP Institution, Fellowship Status Changes to Medical, Military, Forfeit, or Termination Statuses only

### Program Office and COs

- Review and approve/disapprove Fellow Change Status Requests
- Update Completion Report

For GRFP professional development opportunities deadlines please refer to the current Dear Colleague Letters for GROW and GRIP.

## **FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Fellowship Acceptance**

All Fellows, from the start of their Fellowships, must be able to certify that they have read and understood the Terms and Conditions in this Guide and that they are aware of the consequences of not complying with the Terms and Conditions.

Awardees are sent a Fellowship Offer Letter by e-mail in late March/early April (Sample Letter; **APPENDIX I**). Awardees must formally accept and agree to the Terms and Conditions of the award by May 1. Awardees who accept the Fellowship offer become new Fellows. New Fellows must be duly

enrolled in a graduate degree program in the field of study indicated in their application by the beginning of the following academic year, or they must be approved for non-enrollment status by their GRFP Institution. Fellows must pursue graduate study that leads to a research-based master's or doctoral degree in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) or in STEM education, as described in the Program Solicitation (see **APPENDIX II**); major changes in scope (i.e., changes in primary field of study) during the graduate career may be proposed after the first year of graduate study and require NSF approval. Fellows from the date of Acceptance through Completion or Termination of the Fellowship must be affiliated with a degree-granting institution accredited in, and having a campus located in, the United States, its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico that offers graduate degrees in eligible STEM or in STEM education fields.

New Fellows must declare Fellowship status by May 1. New Fellows will submit their plan to utilize the funding over the five-year Fellowship Period at the start of their Fellowships. Declaring Fellowship Status means the Fellow uses the GRFP FastLane Module to indicate her or his intention to be on Tenure, Reserve, Military Deferral, or Medical Deferral for each year of the five-year Fellowship Period. New Fellows must certify that they meet all of the eligibility requirements (see **APPENDIX II**), as described in the Program Solicitation and Program Certifications. Failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship offer and render individuals ineligible to re-apply. In cases where Fellows have misrepresented their eligibility, or have failed to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, the Fellowship will be revoked, and the case may be referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. This action may result in requiring the Fellow to repay Fellowship funds to the National Science Foundation.

Fellowship offers may not be accepted and deferred except for Medical or Military Deferrals (see descriptions below).

## Fellowship Year

Each Fellowship year is comprised of twelve months. The effective start date of the Fellowship is the date on which a Fellow actually begins the Fellowship (summer/June 1 or fall/September 1), and the Fellowship year is computed from that date. Upon accepting the Fellowship, the Fellow selects summer/June 1 or fall/September 1 to coincide with the approximate graduate program start date (e.g., fall for Fellows starting graduate school in August/September/ October).

The Fellowship start date does not necessarily coincide with the formal summer or fall academic session of the GRFP Institution, and Fellowship Tenure Status is not defined by the date on which a stipend payment is issued. The exact start date of graduate study is mutually determined by the Fellow and the CO.

Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate programs throughout the Fellowship year. New Fellows may begin their Fellowship either during the summer (June 1) or the fall (September 1) immediately following the Fellowship Offer, provided they are actively engaged in research or coursework at the time of the Fellowship start. New Fellows who are between programs or not actively engaged in a graduate program during the summer are only eligible for a fall start. GRFP Institutional

rules concerning enrollment apply; therefore, summer starts do not require summer enrollment *per se*, but active engagement in the graduate program is required. Fellows should check with their COs concerning enrollment requirements. The Fellowship may not be used retroactively.

## All Fellows

All Fellows must declare Fellowship status by May 1 for the next Fellowship year. This task is accomplished in the GRFP FastLane Module. Declaring Fellowship Status means the Fellow uses the GRFP FastLane Module to indicate her or his intention to be on Tenure, Reserve, Military Deferral, or Medical Deferral for the next Fellowship year. Fellows must certify that they continue to meet the eligibility requirements, as described in the Program Solicitation and Program Certifications.

All Fellows from the date of Acceptance through Completion or Termination of the Fellowship must be affiliated with a graduate degree-granting institution accredited in, and having a campus located in, the United States, its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico that offers research-based degrees in eligible STEM or in STEM education fields.

Failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship. In cases where Fellows have misrepresented their eligibility, or have failed to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, the Fellowship will be revoked, and the case may be referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. This action may result in requiring the Fellow to repay Fellowship funds to the National Science Foundation.

Fellows are not permitted to receive more than the equivalent of 12 months of GRFP stipend support during a single Fellowship year, and no Fellow is eligible to receive more than 36 months cumulative GRFP support. Only Fellows with Tenure Status are eligible to receive stipend payments. Fellows are expected to be engaged in their graduate program and research, irrespective of their Fellowship status (except if on Medical or Military Deferral Status).

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

Fellows are required to make satisfactory academic progress towards completion of their graduate degrees, except if on Medical or Military Deferral Status. Satisfactory progress is defined and certified annually by the Fellow's GRFP Institution. A Fellow's Academic/Research Advisor or designated graduate program administrator is required to annually review the Fellow's Annual Activities Report and verify the Fellow's eligibility and degree progress by signing the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form (**APPENDIX III**). The signed form is submitted by the Fellow as part of the Annual Activities Report submission. After the Fellow completes these actions, the Coordinating Official (CO) certifies satisfactory progress. The CO certifies unsatisfactory progress for Fellows who do not complete the required reporting actions. These Fellows are subject to having their Fellowships revoked by NSF. Fellows who are not rated by the CO will be allowed to continue their fellowships only through the remainder of the current Fellowship year. If at any time during the year the GRFP Institution determines that a Fellow is making unsatisfactory progress, the CO will notify the GRFP Program Office and the Fellowship will be terminated.

## Responsible Conduct of Research

It is the responsibility of the Fellow, in conjunction with the Grantee GRFP Institution, to ensure that all academic and research activities carried out in or outside the US comply with the laws or regulations of the US and/or of the foreign country in which the academic and/or research activities are conducted. These include appropriate human subject, animal welfare, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other regulations or laws, as appropriate. All academic and research activities should be coordinated with the appropriate US and foreign government authorities, and necessary licenses, permits, or approvals must be obtained prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

In response to the America Competes Act, (P.L. 110-69) all Fellows supported by NSF are required to receive appropriate training and oversight in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research. Fellows should check with the CO about the Responsible Conduct of Research training requirement.

## Research Involving Human Subjects

Projects involving research with human subjects must ensure that subjects are protected from research risks in conformance with the relevant federal policy known as the Common Rule (Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, 45 CFR 690). All projects involving human subjects must either (1) have approval from the organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) or (2) must affirm that the IRB or an appropriate knowledgeable authority previously designated by the organization (not the Fellow) has declared the research exempt from IRB review, in accordance with the applicable subsection, as established in section 101(b) of the Common Rule. Fellows are required to comply with this policy and adhere to the organization's protocol for managing research involving human subjects.

## Research Involving Vertebrate Animals

Any project proposing use of vertebrate animals for research or education shall comply with the Animal Welfare Act [7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.] and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the Secretary of Agriculture [9 CFR 1.1-4.11] pertaining to the humane care, handling, and treatment of vertebrate animals held or used for research, teaching or other activities supported by federal awards. In accordance with these requirements, proposed projects involving use of any vertebrate animal for research or education must be approved by the submitting organization's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). For this approval to be accepted by NSF, the organization must have a current Public Health Service (PHS) Approved Assurance.

Projects involving the care or use of vertebrate animals at a foreign organization or foreign field site also require approval of research protocols by the US grantee's IACUC. If the project is to be funded through an award to a foreign organization or through an individual Fellowship award that will support activities at a foreign organization, the NSF will require a statement of compliance that the activities will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws in the foreign country and that the International Guiding Principles for Biomedical Research Involving Animals (see <http://www.cioms.ch>) will be followed.



## Legal Rights to Intellectual Property

The National Science Foundation claims no rights to any inventions or writings that might result from its fellowship grants. However, Fellows should be aware that the NSF, another federal agency, or some private party may acquire such rights through other support for particular research. Also, Fellows should note their obligation to include an Acknowledgment and Disclaimer in any publication.

## Acknowledgement of NSF Support and Disclaimer

All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP Support and provide a disclaimer by including the following statement in the Acknowledgements or other appropriate section:

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. (NSF grant number). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation."

Fellows should obtain the NSF grant number from their CO.

For activities supported by the [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide](#) initiative ([GROW](#)):

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. (NSF grant number) and an international travel allowance through the [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide \(GROW\)](#). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation."

For activities supported by the [Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#):

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. (NSF grant number) and an internship provided through the [Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#). Any findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation."

## Use of NSF Logo

NSF's logo may be used by recipients of NSF support for the sole purpose of acknowledging that support.

The NSF's logo may be used to link to an NSF website to acknowledge NSF's assistance or affiliation.

The NSF [logo guidelines](#) provide information on what individuals may and may not do with the NSF logo (<https://www.nsf.gov/policies/logos.jsp>).

## NSF Fellowship Service Requirement

NSF requires no formal service (time commitment) of Fellows, beyond the requirement that Fellows meet Fellowship reporting requirements and maintain satisfactory progress in their graduate programs throughout the five-year Fellowship Period at the GRFP Institution (except for Fellows on Medical Deferral or Military Deferral).

### Reporting Requirements

Regardless of Fellowship Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to complete two separate tasks by May 1 via the GRFP FastLane Module: 1) submit the Annual Activities Report with the signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form, and 2) declare Fellowship year status. A description of each of these required tasks is provided below.

#### *Submit Annual Activities Report*

Fellows must complete the certifications on the E-signature page (**APPENDIX IV**) when the Annual Activities Report is submitted.

The Annual Activities Report is reviewed and satisfactory progress verified by the faculty advisor or designated graduate program administrator prior to submission to NSF. As explained in the [NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide](#) [PAPPG; [NSF 16-1](#)], Chapter I.D.3), NSF expects strict adherence to the rules of proper scholarship and attribution. Authors other than the Fellow should be named and acknowledged. Serious failure to adhere to such standards can result in findings of research misconduct. NSF policies and rules on research misconduct are discussed in the [AAG Chapter VII.C](#), as well as 45 CFR Part 689.

Regardless of Fellowship status, all continuing Fellows are required to submit an Annual Activities Report with the signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form by May 1, 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET), via the GRFP FastLane Module. The online Report includes information on research accomplishments and activities related to broader impacts, presentations, publications, teaching and research assistantships, awards and recognitions, and other scholarly and service accomplishments. To complete this requirement, the Fellow provides a copy of the Annual Activities Report to her or his Academic/Research Advisor for review and approval prior to submission, and well in advance of the deadline. The Academic/Research Advisor (or designated graduate program administrator) signs the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form (**APPENDIX III**) to indicate that she or he has reviewed the Activities Report, discussed it with the Fellow and that the Fellow is making satisfactory progress towards the degree and remains eligible for active GRFP Fellowship status. The Fellow must complete the Annual Activities Report and submit the Report with the attached Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form (**APPENDIX III**) by May 1, 11:59 PM ET.

NSF would like to be informed of any major highlights such as publications, awards, and patents. Fellows are invited to share their accomplishments by sending an e-mail to NSF ([grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov)). Advance notification about important events or announcements, such as embargoed research publications, is most useful.

Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID®) (<http://orcid.org>) is an open, non-profit, community-driven effort to create and maintain a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research activities and outputs to these identifiers. An ORCID identifier provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized. The ORCID Registry is available free of charge to individuals, who may obtain an ORCID identifier, manage their record of activities, and search for others in the registry. While NSF encourages Fellows to include an ORCID in their fellow record, submission of the ORCID identifier is optional.

### *Annual Activities Report submitted upon Completion or Termination of the Fellowship*

Fellows who graduate (Complete) or whose Fellowship is terminated are required to update the most recent submitted Annual Activities Report or to submit the pending Annual Activities Report through the GRFP FastLane module within 30 days of Completion/Termination.

### *Fellowship Status Declaration*

Fellows must declare their Fellowship status for the next Fellowship year using the GRFP FastLane module. Requests to Change Fellowship Status after the Fellowship year has begun are not permitted.

Failure to declare status by May 1, 11:59 PM ET will result in Fellows remaining in Undeclared Status on the GRFP Grants Roster Report. Undeclared Fellows will be allowed to continue their Fellowships only through the remainder of the current Fellowship year.

### *Change in Field of Study, Research Plan, or Degree Plan*

Acceptance of the Fellowship award constitutes a commitment to pursue a research-based graduate degree in STEM or in STEM education. A Fellow's research and graduate study must both be in STEM or in STEM education, and must meet the program eligibility requirements in the Program Solicitation (see **APPENDIX II**). Fellows must enroll in a graduate degree program consistent with the relevant field of study proposed in their application and to undertake a course of study leading to a research-based Master's or PhD. The Fellowships of ineligible Fellows (according to the eligibility requirements in the Solicitation) are subject to revocation by NSF.

A major change in a Fellow's graduate program field of study or research direction constitutes a "change in scope" — one that alters the program to the extent that it is significantly different from that originally submitted with and reviewed with the Fellowship application (e.g., a change in primary field of study; see **APPENDIX II** for primary fields of study). Such changes require a written rationale, which must receive the prior approval of the CO and NSF. Changes in the primary field of study within the first Fellowship year are not permitted. Acceptance of a Fellowship award is an explicit agreement that the Fellow will be duly enrolled in a graduate degree program consistent with the field of study indicated in their application by the beginning of the following academic year.

The proposed field of study and/or graduate program resulting from a minor or major change must meet the eligibility requirements detailed in the Program Solicitation (see **APPENDIX II**). Any questions regarding program eligibility should be directed by e-mail to the Program Office. Using the GRFP

FastLane Module, Fellows must submit Change Requests for minor and major field-of-study changes and include a brief description of the revised proposed plan of study and research. Additional information may be required by NSF.

Fellows do not need to request NSF approval to change between master's and doctoral degree programs if there is no change in the field of study or institution. Fellows should update their profile in the GRFP module to reflect the appropriate degree.

## Communication

GRFP communications are conducted by e-mail. Therefore, it is the Fellow's responsibility to keep the Contact Information (especially e-mail addresses and phone numbers) up to date. Fellows completing their Fellowships are required to update their contact information to allow the Program Office to contact them. The Program Office uses e-mail addresses to contact Fellows for program assessment purposes, and to measure the impact of the Fellowship on graduate school experiences and career outcomes.

To contact the Program Office, Fellows should e-mail [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) and include a brief description of the topic in the Subject line. They should include their full name, Fellow ID, and details of the issue or request. Please ensure spam filters do not block messages from the NSF GRFP (e-mail address: [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov)) and other e-mail addresses from @nsf.gov. The Program will follow up with Fellows, via e-mail or phone, depending on the nature of the request.

## Whistleblower Protection

Awardees are notified of the applicability of 41 U.S.C. § 4712, as amended by P.L. 112-239, providing protection for whistleblowers.

## AFFILIATION WITH GRFP INSTITUTION

All Fellows from the date of Acceptance through Completion or Termination of the Fellowship must be affiliated with a degree-granting institution accredited in, and having a campus located in, the United States, its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. When submitting the GRFP Application, applicants must indicate a proposed GRFP Institution. Until a Change Request is submitted by the Fellow and approved by the GRFP Institution CO, NSF assumes association with the originally proposed GRFP Institution. It is the Fellow's responsibility to arrange for admission to a graduate program and to request approval from the CO and NSF, via the GRFP FastLane Module, for any institutional changes. Because Fellowship Funding is made through an award to the GRFP Institution on record, Fellows with incorrect institutional affiliations risk delay or forfeiture of stipend payments. It is particularly important for new Fellows to confirm that their GRFP Record properly reflects their correct graduate institution.

## Change of Affiliated GRFP Institution

Fellows are permitted to change GRFP Institutions. When transitioning from one GRFP Institution to another, Fellows should not plan to have a significant break in enrollment. Full-time engagement in a

graduate research program is expected; therefore, any break exceeding one month requires prior NSF approval. Enrollment breaks between graduate programs or GRFP Institutions exceeding three or more months are generally not approved, and if approved, may require forfeiture of stipend payments. See specific scenarios below for more information on changing GRFP Institutions.

### *Before Starting the Fellowship*

If a new Fellow wishes to study at a GRFP Institution other than the proposed GRFP Institution listed on their Fellowship application, a Change Request must be submitted for NSF approval via the GRFP FastLane Module before the May 1 deadline. This action must be completed by the Fellow by May 1 following the Fellowship Offer. The CO at the proposed new institution must approve the request before the Fellowship year begins. Contact the Program Office ([grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov)) if the Institution is not listed in the GRFP Institution Directory available on FastLane.

### *Between Fellowship Years*

Continuing Fellows who wish to transfer between GRFP Institutions between Fellowship years must submit a Change Request, via the GRFP FastLane Module, during the Fellowship Status Declaration Window. This action should be completed by May 1. If a Fellow wishes to change GRFP Institutions after submitting the annual Fellowship Status Declaration and before starting the new Fellowship year, a Change Request must be submitted to NSF for approval. COs at both the current and proposed GRFP Institutions and NSF must approve the request.

### *During a Fellowship Year*

If a Fellow wishes to transfer from one GRFP Institution to another during a Fellowship year, the Fellow must submit a Change Request. The COs at both the current and proposed GRFP Institutions and NSF must approve the request, upon confirmation that the Fellow's work at the current GRFP Institution has continued to be satisfactory. Upon approval, the Program Office adjusts the Fellow's Fellowship status records in the GRFP FastLane Module.

## FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS

Fellows will submit their plan to utilize the funding over the five-year Fellowship Period at the start of their Fellowship. During the five-year Fellowship Period, active Fellows must be in one of the following four Fellowship Statuses: Tenure, Reserve, Medical Deferral, or Military Deferral. The Fellowship may not be deferred for other reasons. Active Fellows have the opportunity to engage in the full range of professional development opportunities offered by GRFP during the five-year Fellowship Period. Active Fellows convert to non-active Fellows when they Complete or Terminate their Fellowships.

The Fellowship provides three Tenure Years of financial support (stipend and institutional Cost-of-Education allowance) and two Reserve Years. Both Reserve and Tenure Statuses are only granted in 12-month increments (summer or fall start). As noted above, Annual Activities Reports are required irrespective of status. **Portions of an unused year of Reserve or Tenure Status cannot be held for later use (unless the Fellow status is changed to NSF-approved Medical or Military Deferral).**

Tenure Status ensures that Fellows have the resources (time and financial support) to devote full-time effort to their graduate program of study, and Reserve Status ensures that Fellows have the option and flexibility to participate in other education and training opportunities. With the assistance of an Academic/Research Advisor, Fellows should plan for the judicious use of GRFP resources at the beginning of their Fellowship. Fellows will submit their plan to utilize the funding over the five-year Fellowship Period at the start of their Fellowship.

Fellows not on NSF-approved Military or Medical Deferrals who have used two years of Reserve Status must choose Tenure Status for subsequent years. A Fellow may change between statuses from one year to the next during the Fellowship Status Declaration Period. When changing Fellowship status from Reserve to Tenure, Fellows may change start time from fall to summer or vice versa. When such a change in start time is made, NSF must be certain that no Fellow receives more than 36 months of Fellowship support and that no Fellow is allowed more than five years from the start of the Fellowship Period. Regardless, Fellows exercising this option must enter Tenure Status no later than the fall of the year that their Reserve Status ends. Retroactive changes after the Fellowship year has begun are not permitted.

Within a given Fellowship year, duly authorized military service or training is permitted without penalty to the Fellow with the approval of the CO and NSF, if the service does not compromise the Fellow's enrollment status and degree progress.

## Non-Enrollment Periods

For Fellows who are pursuing activities where institutional enrollment is not required or permitted, the non-enrollment period is subject to the approval of the CO. A non-enrolled Fellow must be on Tenure or Reserve Status. This may include Reserve Status to accept a one- or two-year international fellowship for study abroad. By retaining the Fellow on their Grants Roster, the GRFP Institution approves the specific arrangement of non-enrollment status and certifies that the Fellow is accepted by, and will be enrolled at, the GRFP Institution following the non-enrollment period. In all cases, the expectation is that Fellows are engaged full-time in activities that further their education and completion of an eligible research-based graduate degree.

## Tenure Status

Fellows use Tenure Status for three years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship Period. During Tenure Years, Fellows actively utilize Fellowship support – receiving a stipend and/or institutional COE. The Fellowship includes a maximum of three Tenure Years. This includes situations where all or part of the support is forfeited (lost).

Tenure includes periods of full-time research and/or coursework under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor at the GRFP Institution, whether or not the GRFP Institution is in session, as well as any normal, short vacation periods. Summer is not considered a “short vacation period,” and to be eligible to receive stipend payments during the summer, Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate program through coursework or research under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor, with summer enrollment status as required by the GRFP Institution.



Fellowship Tenure Status is granted in 12-month increments corresponding to a Fellowship year (summer or fall start) and may not be broken into smaller units spread across more than one year, except in cases of NSF-approved Medical or Military Deferral (see below).

Fellows on Tenure must be actively engaged in a research-based graduate degree program in STEM or in STEM education at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow on Tenure has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the non-enrollment period is subject to the approval of the CO. Approval confirms that the activities conducted are part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include professional development opportunities provided by GRFP ([GROW](#) and [GRIP](#)), field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution and conform to the terms in this Guide.

## Reserve Status

Fellows use Reserve Status for two years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship Period.

The intent of Reserve Status is to allow Fellows the flexibility of incorporating professional development opportunities (e.g., [GROW](#), [GRIP](#), research assistantships, teaching assistantships, internships, etc.) into their graduate programs. Fellows on Reserve Status remain full-time students (as defined by their GRFP Institution) and actively engage in research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible graduate degree. Annual Activities Reports are required during Reserve Status.

Fellows on Reserve must be actively engaged in a research-based graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status as established by each GRFP Institution may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow on Reserve has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the non-enrollment period is subject to the approval of the CO. Approval confirms that activities conducted are part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include professional development opportunities provided by GRFP ([GROW](#) and [GRIP](#)), field courses, extended workshops, internships and other activities deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution that conform to the terms in this Guide.

## Forfeit during Tenure Status

Funding not utilized during a Tenure year is forfeited (lost). Fellows in forfeit status during a Tenure year must be actively engaged in research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible research-based graduate degree. Annual Activities Reports are required during forfeit periods. Fellows must declare Fellowship status annually by May 1; the forfeit period must be renewed if the forfeit period extends into a new Fellowship year. Failure to renew Tenure Status with forfeit may result in termination of the Fellowship if the Fellow remains in Undeclared Status. Fellows must submit a Change Request at the end of their forfeited period to be placed back on Tenure or Reserve Status.

## Medical Deferral Status

Medical Deferrals may be requested when an extended absence (more than one month) is necessary due to medical (mental or physical health) or dependent-care (family leave) situations. If a Fellow or immediate family member (spouse, child, dependent, sibling, or parent) experiences a serious illness or other medical condition that prevents full-time Fellowship Activity for an extended period, the Fellow may be granted a Medical Deferral for all or part of a Tenure or Reserve Year. NSF considers dependent care to include child care, adoption, parental leave, elder care, and extended family illness. If dependent care requires that a Fellow take leave from full-time Fellowship Activity for an extended period, a Medical Deferral may be granted for all or part of a Tenure or Reserve Year. Medical Deferrals must be in monthly increments, up to a maximum accumulation of two years or 24 months. The unused, deferred months of Tenure or Reserve are available for use at a later date, and prevailing Fellowship Terms and Conditions will apply. In cases of an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, active enrollment is not required; however, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

To request Medical Deferrals, Fellows should first contact their CO and secure an institutionally approved medical or family leave based on the Institution's graduate student leave policies. Using the GRFP FastLane Module, Fellows must formally submit a Change Request for a Medical Deferral before or within the first month of the Medical Deferral. The Request should provide an estimate of the length of time (in whole months) approved for the Medical Deferral, and the time approved will be recorded for the Medical Deferral. The nature of the medical or family leave situation need not be disclosed to NSF in the Change Request. The Medical Deferral Request is approved by the CO and the GRFP Program Office. The GRFP Institution retains relevant documentation indicating that the condition merits a Medical Deferral. Fellows in Medical Deferral Status must submit an Annual Activities Report (stating they are on medical deferral) and declare Fellowship status annually by May 1; the Medical Deferral must be renewed if the Deferral extends into a new Fellowship year. Failure to renew a Medical Deferral Status may result in termination of the Fellowship if the Fellow remains in Undeclared Status. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected. Fellows must submit a Change Request at the end of their Medical Deferral to be placed back on Tenure or Reserve Status.

### *Medical Deferral for Fellows on Tenure: Paid Leave Option*

For Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, there is a limited paid leave option: (1) If the GRFP Institution's graduate student leave policies allow for paid leave, those leave policies apply; or (2) In the absence of paid graduate student leave policies at the GRFP Institution, Fellows may continue to receive stipend payments for a period not to exceed three months total during the three Tenure Years. The three months may be broken up into shorter, monthly time frames across multiple Tenure Years (e.g., use of two months of Stipend under Medical Deferral in Tenure Year 1 and one month in Tenure Year 3). Fellows must include the request for 1, 2, or 3 months paid Leave with the Medical Deferral request submitted through the GRFP FastLane Module. Retroactive requests are not approved. Fellows must specify in their Medical Deferral request that they are requesting to be placed on paid medical deferral. The paid leave option utilizes existing stipend/tenure months and is not a supplemental funding source (no Fellow is eligible to receive more than 36 months cumulative GRFP support).



GRFP supports NSF's Career-Life Balance (CLB) Initiative (<https://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance>). GRFP Institutions may submit one or more CLB funding requests (NSF 13-099) as individual supplement requests to the current GRFP institutional award to sustain the research of a Fellow who has been granted an NSF-approved Medical Deferral for dependent-care (family leave) situations. This gender neutral supplemental funding opportunity is in addition to the limited paid leave option for Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral. Retroactive requests are not approved.

## Military Deferral Status

Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for Active Duty. While on Military Deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected. The unused, deferred months of Tenure or Reserve are available for use at a later date, and prevailing Fellowship Terms and Conditions will apply. Fellows must request Military Deferrals via the GRFP FastLane Module, and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the GRFP Institution. Fellows in Military Deferral Status must submit an Annual Activities Report (stating they are on military deferral) and declare Fellowship status annually by May 1; the Military Deferral Status must be renewed if the Military Deferral Status extends into a new Fellowship year. Failure to renew a Military Deferral Status may result in termination of the Fellowship if the Fellow remains in Undeclared Status. Fellows must submit a Change Request at the end of their Military Deferral Status to be placed back on Tenure or Reserve Status. In cases of an NSF-approved Military Deferral, active enrollment is not required; however, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

## TENURE BEYOND MASTER'S DEGREE COMPLETION

Fellows who have not completed their five-year Fellowship Period and are completing a master's degree have the option of continuing their Fellowship by enrolling in an eligible research-based doctoral degree program. To remain a Fellow:

1. The Fellow must be accepted into a doctoral program upon completion of the master's degree; pursuit of a second master's degree is not permitted.
2. The transition period between degree programs may not exceed three months; and
3. The Fellow must request NSF approval and complete any required actions.

During the transition period, Fellows are eligible to receive GRFP financial support as long as they maintain Tenure (on Tenure Fellows) or Reserve (on Reserve Fellows) Status. During the transition period, Fellows must remain engaged full-time in activities that further their education and completion of an eligible research-based graduate degree. Transition periods longer than three months are not allowed. Requests for NSF approval and continued support during transition periods should be sent to [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov).

## FELLOWSHIP TERMINATION

Should a Fellow find it necessary to discontinue their Fellowship before completion of the Fellowship, the Fellow is required to initiate and submit a request to Terminate the Fellowship, via the GRFP FastLane Module. The CO reviews and approves the Fellow's Termination request prior to NSF approval and action.

Failure to comply with the following Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in termination of the Fellowship:

1. Maintain satisfactory progress towards an eligible research-based graduate degree.
2. Submit the Annual Activities Report with signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form.
3. Declare Fellowship status by the established deadlines.

In addition, satisfactory progress must be certified by the CO. If at any time during the year the PI and the CO determine that a Fellow is making unsatisfactory progress, the Fellowship will be terminated. Fellows who are not rated by the CO will be allowed to continue their fellowships only through the remainder of the current Fellowship year.

GRFP Institutions are provided the opportunity to take corrective action to address the status of Fellows who have failed to declare Fellowship status and who have not been certified by the CO with respect to eligibility and progress.

NSF will terminate the Fellowship after the GRFP Institution certifies that the Fellow did not comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, as reported on the Grants Roster Report.

Failure of GRFP Institutions to meet the established reporting deadlines will result in delay of funding.

## FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION

Fellows who have completed their five-year Fellowship Period or have graduated are considered Complete. Completed Fellows are required to submit the Annual Activities Report or to update the most current Annual Activities Report through the GRFP FastLane module within 30 days of Completion.

### Stipend Payment for Terminated and Completed Fellows

Terminated and Completed Fellows are entitled to stipend payments only for the months that the Fellow is on Tenure at the GRFP Institution, provided all Fellowship Terms and Conditions were met during these months. For stipend payment purposes, the last month of Tenure is defined as that month which contained 14 or more days in a calendar month on Tenure at the GRFP Institution.

No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as indicated above where a master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program. There is no continued Fellowship support after the Fellow has completed all requirements for the graduate degree, as determined by the GRFP Institution. Under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF.

## FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS

Starting with the 2011-2012 Fellowship year, GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with support from another federal graduate fellowship, irrespective of the Fellow's status. Federal graduate fellowships are defined as awards that are offered to individuals from the US Government (e.g., Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institutes of Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Agriculture, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration) to support the graduate education of individuals.

### *Stipend*

The annual, 12-month GRFP stipend amount is specified in each year's Program Solicitation. The stipend is pro-rated in monthly increments (e.g., completion of the final academic term of graduate study after nine months of Tenure results in nine-twelfths of the annual stipend). No dependent, research, or travel allowances are provided. Only Fellows on Tenure and compliant with all Fellowship Terms and Conditions are eligible to receive stipend payments. If a Fellow does not conform to the Standards of Conduct of the GRFP Institution and/or the NSF, NSF reserves the right to withhold a Fellow's stipend payments and to terminate a Fellowship.

Fellowship stipends are managed by the GRFP Institution. For disbursement procedures and schedules, Fellows should check with the CO. Regardless of the exact stipend payment schedule, NSF requires that the stipends be reported in no less than 1-month increments. 2 CFR §200.68 (OMB Uniform Guidance) specifically excludes the costs of scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of student aid from indirect cost rate recovery; therefore, GRFP Institutions should ensure that Stipend Payments are not reduced by items that the GRFP Institution would normally consider indirect costs or fringe benefits.

### *Stipend Increase*

Each Fellowship consists of three years of support usable over a five-year Fellowship Period. For each year of support, NSF provides a stipend to the Fellow and a Cost-of-Education allowance to the GRFP Institution. Any stipend increase approved for a Fellowship year will be provided to all Fellows on Tenure that year. Fellows who have graduated or terminated their Fellowship are ineligible to receive any retroactive stipend increase.

### *Stipend Supplementation*

Each Fellow is expected to devote full time to advanced scientific study or work during the Fellowship Period. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable

part of the education and training of many graduate students and such opportunities may arise during a Tenure year, a Fellow on Tenure may choose to undertake a reasonable amount of such activities without NSF approval. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and the gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not service to the institution as such, will govern these activities. Compensation for such activities is determined by the GRFP Institution and is based on the institution's general employment policies. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP Institution about specific policies pertaining to the GRFP Fellowship and paid activities.

Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept, from NSF or other federal and private sources, support for research expenses, such as laboratory supplies, instrumentation usage fees, field-station usage fees, travel expenses, conference/registration fees, workshop expenses, or subscription fees. For Fellows on Tenure, support for living expenses associated with off-site research activities will require approval by the CO. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP Institution about specific policies pertaining to acceptance of any non-federal fellowships.

### *Income Tax*

Stipends may be considered taxable income. Fellows may find it helpful to consult the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Topic 421: Scholarship and Fellowship Grants and Publication 970: Tax Benefits for Education. These are available at <http://www.irs.gov>. Specific questions regarding the taxation of Fellowship funding and personal tax liability should be referred to the IRS. As such, NSF will not respond to questions regarding tax issues.

Fellows are not, in any sense, considered salaried employees of the NSF. NSF will not deduct funds from the stipend or pay any additional amounts, such as Social Security Taxes. NSF also will not issue W-2 or 1099 Forms. GRFP Institutional policies regarding the withholding of taxes from stipend payments vary, and Fellows bear the responsibility of filing and paying any taxes due.

### *Cost-of-Education (COE) Allowance*

The Fellowship provides a fixed COE allowance to the GRFP Institution, not to the Fellow. The COE allowance is specified each year in the Program Solicitation. The actual use of the COE allowance is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution. The COE allowance is without regard to the actual amount of tuition and fees involved. While on Tenure, Fellows are exempt from paying required tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing. For Fellows in good standing on Tenure for six months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive the full COE allowance. For Fellows on Tenure for one to five months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive half of the COE allowance.

### *Tuition and Fees*

#### *Required*

While on Tenure, Fellows are exempt from paying required tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing.

### *Optional/Refundable*

While on Tenure, Fellows may be required to pay any fees or deposits that are refundable in whole or in part, that are optional (e.g., non-required coursework or tuition at other institutions not considered part of the Fellow's principal program of study), or that were incurred prior to the actual start of Fellowship (e.g., an admission application fee).

### Living Expenses

All living expenses are the responsibility of the Fellow.

### Workman's Compensation

NSF Graduate Fellows are covered by applicable institutional policies for graduate students.

### Veterans Benefits

Under Section 178(a) of Title 38, US Code, educational benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs may be received concurrently with Fellowship support. The receipt of educational benefits from the Veterans Administration is allowed by NSF as payment supplementary to Fellowship support.

### Future Employment

The Offer and Acceptance of this Fellowship does not obligate the Fellow, NSF, or the US Government, in any way, with regard to future employment or service of any kind, except as noted here and/or in the annual Program Solicitation.

### Long-Term Fellow and GRFP Institution Responsibilities

The Division of Graduate Education (DGE) conducts evaluations to provide evidence on the impact of the GRFP on individuals' educational decisions, career preparations, aspirations and progress, as well as professional productivity. The data provide information on whether the program policies are effective in achieving the program goals. Additionally, it is highly desirable to have a structured means of tracking Fellows beyond graduation to gauge the extent to which they follow a career path consistent with the intent of the program and to assess the impact the Fellowship has had on their graduate education experience. Accordingly, Fellows may be contacted during and after the completion of this Fellowship for updates on various aspects of their employment history, professional activities and accomplishments, participation in international research collaborations, and other information helpful in evaluating the impact of the Program. Fellows and their GRFP Institutions agree to cooperate in GRFP Evaluations conducted by the NSF and/or contracted evaluators. The [2014 GRFP evaluation](#) is posted on the "Evaluation Reports" Web page for NSF's Education and Human Resources Directorate: [https://www.nsf.gov/ehr/Evaluation\\_Resources.jsp](https://www.nsf.gov/ehr/Evaluation_Resources.jsp).

## FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES

### XSEDE - Allocated Resources

Fellows and Honorable Mention Recipients may request cyberinfrastructure resources through to XSEDE-allocated resources and services. Access to [XSEDE](#) resources is not automatic and requests must be for cyberinfrastructure resources in support of research undertaken toward completion of the graduate program of study. Details on resources available are described on the [XSEDE](#) website. See **APPENDIX V** for additional details.

### Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities

Fellows with disabilities are eligible for facilitation awards through the Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) Program. See **APPENDIX VI** for additional details.

### Career-Life Balance Initiative

GRFP Institutions may submit supplemental funding requests to sustain the research of active NSF Graduate Research Fellows who have been granted an NSF-approved Medical Deferral for dependent-care (family leave) situations (see [NSF 13-099](#)). This gender neutral supplemental funding opportunity is in addition to the limited paid leave option for Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral. Retroactive requests are not approved.

### GRFP Professional Development Opportunities

Over the course of the five-year Fellowship Period, Fellows are encouraged to take advantage of additional opportunities to enhance their professional development offered through the GRFP; i.e., the [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide \(GROW\)](#) initiative and the [Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#). Fellows are also encouraged to join the *NSF GRFP Fellows and Alumni Network* on LinkedIn to connect with members of the GRFP community and to receive and exchange career and professional development information.

The [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide \(GROW\)](#) initiative (<https://www.nsf.gov/grow>) provides Fellows with opportunities to engage in international collaborations with investigators in partner countries around the world. Through [GROW](#), Fellows benefit from partnerships developed by NSF with counterpart funding organizations in other countries (see <https://www.nsf.gov/grow> for a current list of countries and partner organizations). [GROW](#) offers funding for international stays of 2-12 months, with the duration varying by country and partner organization. Details for each partner organization, including eligible institutions and organizations, levels of in-country support, and any restrictions on the duration of stays, are available through links to partner websites at <https://www.nsf.gov/grow>.

The [Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#) provides professional development to Fellows through internships developed in partnership with federal agencies (see <https://www.nsf.gov/grip> for a current list of partner agencies). Through [GRIP](#), Fellows participate in mission-related, collaborative research under the guidance of host research mentors at federal facilities and national laboratories.

## INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

GRFP Institutions support and advise Fellows throughout their Fellowship Period, receive NSF awards (grants) to financially support Fellows on Tenure, and report to the NSF on Fellow and award activities. The primary GRFP Institution representatives are the Principal Investigator (PI), Coordinating Official (CO), and Financial Official (FO). The Fellows' Academic/Research Advisors are also integral to ensuring Fellows are making satisfactory progress toward degree completion. A sample award letter to a GRFP Institution is shown in **APPENDIX VII**.

Each institution, in accepting the funds, also certifies that the Fellows are eligible to receive the Fellowship under the Terms and Conditions specified in the Guide. The institution has full responsibility for the conduct of the project or activity supported under an NSF grant and for the results achieved.

### GRFP Institution Reporting Requirements

#### *Grants Roster Report*

GRFP Institutions are required to submit the Grants Roster Report for the upcoming Fellowship year. The Grants Roster Report lists the Fellowship status of all new and continuing Fellows at the institution. The Coordinating Official submits the Grants Roster Report in the GRFP FastLane module. Through submission of the Grants Roster Report, institutions formally acknowledge the status of all Fellows with respect to reporting requirements and rating of progress, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award.

GRFP Institutions are provided an opportunity for reconsideration to address the status of Fellows who have failed to declare Fellowship status and who have not been certified by the CO with respect to eligibility and progress by the deadlines. Such Fellows will be allowed to continue their Fellowships only through the remainder of the current Fellowship year. All remaining years during the Fellowship Period will be canceled. The Fellowships of Fellows remaining in Undeclared Fellowship Status on the Grants Roster Report are terminated at the end of the current Fellowship year.

#### *Program Expense Report*

GRFP Institutions are required to submit the Program Expense Report for the previous Fellowship year. GRFP will not issue an additional award to GRFP Institutions with unsubmitted Program Expense Report(s). Only the designated GRFP Financial Official can submit the report in the GRFP FastLane module. By submitting the GRFP Program Expense Report, institutions verify and certify that the Program Expense Report is in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award.

#### *Completion Report*

GRFP Institutions are required to submit the GRFP Completion Report annually. The Completion Report allows GRFP Institutions to certify the current status of all GRFP Fellows at the institution. The current status will identify a Fellow as: In Progress, Graduated, Transferred, or Withdrawn. For Fellows who have graduated, the graduation date is a required reporting element.



A description of the role of each institutional representative is included below:

### Sponsored Project Officer (SPO)

Each institution designates one individual from the research administration as the Sponsored Project Officer (SPO). The SPO is charged with the initial FastLane access of a new GRFP Institution and with entering required information about institutional GRFP Officials (including PI, CO, and FO). At an established GRFP Institution, the SPO is responsible for keeping the information updated about institutional GRFP Officials (including PI, CO, and FO) in the GRFP FastLane Module.

### Principal Investigator (PI)

Each GRFP Institution is required to designate a Principal Investigator (PI) for the GRFP award. The designated PI serves as the PI for all Fellows at the GRFP Institution. It is strongly recommended that the dean of the graduate school (or equivalent) serve in this capacity. In addition to being able to submit requests for supplemental funding, such as [Career-Life Balance](#) and FASED, advantages also include direct access to regular award functions on FastLane and Research.gov, such as requests for No-Cost Extensions (NCE) to the award for the GRFP Institution. The PI also may serve as the CO or as an alternate CO. In coordination with the CO and FO, the PI is responsible for ensuring that the GRFP Grants Roster Report, the Program Expense Report, and the Completion Report are submitted by the deadlines.

PI changes are handled through the standard NSF FastLane notification and request process – not via the GRFP FastLane Module. For new GRFP Institutions or those without an active GRFP award, please contact [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) for instructions. The following information will be required: PI's name, NSF Biosketch, and Current and Pending Support information.

### Coordinating Official(s) (CO)

The CO is designated by the GRFP Institution to serve as the primary and day-to-day point of contact for Fellows and the Program Office. Typically, the CO is located in the graduate school or other academic office that oversees fellowships and/or graduate student financial support. The CO is paired with a representative from the Sponsored Projects Office (or equivalent organization), the Financial Official (FO), who is responsible for the financial reporting requirements.

CO appointments and changes are handled through the standard NSF FastLane account management process – not via the GRFP FastLane Module. To appoint a CO, the Sponsored Project Officer at the GRFP Institution modifies the NSF FastLane User Profile of the prospective CO to include GRFP Coordinating Official privileges. An Alternate CO is a secondary or additional CO. Once the NSF FastLane User Profile is updated, the CO may access the GRFP FastLane Module.

The CO performs the following duties:

1. Advises Fellows on GRFP policies, procedures, Terms and Conditions, etc.;
2. Interprets GRFP policies in the context of the institutional procedures (e.g., stipend payment schedules, enrollment requirements, etc.);



3. Reviews Fellow Change Requests in the GRFP FastLane Module and provides GRFP Institution approval/disapproval of such requests, as appropriate;
4. Reviews information on New and Continuing Fellows for the GRFP Institution during the New Fellowship Announcement and Fellowship Status Declaration Periods each spring;
5. Confirms the accuracy of the Fellows listed and their status for the next Fellowship year;
6. Certifies the progress of continuing Fellows;
7. Submits the GRFP Grants Roster Report and the Completion Report; and
8. Participates in the preparation and submission of the GRFP Program Expense Report in coordination with the PI and FO.

### Financial Official (FO)

The FO is the GRFP institutional representative from the Sponsored Projects Office (or equivalent organization) responsible for financial oversight of NSF awards. In coordination with the PI and CO, the FO is responsible for ensuring that the quarterly Federal Financial Reports (FFR) and the GRFP Program Expense Report (due October 1 in the NSF GRFP FastLane Module) are submitted by the established deadlines. The FO, or other Sponsored Projects Official, also is responsible for assisting the PI/CO with NSF FastLane requests for supplemental funding, and Research.gov notifications/ requests for No-Cost Extensions (NCE), etc.

The FO, or other Sponsored Projects Official should have the authority to manage award functions in NSF FastLane and [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). To appoint an FO, the Sponsored Project Officer at the GRFP Institution modifies the NSF FastLane User Profile of the prospective FO to include GRFP Financial Official privileges. Once the NSF FastLane User Profile is updated, the FO may access the GRFP FastLane Module.

### Academic/Research Advisor

In coordination with the PI and CO, Fellows' Academic/Research Advisors are responsible for the following:

1. Monitoring Fellows' degree progress;
2. Reviewing Fellows' Annual Activities Reports and signing the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form (**APPENDIX III**) verifying Fellows' satisfactory progress by May 1 each year; and
3. Recommending or approving, as appropriate, Fellows' participation in activities that require the Advisors' support, such as the [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide Initiative \(GROW\)](#) or [Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#).

Academic/Research advisors are also strongly encouraged to participate in the judicious planning of the Fellowship resources, such as Tenure versus Reserve years.

## Fellowship Awards

Funds for all Fellows attending a GRFP Institution are made available through issuance of a continuing award to the GRFP Institution. If required, funds thereafter are provided by awards, amendments, and supplements. The following documents also are incorporated into each award by reference:

- GRFP Program Solicitation;
- Research Terms and Conditions and associated NSF Agency Specific Requirements; and
- NSF Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials

Immediately following Fellow Declaration of Fellowship Status, the GRFP FastLane Module will update the list of Fellows (the Grants Roster Report) at the GRFP Institution. The institution is required to submit the Grants Roster Report. The new, annual obligation per Fellow will be based on the stipend and COE allowance levels specified in the current Program Solicitation and listed in the GRFP FastLane Module.

## AWARD MANAGEMENT

GRFP funding generally is provided incrementally on an annual basis upon fulfillment of institutional reporting requirements. Each year, the surplus/deficit funding is taken into account in determining the amount of the next award or amendment to an existing award. Therefore, in the event of surplus funds remaining at the time of the award expiration, a No-Cost Extension (NCE) request must be submitted electronically to drawdown against the award and/or any amendments or supplements to the original award. In the event that there are no active Fellows at the time of award expiration, it is prudent to still submit a NCE request because additional Fellows may affiliate with the GRFP Institution in the near future. Funds on expiring awards and/or award amendments or supplements that are not fully expended are forfeited by the GRFP Institution in the absence of a NCE. Due to the timing of the GRFP awards with respect to Fiscal Years, NSF cannot de-obligate excess award funds for GRFP Institutions. When there are active Fellows, the amount of the forfeited funds becomes the responsibility of the GRFP Institution and will not be replaced by the Foundation. Forfeited funds will be subtracted from fellowship funding provided in the next new award.

### Pre-Award Costs

Once an award is made, the effective date cannot be changed; however, awardees have the authority to incur pre-award costs as outlined in [AAG](#) Chapter V.A.2.b.

- (i) Grantees may incur allowable pre-award costs within the 90-day period immediately preceding the effective date of the grant providing:
  - a. the approval of pre-award spending is made and documented in accordance with the grantee's procedures; and
  - b. the advanced funding is necessary for the effective and economical conduct of the project.
- (ii) Pre-award expenditures are made at the grantee's risk. Grantee authority to approve pre-award costs does not impose an obligation on NSF: (1) in the absence of appropriations; (2) if an award is not subsequently made; or (3) if an award is made for a lesser amount than the grantee anticipated.
- (iii) Requests for pre-award costs for periods exceeding 90 days must be submitted electronically via use of the Notification and Request module in [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). Pre-award expenditures prior to funding of an increment within a continuing grant are not subject to this limitation or approval requirement, but are subject to paragraph (ii) above.

## ACM\$

On April 2013 NSF released and implemented the Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$) to all NSF awardee organizations. ACM\$ is a new approach to award payments and post-award financial processes. ACM\$ is available via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov).

NSF financially closes awards three months after the award expiration date and the award is removed from the Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$). Once an expired award is removed from ACM\$, the award is not available for payment processing. Expired awards with funds available will not be able to complete a cash request.

NSF funds may not be expended subsequent to the expiration date of the grant except to liquidate valid commitments that were made on or before the expiration date. The expiration date may be changed as a result of approval of a request for a No-Cost Extension.

## No-Cost Extension

### *Grantee Approved No-Cost Extension*

A Grantee Approved No-Cost Extension notification does not require NSF approval and is approved at the institution level. However, the notification must be submitted and approved at least 10 days prior to the expiration date via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov), or it will require NSF approval. This one-time extension may not be exercised merely for the purpose of using the unliquidated balances. Grantees are not authorized to extend an award that contains a zero balance.

### *NSF-Approved No-Cost Extension*

(a) If additional time beyond the extension provided by the grantee is required and exceptional circumstances warrant, a formal request must be submitted to NSF via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). The request must be submitted to NSF at least 45 days prior to the expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for

their use. As indicated above, that unobligated funds may remain at the expiration of the grant is not in itself sufficient justification for an extension. The plan must adhere to the previously approved objectives of the project. All requests for NSF-approved extensions must be submitted via the [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov) system. Grantees are not authorized to extend an award that contains a zero balance. NSF Program Officers are authorized to approve the first No-Cost extension request on current active awards.

(b) The first No-Cost Extension request will be subject to the approval of the cognizant Program Officer. The Authorized Organizational Representative and the PI will be electronically notified of the disposition of this request by the cognizant NSF Program Officer. The second No-Cost Extension will be subject to the approval of an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer, and, if approved, will be in the form of an amendment to the grant specifying a new expiration date. Grantees are cautioned not to make new commitments or incur new expenditures after the expiration date in anticipation of a No-Cost Extension.

## APPENDIX I: SAMPLE FELLOWSHIP OFFER LETTER

APPLICANT NAME

March XX, 2016

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE ZIP

COUNTRY

Application Number: APPLICANT ID

Dear APPLICANT:

I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive a 2016 National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Fellowship. Your selection was based on your demonstrated potential to contribute to strengthening the vitality of the US science and engineering enterprise. **Please read carefully and follow the instructions** in the next pages for GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions, your responsibilities, and how to formally accept your Fellowship, declare Fellowship status, and view your rating sheets.

The stipend for 2016-17 is \$34,000 per twelve-month Fellowship year, given in increments of \$2,833 per month. The GRFP Fellowship Period is five years, or less if you graduate and complete the Fellowship before the five-year period ends. Financial support is provided for a maximum of three years. The financial support may be used in any three, 12-month units, starting in summer (June 1) or fall (September 1) over the five-year period that begins in 2016 (your award year). Your institution will receive a \$12,000 Cost-of-Education Allowance in lieu of all required tuition and fees for each of the three years you choose to utilize the Fellowship funding.

We encourage you to take advantage of professional development opportunities offered through the GRFP; for example, the [Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide](https://www.nsf.gov/grow) (<https://www.nsf.gov/grow>) and the [Graduate Research Internship Program](https://www.nsf.gov/grip) (<https://www.nsf.gov/grip>). E-mail notifications and “Dear Colleague Letters” on the <https://www.nsf.gov> web site are the typical vehicle for communications of this nature.

Your selection as an NSF Graduate Fellowship awardee is a significant accomplishment. We wish you success in your graduate studies in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or in STEM education, and continued success in achieving your career aspirations. We look forward to learning about your achievements and contributions during your graduate study and beyond.

Sincerely,

Division Director  
Division of Graduate Education

Dear Awardee,

Please read all of the information below and complete the required tasks before the deadline of May 1 (11:59 PM ET). On behalf of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program, we extend a warm welcome to the NSF community.

Sincerely,

GRFP Program Directors

- You must formally accept the award and agree to the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship by May 1, 2016 (11:59 PM ET). Visit the NSF GRFP FastLane website (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>) to review the eligibility requirements, certifications, Terms and Conditions and to electronically accept or decline this Fellowship. Please note: failure to meet the May 1 deadline to Accept/Decline the Offer will result in revocation of the Fellowship offer.
- The “Administrative Guide” link on the [NSF GRFP FastLane](#) website opens the NSF GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows & Coordinating Officials (Guide). This document includes the Terms and Conditions that apply to your Fellowship, in addition to the eligibility requirements and Certifications. You will need to complete the Certifications section on the GRFP FastLane website (see below). These are the same certifications you have already attested to in the application. Failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship.
- Acceptance of the Fellowship constitutes a commitment to pursue a research-based graduate degree in an eligible science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or in a STEM education field, as described in the [Program Solicitation](#). Acceptance of a Fellowship award is an explicit acceptance of this commitment and assurance that you will be duly enrolled in a graduate degree program consistent with the field of study proposed in your application by the beginning of fall 2016.
- All Fellows from the date of Acceptance through Completion or Termination of the Fellowship must be affiliated with a graduate degree-granting institution accredited in, and having a campus located in, the United States, its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico that grants degrees in a GRFP-supported field.
- Familiarize yourself with the NSF GRFP FastLane website (accessed by logging in at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>), as most GRFP actions and requests are handled through this site. The Guide contains the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and GRFP Institutions. Please review it before contacting your Coordinating Official (CO) or the Program Office.
- You should contact the GRFP Coordinating Official at your intended institution of graduate study to inform her/him that you have accepted an NSF GRFP Fellowship. The Institution Directory is located at <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>. The CO will assist you in effectively

managing your Fellowship and should be your first point of contact in the event the Guide does not answer your questions.

- Following acceptance of the Fellowship you will need to declare your Fellowship status by **May 1, 2016**. Fellowship status is explained in the Guide. The Fellowship Status Declaration period is open and will close **May 1, 2016 11:59 PM ET** (Note: The deadlines for accepting the Fellowship and declaring your Fellowship status are the same, therefore plan accordingly). Fellows are required to declare Fellowship status (Tenure or Reserve) for each Fellowship year within the five-year GRFP Fellowship Period, unless they complete the graduate degree before the five-year GRFP Fellowship Period ends. Fellows who have completed three years of funding (Tenure) must declare Reserve Status for any years remaining in the five-year period. You will need to declare your Fellowship status each year by May 1 of that year.
- Fellows are expected to make satisfactory academic progress towards completion of their graduate degrees, as defined and certified by the Fellow's GRFP Institution. Upon completion of each year of your Fellowship, you are required to submit an Annual Activities Report that documents your activities, accomplishments, progress, and productivity. All Fellows are required to submit the Annual Activities Report by May 1, via the GRFP FastLane Module. Before May 1 of each year, your Annual Activities Report must be reviewed and approved by your Academic/Research Advisor, who signs the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form. This Form is submitted as part of your Annual Activities Report. The Coordinating Official of the GRFP Institution will then certify your eligibility and satisfactory progress, required for Fellowship continuance.
- In response to the America Competes Act, all Fellows are required to receive appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research. Please check with the campus CO about the Responsible Conduct of Research training requirement at your (intended) institution.
- Fellows are responsible for obtaining appropriate permissions and complying with all institutional policies concerning human subjects, hazardous materials, vertebrate animals, or endangered species and copyright and intellectual property.
- All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP Support and provide a disclaimer (see Guide).
- Fellows are eligible to apply for supercomputing time through the NSF-supported [Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment \(XSEDE\)](#) and for Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED). These opportunities are described in the Guide.
- GRFP Institutions may submit [Career-Life Balance \(CLB\)](#) supplemental funding requests ([NSF 13-099](#)) to sustain the research of active NSF Graduate Research Fellows who have been granted an NSF-approved Medical Deferral for dependent-care (family leave) situations.

- Please ensure that the following e-mail address, and other e-mail addresses from @nsf.gov, are not subject to a spam filter: [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov). The GRFP Office will send out notices and updates using this address. Keep your contact information and e-mail addresses current, as NSF will use your e-mail address to communicate with you on a regular basis about related opportunities (e.g., [GROW](#) and [GRIP](#)).
- Your name is included in the Awardee List. The NSF publishes lists of Fellowship and Honorable Mention recipients on the GRFP website at <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp> in April 2016.
- You may consider becoming a member of the [GRFP Fellows & Alumni Network on LinkedIn](#).

Applications were reviewed according to the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. To view your application reviews, please navigate to the NSF GRFP FastLane website and login using your FastLane GRFP login credentials.

- Navigate to <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>.
- Login with your FastLane GRFP Username and Password.
- The “View/Print Application Reviews” link will be available in your Fellows Optional Task List on the home page.
- To view the Review Ratings sheets in a printable Adobe PDF version, click the “View PDF” icon.

**It is recommended that you print or save a copy of the reviews PDF for your records now, as these will not be available after July 15, 2016.**

If you have problems accessing your reviews, please send an e-mail to [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).

Any other questions pertaining to the reviews should be directed to [info@nsfgrfp.org](mailto:info@nsfgrfp.org).

### *Certifications by Fellow*

You must read and agree to all the certifications and Terms and Conditions as indicated in the information below before your award acceptance can be submitted.

There are five certifications which must be made before the National Science Foundation can authorize funds for a Fellowship award. These concern: 1) controlled substances; 2) delinquency on federal debt; 3) debarment and suspension; 4) originality of the application; and 5) eligibility criteria.

### **I certify that:**

1. I will not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in the conduct of any activity with this Fellowship award.



2. I am not delinquent on repayment of any federal debt.
3. To the best of my knowledge and belief,
  - (a) I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency;
  - (b) I have not within a three-year period preceding my application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against me for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
  - (c) I am not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (3) (b) of this certification;
  - (d) I have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transactions (federal, state or local) terminated for cause or default.
4. I certify that the two statements (Personal, Relevant Background and Future Goals Statement, and Graduate Research Plan Statement) in my application are my own original work.
5. I have read the NSF GRFP eligibility criteria and I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am eligible for this Fellowship. [See Section IV of the [Program Solicitation](#) for eligibility criteria (Fellows who are, or who will, enroll in a graduate degree program while on a leave of absence from a professional degree program or professional degree-graduate degree joint program are ineligible for a Graduate Research Fellowship)].

By electronically signing the request, I am certifying that (a) the statements made herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge; (b) I have not previously accepted an NSF Graduate Research or Predoctoral Fellowship; and (c) I have read and agree to comply with NSF GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions if the Fellowship offer is accepted. I understand that if I accept the offer, failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship.

Willful provision of false information in this request and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001).

## APPENDIX II: GRF PROGRAM SOLICITATION EXERPTS

Excerpts from the current [Program Solicitation \(NSF 16-588\)](#) are included here for convenience only. Individuals should refer to the current Solicitation and/or contact the Program Office by e-mail to fully address specific situations.

### Citizenship

Applicants [and subsequent Fellows] must be US citizens or nationals, or permanent resident aliens of the U.S. by the application deadline. The term "national" designates a native resident of a commonwealth or territory of the United States, such as American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, or the Northern Mariana Islands. It does not refer to a citizen of another country who has applied for U.S. citizenship.

### GRFP Fields of Study

Over the next few pages are the Primary (bolded, capitalized headings) and sub (listings under each heading) Fields of Study. See the [Program Solicitation](#) or contact the Program Office for more information.

## ***CHEMISTRY***

Chemical Catalysis  
Chemical Measurement and Imaging  
Chemical Structure, Dynamics, and Mechanism  
Chemical Synthesis  
Chemical Theory, Models and Computational Methods  
Chemistry of Life Processes  
Environmental Chemical Systems  
Macromolecular, Supramolecular, and  
Nanochemistry  
Sustainable Chemistry  
Chemistry, other (specify)

## ***COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING (CISE)***

Algorithms and Theoretical Foundations  
Bioinformatics and other Informatics  
Communication and Information Theory  
Computational Science and Engineering  
Computer Architecture  
Computer Networks  
Computer Security and Privacy  
Computer Systems and Embedded Systems  
Data Mining and Information Retrieval  
Databases Formal Methods, Verification, and  
Programming Languages  
Graphics and Visualization  
Human Computer Interaction  
Machine Learning  
Natural Language Processing  
Robotics and Computer Vision  
Software Engineering  
CISE, other (specify)

## ***ENGINEERING***

Aeronautical and Aerospace Engineering  
Bioengineering  
Biomedical Engineering  
Chemical Engineering  
Civil Engineering  
Computer Engineering  
Electrical and Electronic Engineering  
Energy Engineering  
Environmental Engineering  
Industrial Engineering & Operations Research  
Materials Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering  
Nuclear Engineering  
Ocean Engineering  
Optical Engineering  
Polymer Engineering  
Systems Engineering  
Engineering, other (specify)

## ***GEOSCIENCES***

Aeronomy  
Atmospheric Chemistry Biogeochemistry  
Biological Oceanography  
Chemical Oceanography  
Climate and Large-Scale Atmospheric Dynamics  
Geobiology  
Geochemistry  
Geodynamics  
Geomorphology  
Geophysics  
Glaciology  
Hydrology  
Magnetospheric Physics  
Marine Biology  
Marine Geology and Geophysics  
Paleoclimate  
Paleontology and Paleobiology  
Petrology  
Physical and Dynamic Meteorology  
Physical Oceanography  
Sedimentary Geology  
Solar Physics  
Tectonics  
Geosciences, other (specify)

## ***LIFE SCIENCES***

Biochemistry  
Bioinformatics and Computational Biology  
Biophysics  
Cell Biology  
Developmental Biology  
Ecology  
Environmental Biology  
Evolutionary Biology  
Genetics  
Genomics  
Microbial Biology  
Neurosciences  
Organismal Biology  
Physiology  
Proteomics  
Structural Biology  
Systematics and Biodiversity  
Systems and Molecular Biology  
Life Sciences, other (specify)

## ***MATERIALS RESEARCH***

Biomaterials  
Ceramics  
Chemistry of Materials  
Electronic Materials  
Materials Theory

Metallic Materials  
Photonic Materials  
Physics of Materials  
Polymers  
Materials Research, other (specify)

### ***MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES***

Algebra, Number Theory, and Combinatorics  
Analysis  
Applied Mathematics  
Biostatistics  
Computational and Data-enabled Science  
Computational Mathematics  
Computational Statistics  
Geometric Analysis  
Logic or Foundations of Mathematics  
Mathematical Biology  
Probability  
Statistics  
Topology  
Mathematics, other (specify)

### ***PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY***

Astronomy and Astrophysics  
Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics  
Condensed Matter Physics  
Nuclear Physics  
Particle Physics  
Physics of Living Systems  
Plasma Physics  
Solid State Physics  
Theoretical Physics  
Physics, other (specify)

### ***PSYCHOLOGY***

Cognitive Neuroscience  
Cognitive Psychology  
Comparative Psychology

Computational Psychology  
Developmental Psychology  
Industrial/Organizational  
Neuropsychology  
Perception and Psychophysics  
Personality and Individual Differences  
Physiological Psychology  
Psycholinguistics  
Quantitative Psychology  
Social Psychology  
Social/Affective Neuroscience  
Psychology, other (specify)

### ***SOCIAL SCIENCES***

Archaeology  
Biological Anthropology Communications  
Cultural Anthropology  
Decision Making and Risk Analysis  
Economics (except Business Administration)  
Geography  
History and Philosophy of Science  
International Relations  
Law and Social Science Linguistic Anthropology  
Linguistics  
Medical Anthropology  
Political Science  
Public Policy  
Science Policy  
Sociology (except Social Work)  
Urban and Regional Planning  
Social Sciences, other (specify)

### ***STEM EDUCATION AND LEARNING RESEARCH***

Engineering Education  
Mathematics Education  
Science Education  
Technology Education  
STEM Education and Learning Research, other (specify)

## Ineligible Categories and Programs of Study

An individual's proposed research and graduate study must both be in science or engineering. Fellows must enroll in a graduate degree program consistent with the relevant field of study proposed in their application and undertake a course of study leading to a research-based Master's or PhD.

The following programs, areas of graduate study and research are ineligible.

- Individuals are not eligible to apply if they will be enrolled in a practice-oriented professional degree program such as medical, dental, law, and public health at any time during the fellowship. Examples of typically ineligible degree programs include MBA, MPH, MSW, JD, MD, and DDS. Joint or combined professional degree-science programs (e.g., MD/PhD or JD/PhD) and dual professional degree-science programs are also not eligible. Applicants who will be enrolled in a graduate degree program while on a leave of absence from a professional degree program or professional degree/graduate degree joint program are not eligible for a Graduate Research Fellowship.
- Individuals are not eligible to apply if they will be enrolled in an area of graduate study focused on clinical practice, for example, counseling, social work, as well as patient-oriented research, epidemiological and medical behavioral studies, outcomes research and health services research. Ineligible clinical studies include investigations to provide evidence leading to a scientific basis for consideration of a change in health policy or standard of care, and includes pharmacologic, non-pharmacologic, and behavioral interventions for disease prevention, prophylaxis, diagnosis, or therapy. Graduate study focused on community and other population-based medical intervention trials are also ineligible.
- Individuals are not eligible to apply if they will conduct biomedical research for which the goals are directly health-related, such as etiology, diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in humans and other animals. Research activities using animal models of disease, for developing or testing of drugs or other procedures for treatment of disease, and statistical modeling for which the purpose is diagnosis or epidemiology also are not eligible for support. There are areas of bioengineering research directed at medical use that are eligible. These include research projects in bioengineering to aid persons with disabilities, or to diagnose or treat human disease, provided they apply engineering principles to problems in medicine while primarily advancing engineering knowledge. Applicants planning to study and conduct research in these areas of bioengineering should select biomedical engineering as the field of study.

## APPENDIX III: ACADEMIC/RESEARCH ADVISOR CONFIRMATION FORM

Fellow Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### For the Fellow:

In accordance with the policy of the Graduate Research Fellowship Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials, a Fellow's Academic/Research Advisor is responsible for annually reviewing the Fellow's Annual Activities Report and verifying the Fellow's eligibility and degree progress.

The Faculty/Advisor form shown below must be signed by your Academic/Research Advisor and uploaded to your Activities Report by May 1 of each year. You must complete this requirement in order to comply with the terms of your NSF Graduate Fellowship. Failure to meet the established GRFP deadlines will result in termination of the Fellowship.

Provide a copy of your Annual Activity Report and a copy of this sheet to your Academic/Research Advisor for his/her signature. Once you obtain the signature, upload to your activities report no later than May 1.

### For the Academic/Research Advisor:

In accordance with the policy of the Graduate Research Fellowship Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials, a Fellow's Academic/Research Advisor is responsible for annually reviewing the Fellow's Annual Activities Report and verifying the Fellow's eligibility and degree progress. After your review of the Fellow's Annual Activity Report, please verify the following by your signature:

I am the primary academic advisor for \_\_\_\_\_ . I confirm that:

- I have reviewed the Fellow's Activity Report and discussed it with the Fellow.
- This Fellow is making satisfactory academic progress towards the degree and remains eligible for active GRFP Fellowship status.

Academic/Research Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX IV: CERTIFICATIONS BY FELLOW

The system shall display the following certifications on the E-Signature Page:

There are four certifications which must be made by all Fellows, and a fifth certification that applies to 2012 GRFP Fellows and beyond, before the National Science Foundation can authorize funds for a Fellowship award. These concern: 1) controlled substances; 2) delinquency on federal debt; 3) debarment and suspension; 4) originality of the application; and 5) eligibility criteria.

I certify that:

1. I will not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in the conduct of any activity with this Fellowship award.
2. I am not delinquent on repayment of any federal debt.
3. To the best of my knowledge and belief,
  - (a) I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency;
  - (b) I have not within a three-year period preceding my application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against me for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
  - (c) I am not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (3) (b) of this certification;
  - (d) I have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transactions (federal, state or local) terminated for cause or default.
4. I certify that the two statements (Personal, Relevant Background and Future Goals Statement, and Graduate Research Plan Statement) in my application are my own original work.

One additional certification applies to 2012 GRFP Fellows and beyond:

5. I have read the NSF GRFP eligibility criteria and I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am eligible for this Fellowship. [See Section IV of the Program Solicitation for eligibility criteria. (Fellows who are, or who will, enroll in a graduate degree program while on a leave of absence from a professional degree program or professional degree-graduate degree joint program are ineligible for a Graduate Research Fellowship)].

By electronically signing the request, I am certifying that (a) the statements made herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge; (b) I have not previously accepted an NSF Graduate Research or Predoctoral Fellowship; and (c) I have read and agree to comply with NSF GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions if the Fellowship offer is accepted. I understand that if I accept the offer, failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship.

Willful provision of false information in this request and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001).

## APPENDIX V: XSEDE – ALLOCATED RESOURCES

Access to [XSEDE](#) resources and services may be provided upon review of requests for cyberinfrastructure resources in support of research undertaken toward completion of the graduate program of study that occurs within the 5-year period of the fellowship award. Details of resources available are described at <https://www.xsede.org>. Fellowship awardees and Honorable Mention recipients must request for an XSEDE allocation using the [XSEDE](#) Allocation Request System called via the [XSEDE User Portal](#). Users set up an account and apply for an allocation. For further information on how to request an allocation, training, and other resources available, visit the [XSEDE User Portal help](#).

## APPENDIX VI: FACILITATION AWARDS FOR SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS WITH DISABILITIES (FASED)

As part of its effort to promote full utilization of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians, and engineers, and to develop scientific and technical talent, the Foundation has the following goals:

- to reduce or remove barriers to participation in research and training by physically disabled individuals by providing special equipment and assistance under awards made by NSF; and
- to encourage disabled individuals to pursue careers in science and engineering by stimulating the development and demonstration of special equipment that facilitates their work performance.

Fellows with disabilities are eligible for facilitation awards through the [Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities \(FASED\)](#) program (GPG Chapter II.D.4.). The GRFP Program Officers will make decisions regarding what constitutes appropriate support on a case-by-case basis. The specific nature, purpose, and need for equipment or assistance should be described in sufficient detail in the proposal to permit evaluation by knowledgeable reviewers.

Funds may be requested to purchase special equipment, modify equipment or provide services required specifically for the work to be undertaken. Requests for funds for equipment or assistance that compensate in a general way for the disabling condition are not permitted. For example, funds may be requested to provide: prosthetic devices to manipulate a particular apparatus; equipment to convert sound to visual signals, or vice versa, for a particular experiment; access to a special site or to a mode of transportation (except as defined below); a reader or interpreter with special technical competence



related to the project; or other special-purpose equipment or assistance needed to conduct a particular project. Items, however, such as standard wheel chairs, prosthetics, hearing aids, TDD/text-phones, or general readers for the blind would not be supported because the need for them is not specific to the proposed project. Similarly, ramps, elevators, or other structural modifications of research facilities are not eligible for direct support under this program.

Requests are made as a supplemental funding request to the NSF award to the GRFP Institution.

The PI is responsible for submitting the NSF proposal for a supplemental funding request to the existing GRFP Institutional Award. Supplemental requests should be submitted electronically by using the “Supplemental Funding Request” function in FastLane and should include a brief description of the request, a budget, and a budget justification.

Requests must be submitted at least two months before funds are needed. Funding decisions will be made on the basis of the justification and availability of program funds, with any resultant funding provided through a formal amendment of the existing GRFP Institution Award.

### **Reporting**

Fellows are required to address how the [FASED](#) award facilitated their research in their Annual Activities Reports (i.e., include a paragraph that begins with “FASED:” under the “Fellowship Summary” section in the Activities Report).

## APPENDIX VII: SAMPLE AWARD LETTER TO GRFP INSTITUTION

Award Date: March 31, 2016  
Award No. DGE-XXXXXXX  
Proposal No. DGE-XXXXXXX

Dr. XXXX  
University XXXXXXX  
President  
Address:

Dear Dr. XXXX:

The National Science Foundation hereby awards \$XX,000 to University XXXX for support of the project described below.

This project, under the direction of XXX XXX, is entitled:

"Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)."

This award starts April 1, 2016 and ends on March 31, 2021.

This grant is awarded pursuant to the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1861-75) and is subject to Research Terms and Conditions (RTC, dated XXXX) and the NSF RTC Agency-Specific Requirements (dated XXXX) are available at <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>.

The amount of this award is based on 12 months of tenure at \$34,000 (taxable) per Fellow as a maximum annual stipend and \$12,000 per Fellow as a Cost-of-Education institutional allowance.

The provisions of the "Program Solicitation" ([NSF 16-588](#)) and "Graduate Research Fellowship Program Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials" ([NSF 16-104](#)) available at [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=nsf16588](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf16588) and [https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=nsf16104](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf16104) respectively, are applicable to this grant.

Available grant balances may be used for any GRFP Fellow who is in compliance with applicable program guidelines. Thus, funds from prior year grants may be used to support any NSF Graduate Research Fellow duly enrolled at a GRFP Institution in an eligible advanced degree program in a field supported by NSF (see the "Program Solicitation" and "Guide" for guidance).

Each institution, in accepting the funds, also certifies that the Fellows are eligible to receive the Fellowship under these Terms and Conditions. The institution has full responsibility for the conduct of the project or activity supported under an NSF grant and for the results achieved.

Funds from this award and/or any amendments to this award are expected to be fully expended in support of the GRFP Fellows prior to expending funds from any newly issued GRFP award.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the academic progress of the Fellow(s) affiliated with the GRFP Institution, it is NSF's intent to provide additional funds for four additional years in amounts to be determined at a later date.

Sincerely,

Grants and Agreements Officer