



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

**NSF 20-086**

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program (Noyce)

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### ELIGIBILITY AND SUPPORT

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1. What STEM majors or degrees are eligible for Noyce scholarship or stipend support?
2. Can cost of attendance cover non-scholarship expenses such as licensure exams or internship placement fees?
3. Can undergraduate scholarship recipients receive more than 2 years of cost of attendance support?
4. Are scholarships or stipends for Scholars and Fellows taxable?

### REPAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP OR FELLOWSHIP

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5. Can a scholarship, stipend, or fellowship recipient obtain credit for the teaching commitment in alternative settings, for example, as a long-term substitute, teaching assistant, or paraprofessional at the K-12 level or as an instructor or teaching assistant at the post-secondary level?
6. Under what circumstances can a hardship be granted, such that a Noyce scholarship or fellowship is forgiven?
7. In the absence of a hardship, as described above, how should scholarship, stipend, or fellowship repayments be returned when the recipient fails to complete the required teaching service commitment?

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10. How many schools must be categorized as high-need in a school district for it to serve as an appropriate placement to complete the Noyce teaching requirement?

## GENERAL INQUIRIES

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12. What is an acceptable national assessment for selecting Master Teaching Fellowship recipients?
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17. Would a proposal focused on studying resilience of STEM teachers be suitable for a Track 4 submission?

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## ELIGIBILITY AND SUPPORT

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- 1. What STEM majors or degrees are eligible for Noyce scholarship or stipend support?**

Noyce identifies STEM eligible majors and degrees based on the associated major's Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code. The CIP code is used by state agencies, national associations, academic institutions, and government agencies for collecting, reporting, and analyzing instructional program data. Additional details on CIP codes can be found at <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode>.

STEM majors or degrees that are typically eligible for Noyce cost of attendance support include disciplines in biology (CIP code 26), chemistry (CIP code 40.05), computer science (CIP code 11), engineering (CIP code 14), geosciences (CIP code 40.06), mathematics (CIP code 27), physics (CIP code 40.08), or fields related to these disciplines.

Noyce does not provide scholarship or stipend support to majors in agriculture (CIP code 01), business (CIP code 52), nursing (CIP code 51.38-39), allied health (CIP code 51.08-09), career and technical education (CIP code 13.13), or education (CIP code 13) unless these majors are coupled with a STEM discipline in a double major. This is not a complete list of ineligible CIP codes for Noyce Support.

**2. Can cost of attendance cover non-scholarship expenses such as licensure exams or internship placement fees?**

The term *cost of attendance* is defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087II). Cost of attendance should only include the cost of tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies, and transportation for a full-time student enrolled at the institution. Other expenses, such as licensure exams and internship placement fees, are not included in cost of attendance.

**3. Can undergraduate scholarship recipients receive more than 2 years of cost of attendance support?**

Noyce cost of attendance support may begin in the junior or senior year of undergraduate studies for a maximum of two years of undergraduate support. An additional year of cost of attendance support is only allowable if the recipient is at an institution where the only option for teacher licensure/certification is at the post-baccalaureate level.

**4. Are scholarships or stipends for Scholars and Fellows taxable?**

NSF does not consider scholarships or stipends to be income. However, NSF does not interpret tax laws or provide guidance on whether scholarships or stipends are taxable.

## REPAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP OR FELLOWSHIP

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**5. Can a scholarship, stipend, or fellowship recipient obtain credit for the teaching commitment in alternative settings, for example, as a long-term substitute, teaching assistant, or paraprofessional at the K-12 level or as an instructor or teaching assistant at the post-secondary level?**

No. The teaching commitment must be met through service as a licensed/certified classroom teacher of record in a high-need school district.

**6. Under what circumstances can a hardship be granted, such that a Noyce scholarship or fellowship is forgiven?**

The institution should follow its own policies on granting hardships. In the event that a hardship is granted to a Noyce recipient, the institution may waive repayment of the

scholarship, stipend, or fellowship if there are relevant documented circumstances (e.g. illness, family care hardships).

**7. In the absence of a hardship, as described above, how should scholarship, stipend, or fellowship repayments be returned when the recipient fails to complete the required teaching service commitment?**

The college or university should collect repayment funds from the recipient. These funds may not be reused for other purposes and must be returned to NSF by the college or university.

- i. Funds may be returned via <https://www.pay.gov>.
- ii. Funds may be returned via check, payable to:  
National Science Foundation  
ATTN: NSF Cashier  
2415 Eisenhower Ave  
Alexandria, VA 22314

## **HIGH-NEED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**8. How is high percentage defined in the definition of a high-need Local Education Agency (LEA)?**

A high-need LEA must meet one of the following criteria:

- a. Has at least one school in which 50% or more of the enrolled students are eligible for participation in the free and reduced price lunch program.
- b. Has at least one school in which -
  - i. More than 34% of the academic classroom teachers at the secondary level (across all academic subjects) do not have an undergraduate degree with a major or minor in, or a graduate degree in, the academic field in which they teach the largest percentage of their classes; OR
  - ii. More than 34% of the teachers in two of the academic departments do not have an undergraduate degree with a major or minor in, or a graduate degree in, the academic field in which they teach the largest percentage of their classes.
- c. Has at least one school whose teacher attrition rate has been 15 percent or more over the last three school years.

**9. Can private, catholic, or charter schools meet the Noyce high-need school district requirement?**

If the school is part of a Local Education Agency (LEA) or religious jurisdiction, such as

a diocese, that functions as a LEA, it can satisfy the Noyce high-need requirement as long as the LEA meets at least one criterion of the high-need LEA requirement. A high-need LEA does not have to be a public school system.

**10. How many schools must be categorized as high-need in a school district for it to serve as an appropriate placement to complete the Noyce teaching requirement?**

If at least one school in the school district meets the high-need definition, the entire district is considered high-need for purposes of the Noyce program.

## GENERAL INQUIRIES

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**11. Can the external evaluator for a Noyce project be at the same institution as the project?**

Yes. However, it must be clear that the external evaluator can provide independent and objective feedback to the project.

**12. What is an acceptable national assessment for selecting Master Teaching Fellowship recipients?**

The Noyce program does not specify which nationally recognized assessments should be used for Master Teaching Fellowship recipients. Projects might use a state assessment of content knowledge or a national assessment such as the GRE.

**13. What are examples of allowable cost sharing, including in-kind and cash matching, for Track 2: Teaching Fellowships and Track 3: Master Teaching Fellowships projects?**

The *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (2 CFR § 200.306) prescribes criteria and procedures for the allowability of cash and in-kind contributions.

Grantees should be aware that mandatory cost sharing commitments are subject to audit. Audit findings involving cost sharing have pertained to: a) failure to keep adequate source documentation for claimed cost sharing; b) unclear valuation of in-kind donated contributions; c) lack of support for cost sharing contributions by subrecipients; and d) failure to complete annual certifications for awards with mandatory cost sharing requirements. Additional guidance on cost sharing may be obtained at:

<https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/caar/costrev.jsp>.

## TRACK 4: NOYCE RESEARCH

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**14. Do projects for Track 4 need to use quantitative methods?**

Track 4 projects must use an appropriate methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) to address the posed research question(s). However, there is no requirement for Track 4 projects to use quantitative methodology.

**15. Is it allowable for Track 4 projects to focus on research that does not involve Noyce teachers?**

Track 4 projects are not required to involve Noyce teachers. However, regardless, the research study should focus on STEM teacher effectiveness, persistence, or retention in high-need schools or districts. The maximum funding request for a Track 4 proposal that does not involve Noyce teachers is \$800,000.

**16. Would it be appropriate for a Track 4 project to compare two or more high-need schools or districts to study factors contributing to STEM teacher effectiveness, persistence, and/or retention?**

Assuming the proposal has a robust theoretical framing and appropriate methodological design, this topic area would be appropriate for Track 4.

**17. Would a proposal focused on studying resilience of STEM teachers be suitable for a Track 4 submission?**

A proposal to study resilience in relation to STEM teacher effectiveness, persistence, and/or retention in high-need schools or districts would be appropriate for Track 4. Factors other than resilience could also be studied if this is done in relation to STEM teacher effectiveness, persistence, and/or retention in high-need schools or districts.