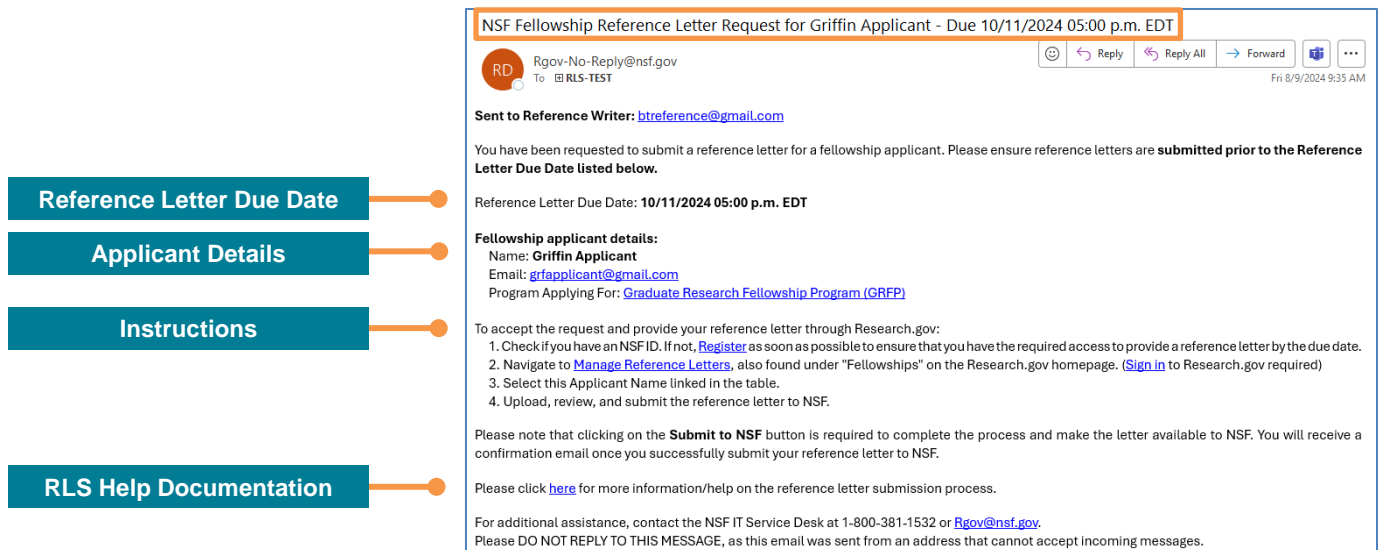All Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) reference letters are submitted in the Research.gov Reference Letter Submission (RLS) system. **All reference letters must be submitted to NSF by the annual deadline in October.**

Starting the Reference Letter Process

- GRFP reference letter writers will receive a system-generated email from the "Rgov-No-Reply@nsf.gov" sender email with "NSF Fellowship Reference Letter Request…" in the subject line.

- The email includes GRFP Applicant details and instructions to access the Research.gov RLS system.

- A confirmation email is sent to the GRFP Applicant after the system-generated reference letter request email is sent to the writer. The GRFP Applicant can track reference letter submission status in the Research.gov GRFP module.

- The system will send a separate email for each GRFP Applicant requesting a reference letter (i.e., writers who receive more than one reference letter request will receive an email for each GRFP Applicant).

Example System-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request Email

Step 1: Register for a new NSF account in Research.gov.

> *Note: Skip to Step 2 on page 3 if you already have an NSF account in Research.gov.* Use the [NSF ID Lookup](#) tool to check if you have an existing NSF account. If needed, contact the NSF IT Service Desk for account verification assistance *at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via [rgov@nsf.gov](#).*

Follow the steps below to create a new NSF account. There is also a three-minute [Register for a New NSF Account video tutorial](#) and [Register for a New NSF Account job aid](#) for a detailed walk-through of steps with associated screenshots.
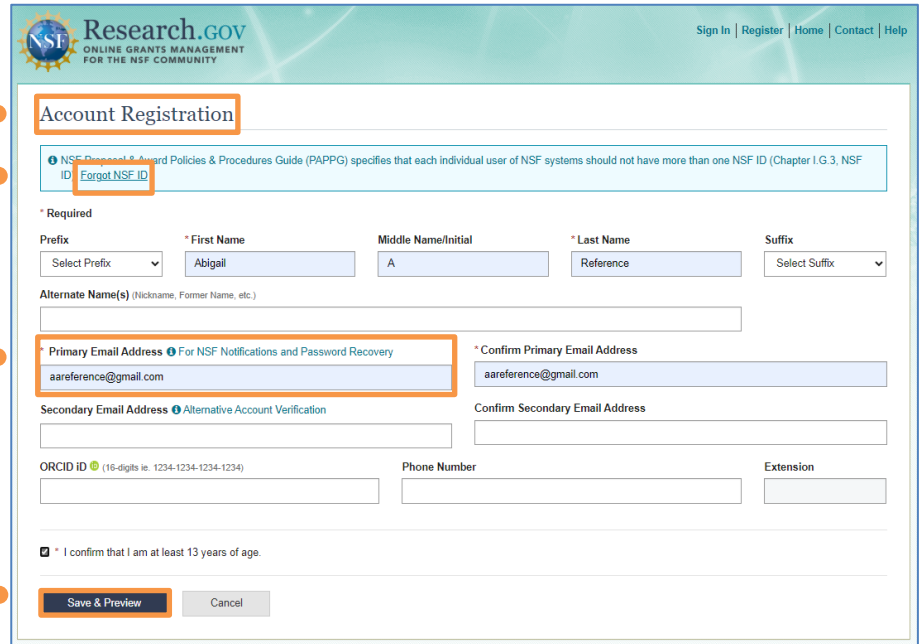
- Open [Research.gov](#).
- Click "**Register**" located at the top of the screen.
- Enter the requested information on the Account Registration page *(one-time process)*

NSF Account Registration page

NSF ID Lookup tool link

NSF account Primary Email field

Save & Preview button is enabled after age confirmation box is checked

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ℹ️ **_NSF Account Primary Email Address Tips:_**

- _Your NSF account primary email address will be used for NSF account notifications including password resets._
- _Please make sure you have ongoing access to this email account (e.g., Gmail address)._
- _It is critical that you have continued access to this email account if you change organizations._
- _NSF account holders can update their NSF account primary email address without NSF IT Service Desk assistance after registration._

- After previewing your account registration information, click **Submit.**

Preview Account Registration screen to verify NSF account information

Submit button is enabled after the _I'm not a robot_ box is checked

Use the Edit button to make changes

- You will receive an Account Registration Confirmation on the screen.
- You will then receive two system-generated emails at your NSF account primary email address.
  - One email will contain your new NSF ID for your NSF account.
  - The second email will have your temporary password so you can sign in to Research.gov. Follow the instructions provided in the email to change your temporary password.
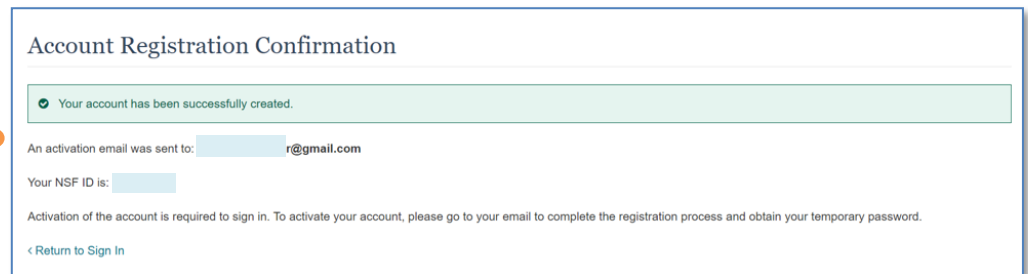
Confirmation message indicates successful NSF account creation

Account Registration Confirmation

✓ Your account has been successfully created.

An activation email was sent to: _____r@gmail.com

Your NSF ID is: _____

Activation of the account is required to sign in. To activate your account, please go to your email to complete the registration process and obtain your temporary password.

‹ Return to Sign In

System generated email is sent to the NSF account primary email address with temporary password to sign in to Research.gov
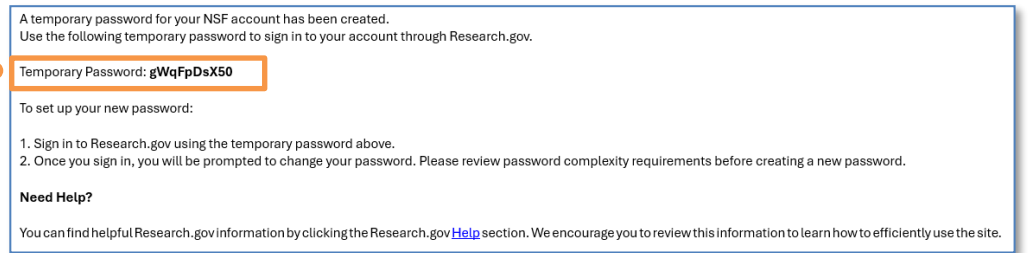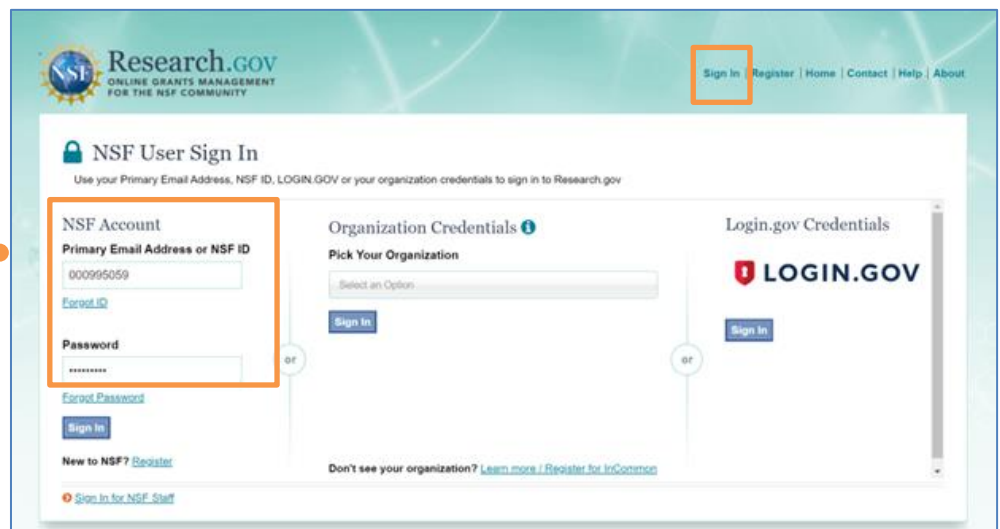
A temporary password for your NSF account has been created.
Use the following temporary password to sign in to your account through Research.gov.

Temporary Password: **gWqFpDsX50**

To set up your new password:

1. Sign in to Research.gov using the temporary password above.
2. Once you sign in, you will be prompted to change your password. Please review password complexity requirements before creating a new password.

Need Help?

You can find helpful Research.gov information by clicking the Research.gov Help section. We encourage you to review this information to learn how to efficiently use the site.

## Step ② : Sign in to Research.gov and access the Reference Letter Submission system.

- Open Research.gov.
- Click **Sign In** located at the top of the screen to enter NSF account credentials.

Sign in with your NSF account primary email or NSF ID and your NSF account password

Research.gov
ONLINE GRANTS MANAGEMENT FOR THE NSF COMMUNITY

Sign In | Register | Home | Contact | Help | About

🔒 NSF User Sign In

Use your Primary Email Address, NSF ID, LOGIN.GOV or your organization credentials to sign in to Research.gov

NSF Account
Primary Email Address or NSF ID
000995059
Forgot ID

Password
••••••••
Forgot Password

Sign In

New to NSF? Register

Sign In for NSF Staff

Organization Credentials ⓘ
Pick Your Organization
Select an Option

Sign In

Don't see your organization? Learn more / Register for InCommon

Login.gov Credentials

🛡 LOGIN.GOV

Sign In

Note: *See the Appendix for information about signing in to Research.gov with Organization credentials or Login.gov credentials.*

- You will be on the Research.gov homepage after signing in.
- Click the **Manage Reference Letters (Writers for GRFP and Postdoctoral Fellowships)** link under Fellowships & Opportunities.
- You will be navigated to the Reference Letter Submission system.


Manage Reference Letters (Writers for GRFP and Postdoctoral Fellowships) link
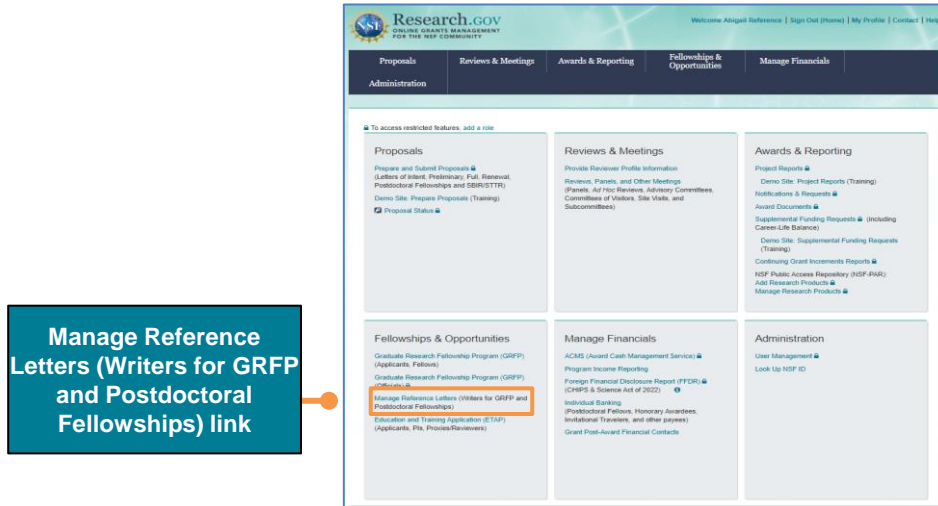
Step 3 : Select or Add GRFP Applicant in the Reference Letter Submission system.

- The GRFP Applicant is added to the *My Reference Letter Requests* table automatically if the reference writer's NSF account primary email address matches the email address provided by the Applicant and used on the "To" line of the system-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request email to the reference writer.
- **Note: Skip to page 8 if the "To" email address on a system-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request email <u>does not</u> match your NSF account primary email address.** View your NSF account primary email address:
  - Sign into Research.gov and select the My Profile option at the top of the screen
  - Your primary email address is shown on the Contact Information tab
- Click the Applicant Name link in the *My Reference Letter Requests* table to continue.
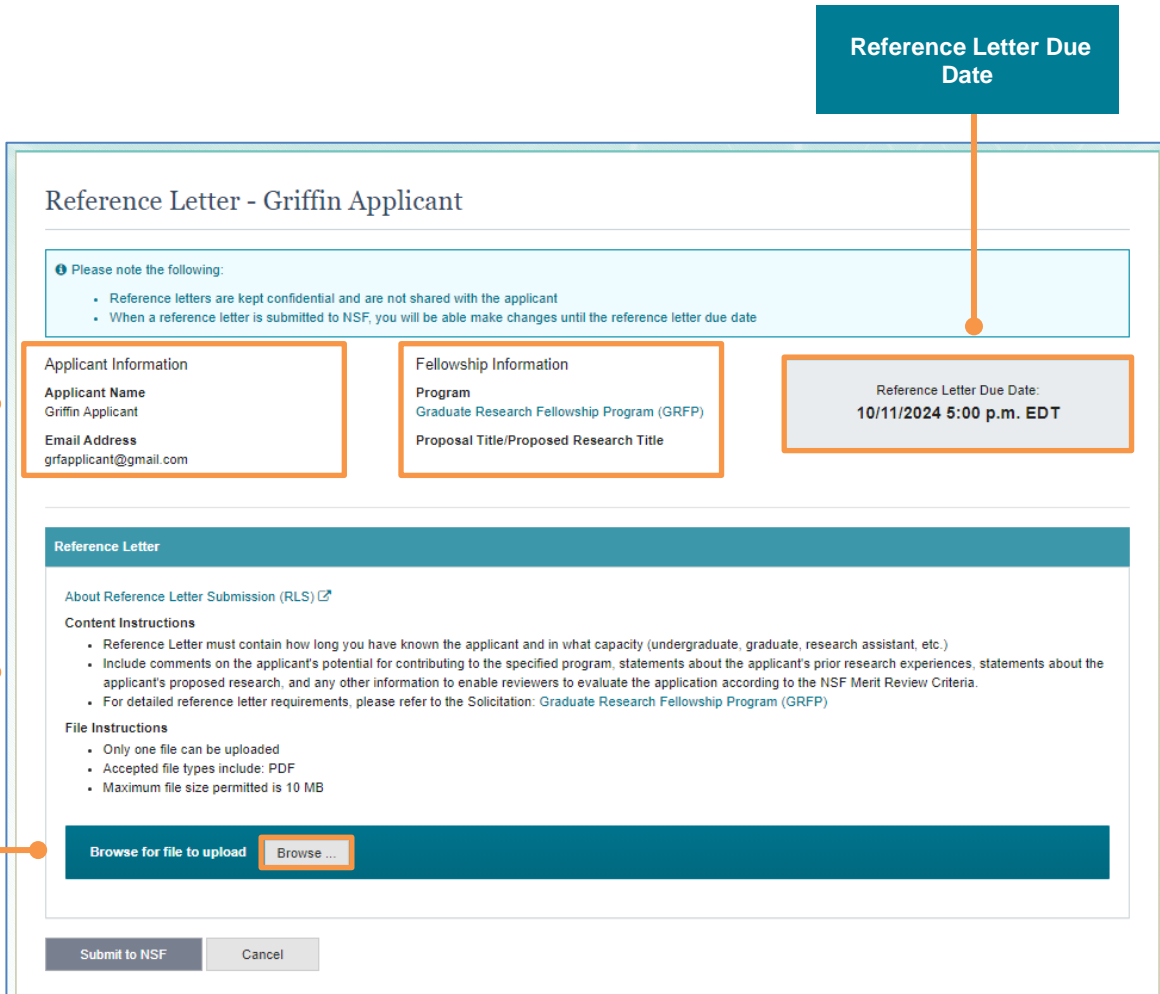

Info message on adding Applicant requests to the *My Reference Letter Requests* table when To email does not match NSF account primary email

Applicant Name link
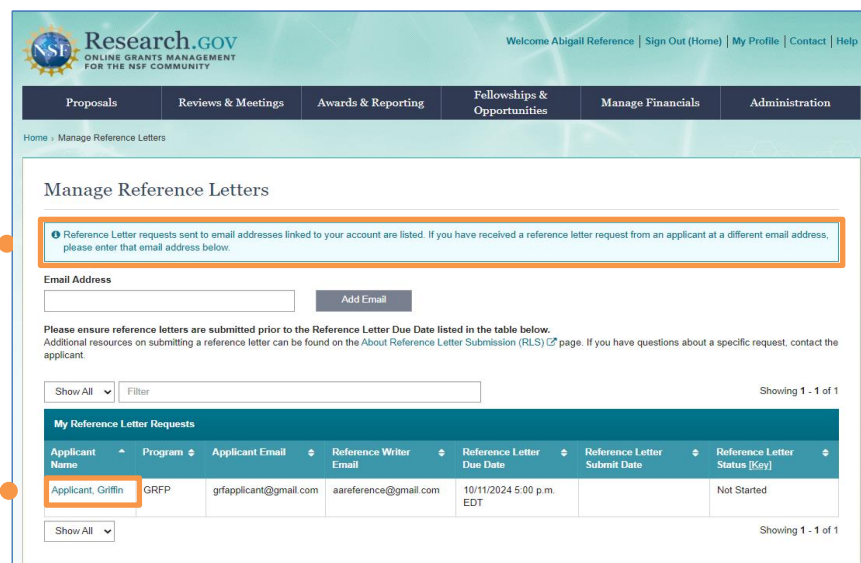
Step ④ : Display Reference Letter Applicant detail page.

- Clicking the Applicant Name link opens the Reference Letter Applicant Detail page which includes information about the Applicant, Fellowship, reference letter due date, and reference letter instructions.
- The system will **not** accept reference letter submissions after the due date.
- The reference letter is uploaded on the Reference Letter Applicant detail page and must be uploaded as a PDF.
- Click the Browse button to continue.

Reference Letter Due Date

Reference Letter - Griffin Applicant

ⓘ Please note the following:
- Reference letters are kept confidential and are not shared with the applicant
- When a reference letter is submitted to NSF, you will be able make changes until the reference letter due date

GRFP Applicant and Fellowship information

Applicant Information

Applicant Name
Griffin Applicant

Email Address
grfapplicant@gmail.com

Fellowship Information

Program
Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

Proposal Title/Proposed Research Title

Reference Letter Due Date:
10/11/2024 5:00 p.m. EDT

Reference Letter

About Reference Letter Submission (RLS) ↗

Reference Letter instructions

Content Instructions
- Reference Letter must contain how long you have known the applicant and in what capacity (undergraduate, graduate, research assistant, etc.)
- Include comments on the applicant's potential for contributing to the specified program, statements about the applicant's prior research experiences, statements about the applicant's proposed research, and any other information to enable reviewers to evaluate the application according to the NSF Merit Review Criteria.
- For detailed reference letter requirements, please refer to the Solicitation: Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)
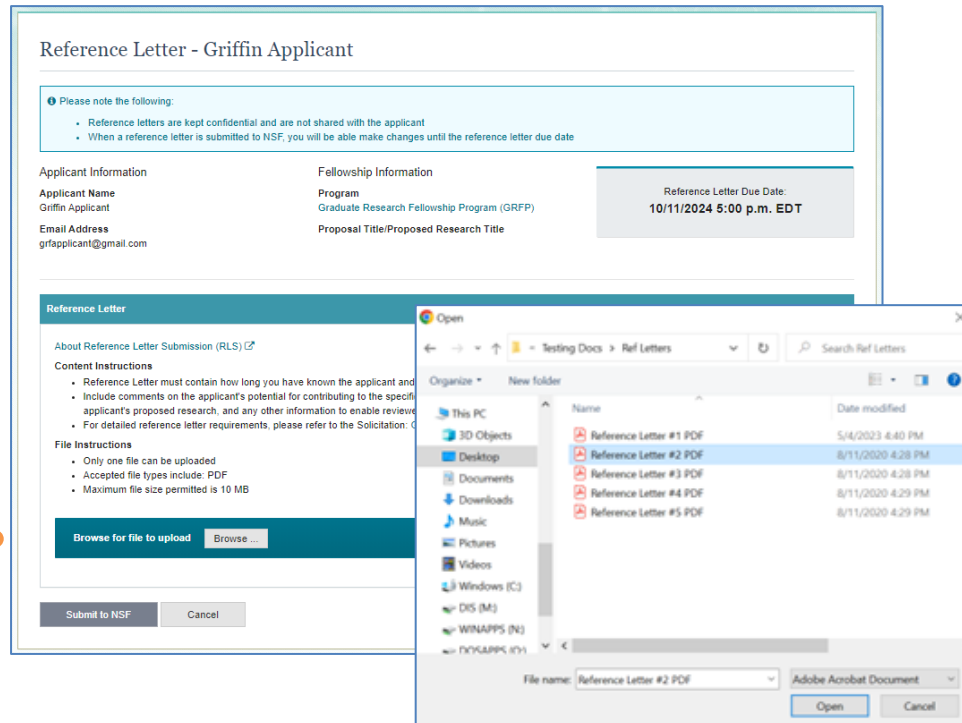
File Instructions
- Only one file can be uploaded
- Accepted file types include: PDF
- Maximum file size permitted is 10 MB

Browse button

Browse for file to upload [Browse ...]

[Submit to NSF] [Cancel]

Step ⑤ : Upload GRFP Applicant reference letter.
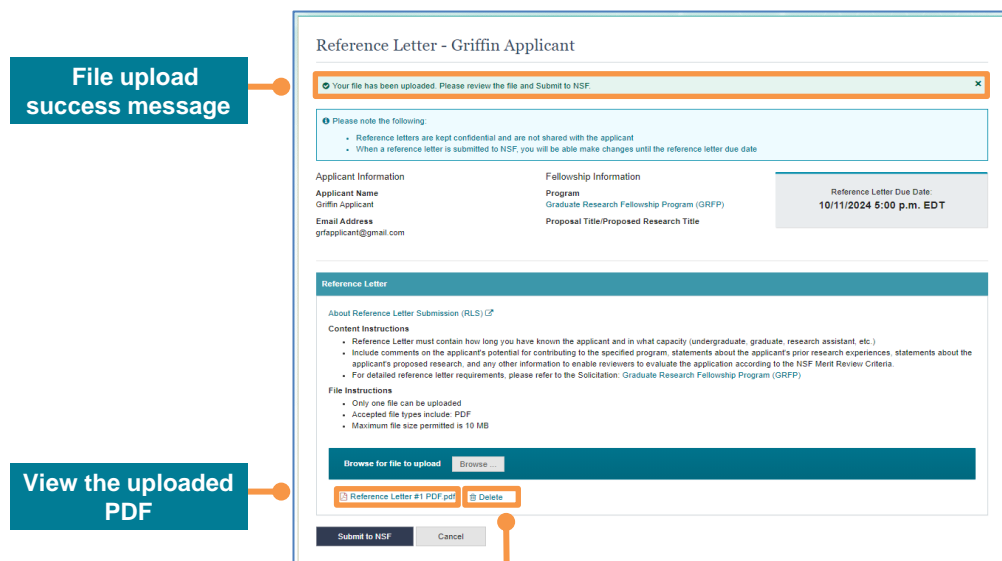
- Use the Browse button to select the reference letter PDF file to upload.

Clicking the Browse button opens the file selection feature

- A success message is generated after the PDF file is uploaded if no file compliance errors are detected (e.g., attempted upload of a file format other than PDF)
- The uploaded file linked at the bottom of the page may be:
  - **Viewed** by clicking the file link. Please ensure that the uploaded file is for the intended Applicant.
  - **Deleted** by selecting the Delete link. Note that an existing uploaded PDF must be **deleted** before a replacement PDF can be uploaded.

File upload success message

View the uploaded PDF

Delete the uploaded PDF to re upload a replacement PDF

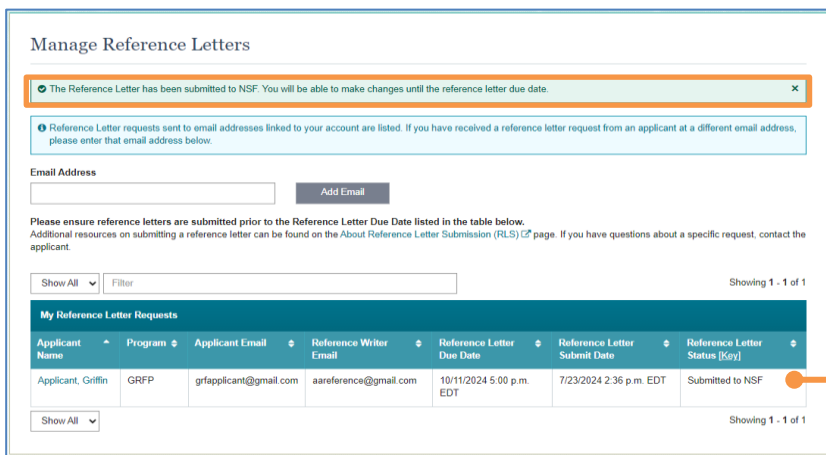## Step ⑥ : Submit reference letter to NSF.

- After confirming that the correct reference letter has been uploaded, use the Submit to NSF button to complete the submission.
- A modal will display to confirm that you are ready to submit the reference letter for the specified Applicant.

Submit to NSF button

Confirm submission to NSF

- A success message is generated after reference letter submission.
- The status is changed to "Submitted to NSF" in the *My Reference Letter Requests* table.
- A system-generated confirmation email is sent to the reference letter writer and to the GRFP Applicant to notify of the reference letter submission.
- **Note: A reference letter PDF can be replaced as many times as needed <u>BEFORE</u> the reference letter submission deadline by clicking the Delete link on the Reference Letter Applicant detail page and repeating steps 4 through 6.**

Reference letter submission success message

Reference Letter Status updated to Submitted to NSF"

Questions?

- Questions about the GRFP reference writer process should be directed to the GRF Operations Center (website: https://nsfgrfp.org) at 1-866-NSF-GRFP (1-866-673-4737) or by email to info@nsfgrfp.org.

ℹ️ *Additional Step May be Required to Add GRFP Applicant*

- If the "To" email address on a system-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request email **does not** match your NSF account **primary email address**, an additional step is needed to add the GRFP Applicant to the *My Reference Letter Requests* table.
- View your NSF account primary email address:
  - Sign into Research.gov and select the My Profile option at the top of the screen
  - Your primary email address is shown on the Contact Information tab
- Follow these steps if the "To" email address on a system-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request email **does not** match your NSF account primary email address:
  - Enter the email address where you received the GRFP Reference Letter Request email in the *Email Address* field and click the **Add Email** button.
  - Check your email for a message from *noreplyadmin@nsf.gov* with the subject "Your One-Time Password." Note that this password expires in 10 minutes.
  - Copy the 6-digit One-Time Password in the email and enter it in the One-Time Password field. Click the **Continue** button.
  - The GRFP Applicant will now be added to the *My Reference Letter Requests* table.
- If you have received requests by more than one GRFP Applicant, this process would be repeated for each Applicant when the "To" email address on the Applicant-specific system-generated GRFP Reference Letter Request email does not match your NSF account primary email address.

Enter the One Time Password

Email address where you received the GRFP Reference Letter Request email
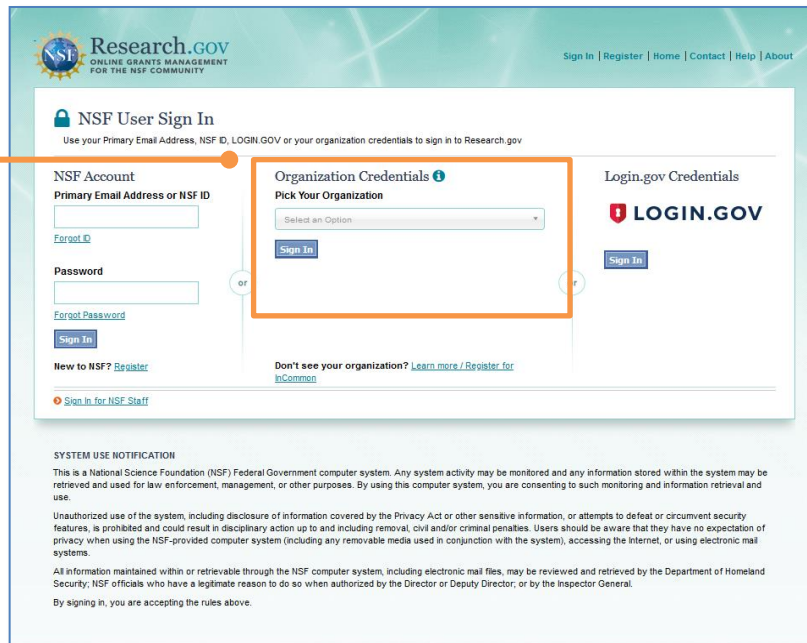
Signing in to Research.gov with Organization Credentials or Login.gov Credentials

Using Organization Credentials to Sign in to Research.gov

After registering for an NSF account in Research.gov, you can sign in to Research.gov with your organization-issued credentials if your organization is an InCommon Federation participant and integrated with NSF. Please check the Organization drop-down on the Research.gov Sign In page to view the list of InCommon Organizations that participate/integrate with NSF.

- Only InCommon Federation participants can use their organization-issued credentials to sign in to Research.gov.
- If you are signing in with your organization-issued credentials, you will be prompted to link your credentials to your NSF account if they are not already linked.
- Please see the About the InCommon Integration at Research.gov page to learn more.
- If you have questions, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM – 9:00 PM Eastern Time; Monday – Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov.

Sign in with your Organization credentials

Using Login.gov Credentials to Sign in to Research.gov

After registering for an NSF account in Research.gov, you can sign in to Research.gov with your Login.gov credentials.

- Login.gov is a Federal shared service platform that provides multi-factor authentication for users to sign in to participating government agency systems.
- Accessing Research.gov through Login.gov enables Reference Writers to have a single username and password for participating Federal systems.
- After Login.gov credentials (username and password) are entered, the Login.gov system will require the Reference Writer to provide a second factor such as a security key, authentication application, or a one-time security code the Reference Writer receives by phone or by text to complete the authentication. For more information, please see the Login.gov Help Center Authentication Options page.
- When signing in to Research.gov with Login.gov credentials the first time, the Reference Writer's Login.gov account and NSF account will automatically be linked if the same primary email is used for both accounts. If Research.gov does not detect a primary email address match for both accounts, the Reference Writer will be prompted to complete a one-time process to link their Login.gov account to an existing NSF account.
- If you have questions, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM – 9:00 PM Eastern Time; Monday – Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov.