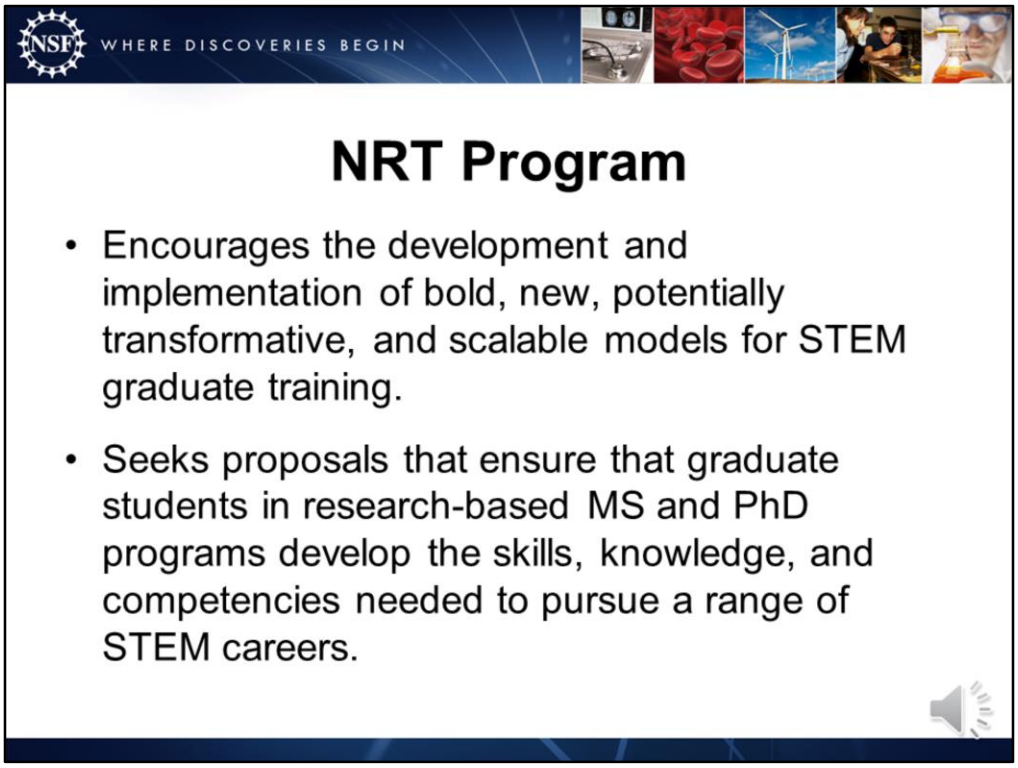
This informational video provides an overview of the National Science Foundation Research Traineeship (NRT) program and describes key similarities and differences between the two tracks that comprise NRT: the Traineeship Track and the Innovations in Graduate Education Track. The goal is to help you determine which track is best suited for your proposed project. Once you have decided where your project fits among the NRT tracks, I encourage you to view the companion video that provides details on the characteristics and features of your selected track.



The NRT program encourages the development and implementation of bold, new, potentially transformative, and scalable models for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) training.

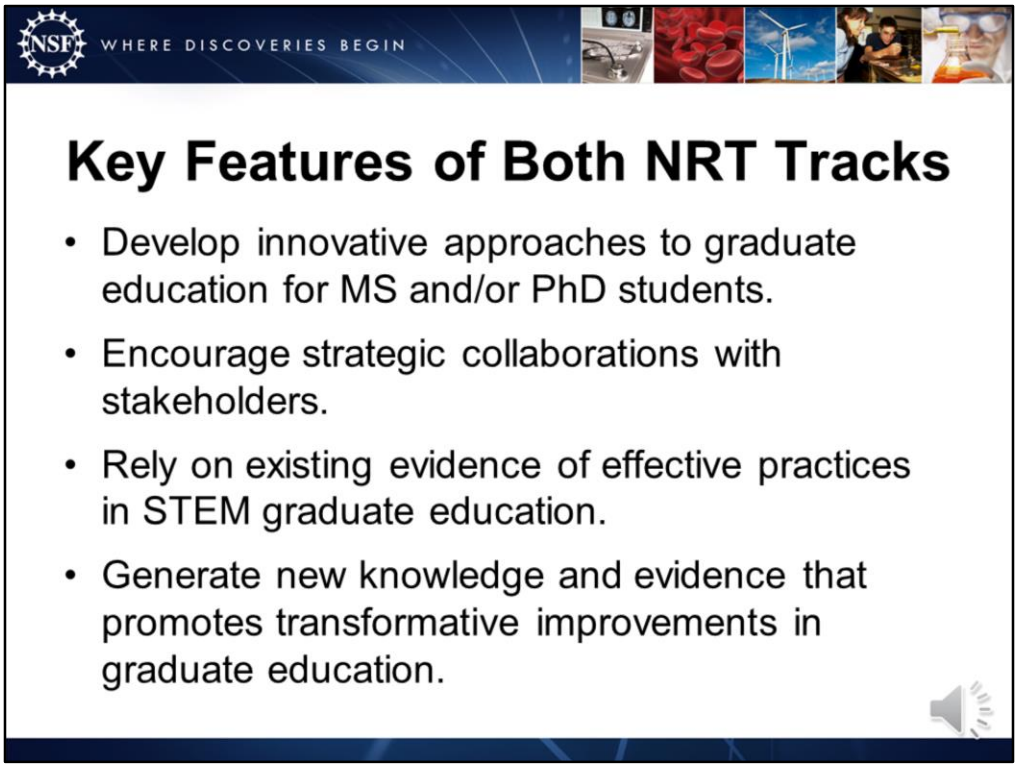
The program responds to the misalignment of STEM graduate training with required workplace skills, including the growing recognition that STEM graduate students require broad professional training for a variety of research and research-related careers.

Thus, it seeks proposals that ensure that graduate students in research-based master's and doctoral degree programs develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to pursue a range of STEM careers.

The new NRT solicitation for 2016, NSF 16-503, extends and broadens the scope of the NRT program launched in 2014. Proposals are invited in two tracks: The Traineeship Track and the Innovations in Graduate Education Track.

These tracks have identical deadlines. For the 2016 proposal cycle, required Letters of Intent are due December 9th 2015 and Full proposals are due February 9th 2016.

The solicitation is active for two years. For the 2017 proposal cycle, required of intent will be due December 9th , 2016 and full proposals due February 7th , 2017.

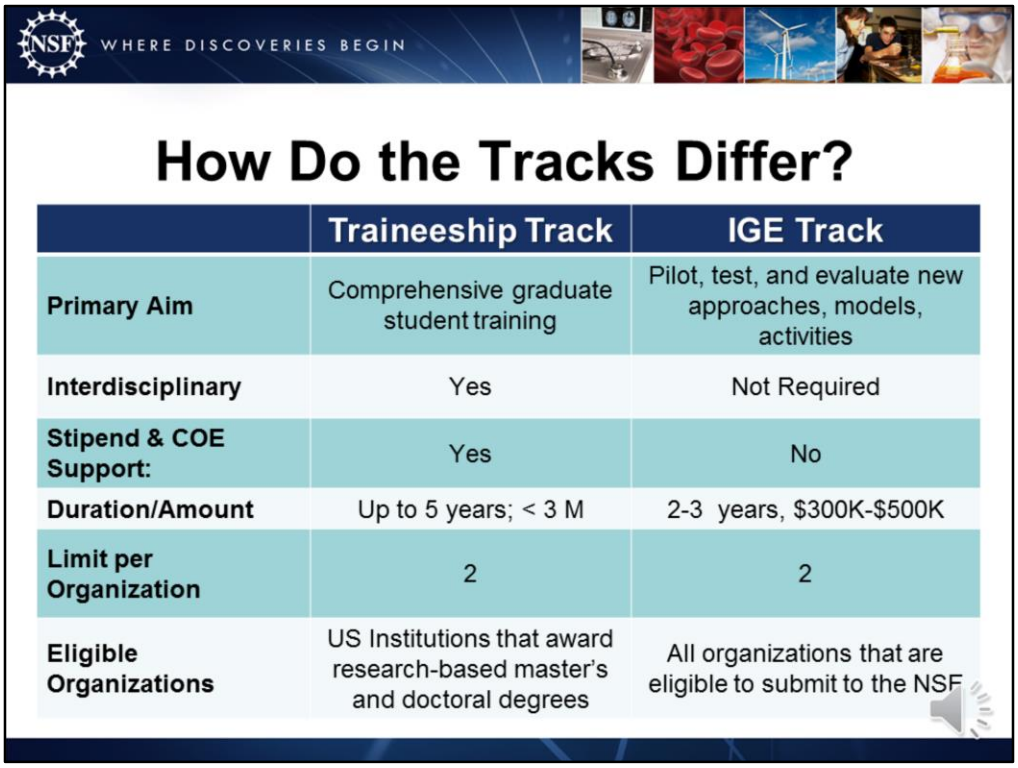


The remainder of this video describes similarities and differences of the tracks, beginning with the similarities.

Proposals to both track may propose graduate education innovations targeting master's students only, doctoral students only, or both master's and doctoral students.

Both tracks encourage strategic collaborations with key stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, national laboratories, field stations, teaching and learning centers, museums, and academic partners are encouraged.

Both call for proposals to draw on existing evidence of effective practices in graduate education. The NRT program also expects that proposals for both tracks will collect and share evidence on the success and effectiveness of their programs and contribute to the knowledge-based on successful models for graduate training.



While the overarching goal of both tracks is to promote transformative advances in the preparation of graduate-trained STEM professionals, the tracks differ in their primary aim, scope, and features.

The Traineeship track is dedicated to innovative, comprehensive traineeship programs in high-priority interdisciplinary research areas.

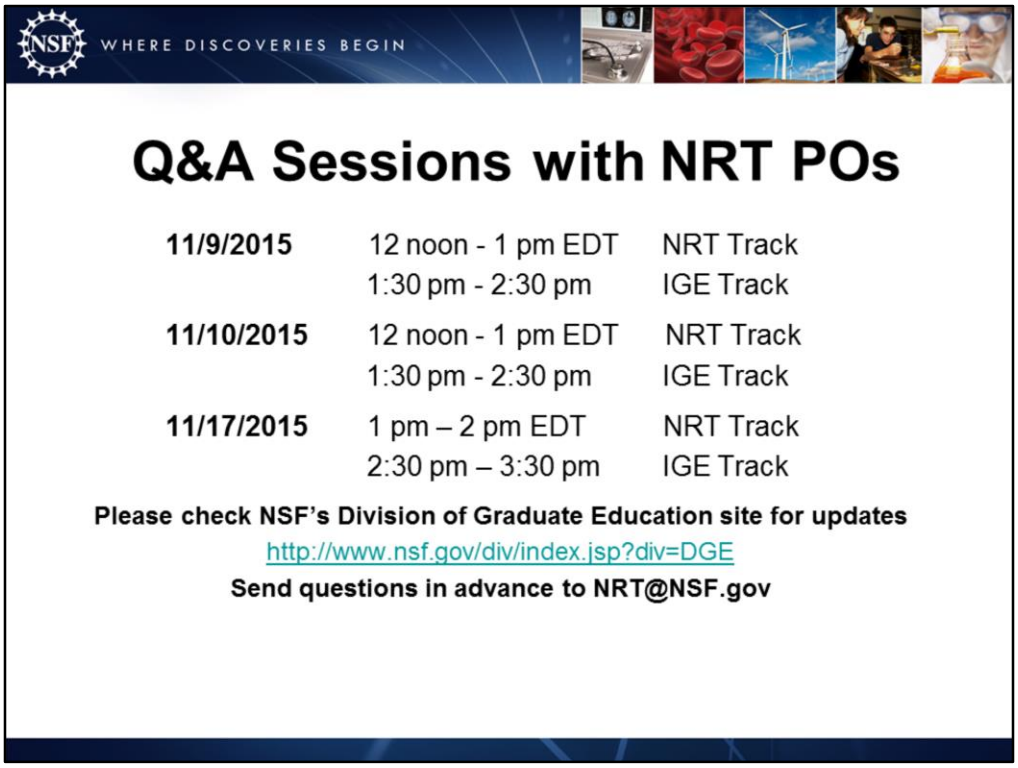
The Innovations of Graduate Education Track is dedicated to piloting, testing, and evaluating bold, new graduate education approaches, models, and activities and generating evidence for their customization, implementation, and broader adoption. The proposed approaches and activities in the IGE track could focus on a single discipline, on multiple disciplines, or on STEM graduate education generally.

Proposals submitted to the Traineeship track may include stipends and costs of education for trainees in the program, whereas those submitted to the IGE track may not.

Traineeship track proposals can be up to 5 years in duration, whereas IGE Track proposals have a shorter duration of 2-3 years. These differences are also reflected in the size of the budgets for both tracks. Budgets for the Traineeship track can be a maximum of $3M, whereas the IGE track proposals are limited to between $300K-$500K.

A single academic institution may submit a total of 3 proposals to the NRT solicitation: 2 to the NRT track and 2 to the IGE track.

However, to submit to the IGE track an organization does not need to be an academic institution that awards research-based master's and doctoral degrees -- as is the case for the Traineeship track. Organizations that are eligible to submit NSF proposals may submit to the IGE track, this includes nonprofit, nonacademic organizations or for profit organizations. If you are still wondering if your institution qualifies, we recommend that you consult the NSF Grant Proposal Guide for a full description.



For additional information on each of the tracks, we recommend that you to take part in Question and Answer Webinars with NRT program officers on the dates and times listed on this slide. Times are Eastern Daylight Savings Time. As I mentioned at the outset, we encourage you to view the video for the track that interests you in advance and to send questions prior to the Q&A session to nrt@nsf.gov.

On behalf of the NRT team, I'd like to thank you for your interest in the program and wish you luck with preparing your proposals.