U.S. National Science Foundation
Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Administrative Guide

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Directorate for STEM Education (EDU)

Division of Graduate Education (DGE)

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1. Introduction

The U.S. 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 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) was established to recruit and support individuals who demonstrate the potential to make significant contributions in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). GRFP recognizes and supports graduate students in NSF-supported disciplines who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees at accredited United States (US) Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs).

This Administrative Guide (Guide) outlines the administrative policies and procedures for the GRFP for both Fellows and awardee IHEs. **The information contained in this Guide, the Fellowship Offer letter, the NSF GRFP Solicitation, and the NSF Award Notice comprise the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award with which Fellows and awardee IHEs must comply to receive Fellowship funds.** The current Guide is effective as of the date on the cover page.

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

Fellowship Terms and Conditions are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of Fellows and awardee IHEs to ensure compliance with current program requirements.

1.1 Significant Changes

Effective Date	Change
See date on cover page	The Guide was redesigned and reformatted. Significant changes include: • Section 2.2 – Requests to change to Summer Start (the June 1 Fellowship Year start date for semesters beginning in May, June, or July) will no longer be permitted. Current Summer Start Fellows will not be affected • Section 2.10 – Individual Development Plan (IDP) Certification has been added to the Annual Activities Report-Advisor Confirmation Form to address the NSF PAPPG requirement for all graduate students to have an IDP • Updated Terms and Conditions for Fellows and awardee IHE Coordinating Officials • Clarification of processes • Updated terminology • Updated links to applicable documentation

1.2 NSF Resources

This Guide refers to the following NSF documents and publications:

- Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) https://new.nsf.gov/policies/pappg
- GRFP Program Solicitation https://new.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/nsf-graduate-research-fellowship-program-grfp
- NSF Agency Specific Requirements to the Research Terms and Conditions https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp

Please visit the following websites for additional information:

- NSF: https://www.nsf.gov
- GRFP: https://www.nsfgrfp.org/
- GRFP Online Module: https://www.research.gov/grfp/Login.do

2. Fellow Responsibilities & Information

The NSF GRFP Program Office administers the Graduate Research Fellowship Program and is assisted by an institutional representative from each awardee IHE who is designated as the Coordinating Official (CO). A directory of GRFP Coordinating Officials which includes representatives from all awardee IHEs, referred to as the IHE Directory, is available on the GRFP Online Module. **The awardee IHE's CO is the first point of contact for all Fellowship questions.** If a Fellow requires additional assistance after consulting the GRFP CO at their IHE and reviewing this Guide, only then should they e-mail 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, and copy their IHE's CO on the e-mail.

2.1 Fellowship Acceptance

Fellow candidates will be sent a Fellowship Offer Letter by e-mail in late March/early April. In the GRFP Module, new Fellows must both 1) formally accept and agree to the Fellowship Terms and Conditions and 2) declare fellow status for the upcoming fellowship year by the specified due date. ***By accepting their Fellowship, all Fellows certify that they have read, understood, and accepted the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship contained in the Fellowship Offer Letter and this Guide, and that they are aware of the consequences of not complying with the Terms and Conditions.***

Candidates who accept the offer become Fellows. Until a change request is submitted by the Fellow and approved by the CO, NSF assumes association with the IHE originally identified as the choice for graduate study in the application. It is the Fellow's responsibility to arrange for admission to a graduate program and to request approval from the CO at the IHE that hosts the graduate program and from NSF, via the GRFP Online Module, for any institutional changes. New Fellows should confirm that their profile in the GRFP Online Module properly reflects their choice of IHE.

New Fellows must be enrolled full-time in an eligible graduate degree program in the field of study indicated in their application by the beginning of the following academic year. Fellows must pursue graduate study that leads to a research-based master's or doctoral degree in STEM, including STEM education, as described in the GRFP Program Solicitation. Major changes in scope (i.e., changes in major field of study) during the graduate career may be proposed after the completion of the first year of graduate study and require NSF approval.

New Fellows must submit their plan to utilize the funding over the five-year Fellowship period at the start of their Fellowships. This plan is only an estimate and is not binding. Declaring Fellowship Status means the Fellow uses the GRFP Online Module to indicate their intention to be on Tenure, Medical Leave, Military Leave, or Reserve for each year of the five-year Fellowship period. New Fellows must certify that they meet the eligibility requirements, as described in the GRFP Program Solicitation, Eligibility Information.

Fellows who misrepresented their eligibility or failed to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will have their Fellowship offer terminated and they will be ineligible to re-apply. Such cases may be referred to the NSF Office of Inspector General for investigation. This action may result in the Fellow being required to repay Fellowship funds to the NSF.

2.2 Fellowship Year

Upon accepting the Fellowship, new Fellows must begin their Fellowship at the start of the fall academic session of their Fellowship acceptance year. The Fellowship start date does not necessarily coincide with the formal academic session of the IHE, and Tenure Status is not defined by the date on which a stipend payment is issued. The dates covered by Tenure Status coincide with the academic year calendar of the IHE each Fellow attends. Fellows are expected to be actively engaged full-time in their graduate programs throughout the Fellowship year. Institutional rules concerning enrollment apply; therefore, enrollment *as documented on the transcript* is required. The Fellowship cannot be used retroactively.

Fall Start/September 1st Fellowship Year. All Fellows will have a fall start date for semesters beginning in August, September, or October.

Effective on the release date of this guide, Summer Start (the June 1 Fellowship Year start date for semesters beginning in May, June, or July) will no longer be permitted. This change will not affect current Summer Start Fellows, who will be allowed to complete their fellowship as scheduled. Current Fall Start Fellows will not be allowed to request a change to a Summer Start.

2.3 Status Declaration

Once applicants accept the GRFP fellowship and start their NSF GRFP-supported graduate study, they are Fellows. Fellows must be enrolled in an IHE for the duration of their Fellowship. Following award acceptance and declaration, Fellows must be in one of the Fellowship status categories shown in the table below.

Fellow Status	Fellowship Status	Stipend?	Description
Active	On Tenure	Yes	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree granting program and receiving GRFP stipend.
	Forfeited	No	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree granting program but is not receiving a stipend during all or part of a Tenure year. Stipend not utilized is lost (forfeited).
	On Reserve	No	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree granting program but is not receiving a GRFP stipend.

Leave	On Medical Leave	Yes	Fellow is on an official (institutionally approved) leave of absence from their graduate program due to a medical or dependent-care situation. There is a limited paid medical leave option of up to three months.
		No	Fellow is on an official (institutionally approved) leave of absence due to a medical or dependent-care situation. Fellow is not receiving a stipend.
	On Military Leave	No	Fellow must interrupt their graduate studies for active duty U.S. military service.
Completion	Completed with Degree	No	Individual who graduated within the five-year Fellowship period.
	Completed	No	Individual who completed the five-year Fellowship period before graduating with a degree.
	Terminated	No	Individual's Fellowship is terminated for cause (failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship) or Fellow voluntarily discontinues Fellowship during the five-year period.

All Fellows must declare their status (Section 2.4) for the next Fellowship year by the deadline specified in the GRFP Online Module. Fellows must certify that they continue to meet the eligibility requirements, as described in the GRFP Program Solicitation and annual certifications. The annual status declaration also requires confirmation that each Fellow accepts the Terms and Conditions in the current Administrative Guide. Fellowship Status declaration for Tenure and Reserve are for the entire upcoming year. After the declaration period ends, the GRFP module will only allow status change requests to forfeit stipend, request Military Leave, or request Medical Leave. Any change requests submitted during the summer will not be reviewed until August. Status changes to Tenure/Reserve after the declaration period ends must be emailed by the CO to the GRFP Program Office before the start of the fellowship year (no later than August).

All Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate program, irrespective of their Fellowship status (except if on Medical or Military Leave). 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 of cumulative GRFP support during the five-year term of the Fellowship.

2.4 Fellowship Status

The Fellowship provides three Tenure years of financial support (stipend and Institutional Cost-of-Education allowance) and two Reserve years. Both Tenure and Reserve statuses are granted only in 12-month increments. Only Fellows with Tenure Status, or on a limited paid Medical Leave Status, are eligible to receive stipend payments. However, Fellows with Reserve status may be eligible for stipend support through INTERN or other similar supplement requests.

Fellows may pursue off-campus activities during the academic year if the activities are part of their graduate degree program. While pursuing these activities, Fellows must maintain full-time enrollment (as established by the awardee IHE and reflected on the Registrar-certified transcript). Off-campus

activities must be approved by the CO who must confirm that these activities are part of the Fellows' graduate education program and normal degree progress (See Section 2.6). A list of awardee IHE's Coordinating Officials can be found in the IHE Directory on the GRFP Online Module.

On Tenure Status

During Tenure years, Fellows actively utilize Fellowship support (i.e., receive a stipend). Fellows use Tenure status for a maximum of three years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship period. The five-year Fellowship period includes situations in which all or part of the support is forfeited (lost). Fellowship Tenure may not be broken into smaller units spread across more than one year, except in cases of NSF-approved Medical or Military Leave (see below). To be eligible to receive stipend payments, Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate program through coursework or research under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor throughout the Fellowship year. Fellows are required to submit Annual Activities Reports (AARs) for both Tenure/Reserve Fellowship Years.

On Reserve Status

Reserve Status allows Fellows the flexibility of incorporating professional development opportunities (e.g., teaching assistantships, internships, etc.) into their graduate programs. Fellows may use Reserve Status for two years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship period. Fellows on Reserve remain ***enrolled as full-time students*** (as defined and confirmed by their awardee IHE's Registrar) and actively engage in research or coursework for the graduate degree program. Fellows are required to submit AARs for both Tenure/Reserve Fellowship Years.

Forfeited Status

Fellows in Forfeited Status during a Tenure year must be fully engaged in research and/or coursework toward an eligible research-based graduate degree and maintain full-time enrollment in the awardee IHE, as reflected on the IHE transcript. Funding not utilized during a Tenure year is forfeited (lost) and not recoverable for later use. Forfeited funds are tied to stipend only, not cost of education. AARs are required during Forfeited periods. Fellows must submit a change request in the GRFP Online Module to return to Tenure Status.

Medical Leave Status

Medical Leave may be requested if a Fellow experiences a serious illness or other physical/mental medical condition, or a Fellow has full-time caregiving responsibilities for an immediate family member (spouse, child, dependent, sibling, or parent) that prevent full-time Fellowship activity for an extended period. NSF considers dependent care to include childcare, adoption, parental leave, elder care, and extended family illness. NSF's Career-Life Balance (CLB) supplemental funding opportunity may be requested in addition to NSF-approved medical leave for dependent care (family leave) situations, see Section 2.6 for more information.

Medical Leave must be requested 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 later, extending beyond the normal five-year limit. Fellows in Medical Leave Status must submit an AAR (stating they are on medical leave), and the Medical Leave must be renewed if the Medical Leave extends into a new Fellowship year.

Paid Medical Leave. For Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Leave, there is a limited paid leave option. NSF support provides up to three months of paid medical leave. The paid leave option utilizes existing stipend/tenure months and is not a supplemental funding source. During

declared medical leave, 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 into shorter, monthly time frames across multiple Tenure Years. Fellows must specify in their Medical Leave request that they are requesting to be placed on paid Medical Leave. Fellows must include the request for one, two, or three months of paid Leave with the Medical Leave request submitted through the GRFP Online Module.

To request Medical Leave, Fellows should first contact their CO and secure an institutionally approved medical or family leave based on the awardee IHE's graduate student leave policies. Using the GRFP Online Module, Fellows must formally submit a change request for a Medical Leave before or within the first month of the Medical Leave. Retroactive requests are not approved. The request should provide an estimate of the length of time (in whole months) approved by the CO for Medical Leave and whether leave is paid/unpaid. The paid leave option utilizes existing stipend/tenure months, unpaid medical leave is reflected as deferred months. The nature of the medical or family leave situation need not be disclosed to the GRFP Program Office in the change request. The awardee IHE retains relevant documentation indicating that the condition merits a Medical Leave. If NSF approves the Fellow's Medical Leave request, the IHE must 1) keep the Fellow enrolled (as documented by the Registrar on the transcript) and 2) include the Fellow in the Grants Roster. Fellows must submit a change request at the end of their Medical Leave to be placed in Tenure or Reserve Status.

Military Leave Status

Military Leave is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for active duty in the U.S. military service. While on Military Leave, a Fellow's fellowship 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 later, and prevailing Fellowship Terms and Conditions will apply. Fellows must request Military Leaves via the GRFP Online Module and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the awardee IHE. Fellows in Military Leave Status must submit an AAR (stating they are on Military Leave) and declare Fellowship status annually. The Military Leave Status must be renewed if the Military Leave Status extends into a new Fellowship year. In cases of an NSF-approved Military Leave, the IHE must agree to keep the Fellow enrolled and on their Grants Roster.

2.5 Enrollment

All Fellows must be enrolled, full-time, in an eligible research-based graduate degree program at a degree-granting IHE accredited in and at a campus located in the US, its territories, or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, except in the case of Military or Medical Leave. Full-time status is established by each awardee IHE and may include reduced course or credit load requirements during the degree program, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. The IHE's Registrar must consider the Fellow enrolled, and the Fellow must provide to the GRFP Program Office a transcript that reflects enrollment status upon request.

Transfer of Fellowship/Change of IHE

Fellows are permitted to change IHEs and transfer the Fellowship to the new IHE. When transitioning from one IHE to another, Fellows should not plan to have a significant break in enrollment (e.g., a break of more than one academic term). Full-time engagement in a graduate research program is expected; therefore, any changes of IHEs require prior NSF approval. When transferring institutions, Fellows are expected to 1) be enrolled in an eligible graduate program and 2) be pursuing a degree in a field of study

supported by NSF GRFP. Individuals who are not enrolled in a graduate program are not graduate students, thus not considered Fellows and ineligible to collect a stipend.

Fellows are not eligible to receive stipends during lapses in enrollment, such as when transferring between institutions. See specific scenarios below for more information on changing IHEs.

Before Starting the Fellowship. If a Fellow wishes to study at an IHE other than the proposed IHE listed on their Fellowship application, the Fellow should indicate their selected IHE when they accept their Fellowship. Contact the NSF GRFP Office (grfp@nsf.gov) if the IHE is not listed in the IHE Directory available in the GRFP Online Module.

Between Fellowship Years. Fellows who wish to transfer between IHEs between Fellowship years must submit a change request, via the GRFP Online Module, during the Fellowship Status Declaration Window. If a Fellow wishes to change IHEs 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 IHEs and NSF must approve the request.

During a Fellowship Year. If a Fellow wishes to transfer from one IHE to another during a Fellowship year, the Fellow must submit a change request. The COs at both the current and proposed IHEs and NSF must approve the request. Upon approval, the NSF GRFP Office adjusts the Fellow's Fellowship status records in the GRFP Online Module.

If completing a Master's degree and moving onto a Doctoral degree, see Section 2.9 below.

2.6 Scholarly Activities

Fellowships

GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with support from another *individual* federal fellowship. Federal graduate fellowships are defined as awards for which an applicant applies as an individual, not as part of a program in which an IHE applies for an award.

Examples from the federal government include, but are not limited to, individual federal fellowship programs offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Defense (e.g., National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG), Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART)), U.S. Department of Energy (e.g., Computational Science Graduate Fellowship (CSGF), U.S. Department of State (e.g., Fulbright fellowships), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Institutes of Health (e.g., Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award (F31)), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to support the graduate education of individuals.

Internships/Assistantships/Traineeships

Internships, assistantships, and traineeships are different than fellowships and therefore Fellows may be permitted to receive additional compensation from one of these if the funding is from a non-federal source or is a component of a benefits package provided to veterans. Fellows are required to check with their awardee IHE about specific policies pertaining to the GRFP Fellowship and paid activities. Fellows must report on other federally funded support in the mandatory AAR. See the table below for guidance on accepting stipend from scholarly activities in conjunction with GRFP stipend depending on Fellow status.

Scholarly Activities and Stipend Support: Funding Source vs Fellow Status		
	Fellow Status – On Tenure	**Fellow Status – On Reserve**
Funding Source – Non-Federal	With approval from the Institution, permitted to accept stipend in conjunction with GRFP stipend	Allowable
Funding Source – Federal	Fellows on Tenure must forfeit the GRFP stipend if accepting another federally funded stipend*	Allowable*
GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with support from another individual federal funded fellowship.		

Teaching and Similar Activities

Each Fellow is expected to devote themselves to full-time advanced scientific study during the Fellowship period. Teaching or a similar activity, such as a research assistantship, constitutes a valuable part of the education and training of many graduate students. Because such opportunities may arise during a Fellowship year, a Fellow may choose to participate in a reasonable amount of such activities without NSF approval. It is expected that such activities should further the Fellow's educational objectives; the activities should not constitute service to the IHE or be required as a way to make up the difference between the Cost-of-Education (COE) and the IHE's regular tuition and fees. Fellows may receive additional compensation for such activities, at the discretion of the awardee IHE.

2.7 NSF Supplemental Funding Opportunities

Non-Academic Research Internships for Graduate Students

NSF INTERN (Non-Academic Research Internships for Graduate Students) is a supplemental funding opportunity for graduate students who are supported by certain NSF programs. For detailed information, view the Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) NSF 21-013. To be eligible, graduate students must have completed at least one academic year in their graduate program (master's or doctoral) and be making satisfactory progress towards the completion of their degree.

Fellows can be either on Tenure or Reserve while receiving support from INTERN. For Fellows on Reserve, the budget can include stipend at the GRFP level (as specified in the GRFP solicitation), tuition, and required fees. Fellows on Tenure are not eligible to receive stipend above the regular GRFP stipend. Therefore, an INTERN budget request for Tenure students should not include stipend if the Fellow is receiving a GRFP stipend. Fellows should contact their CO for assistance with submitting an INTERN Supplement request. The CO will contact the GRFP Principal Investigator (PI) who will submit the request on the Fellow's behalf. If there are additional questions after the Fellow and CO consult, the CO or PI may contact GRFPINTERN@NSF.gov.

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 PAPPG Chapter II.F, Other Types of Proposals Section for further information). The specific nature, purpose, and need for equipment or assistance should be described in sufficient detail in the request to permit evaluation by knowledgeable reviewers. The NSF GRFP Office will make decisions regarding what constitutes appropriate support on a case-by-case basis.

Career-Life Balance Initiative

GRFP supports NSF's Career-Life Balance (CLB) Initiative (see PAPPG Chapter II.F, Other Types of Proposals Section for further information). IHEs may submit CLB supplemental funding requests to the current Institutional award to sustain the research of a Fellow who has been granted an NSF-approved Medical Leave for dependent-care (family leave) situations. This supplemental funding opportunity is in addition to the limited paid leave option for Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Leave. Retroactive requests are not allowed.

2.8 Stipend Supplementation

If the base graduate stipend level at the awardee institution is higher than the $37,000 annual GRFP stipend, institutions are permitted to provide additional funds to bring up the stipend to the same level as other graduate students in similar academic standing. The funds can be from federal grants (as long as they are not from an *individual* federal fellowship), institutional funds, and/or private sources. See the table on Scholarly Activities and Stipend Support for allowability and restrictions. This does not apply to the cost of education allowance.

Supplementation for Other Fees/Expenses

Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept, from NSF or other 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.

2.9 Academic Progress

Fellows are required to make continuous satisfactory academic progress towards completion of their graduate degree, except if on Medical or Military Leave Status. Satisfactory progress is defined and certified annually by the Fellow's awardee IHE. A Fellow's Academic/Research Advisor or designated graduate program administrator is required to annually review the Fellow's AAR and verify the Fellow's eligibility and degree progress by signing the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form. Effective Fellowship Year 2024-2025, per NSF PAPPG Chapter VII.B.7, advisors must also certify that fellows have an Individual Development Plan (IDP). The IPD, which is updated annually, maps the educational goals, career exploration, and professional development of each individual fellow.

The CO can certify unsatisfactory progress for Fellows who fail to make good progress or do not complete the required reporting actions. If at any time during the year the awardee IHE determines that a Fellow is not making satisfactory progress, the CO will notify the NSF GRFP Office, and the Fellowship will be terminated.

2.10 Reporting and Communication

Regardless of Fellowship Status, all Fellows are required each Fellowship Year to complete two separate tasks by the specified due date via the GRFP Online Module: 1) submit the Annual Activities Report (AAR) with the signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form; and 2) declare Fellowship year status as covered in Section 2.4.

Annual Activities Report

Regardless of Fellowship status, all Fellows are required to submit an AAR with the signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form by the specified due date via the GRFP Online 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 accomplishments. Fellows must complete the certifications on the e-signature page when the AAR is submitted.

To complete this requirement, the Fellow must provide a copy of the AAR to their Academic/Research Advisor for review and approval prior to submission, well in advance of the deadline. The Academic/Research Advisor (or designated graduate program administrator) must sign the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form to indicate that they have 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 signed form is uploaded into the GRFP Online Module. GRFP does not require approval for changing Academic/Research Advisors.

Effective Fellowship Year 2024-2025, a new updated text certification language has been added to the Activities Report Advisor Confirmation Form requiring fellows to have an IDP, which must be certified by the fellow's advisor (see PAPPG Chapter VII.B.7).

Fellows who graduate or whose Fellowship is terminated should update their most recent AAR or submit a new report in the GRFP Online Module during the designated submission window.

Change in Field of Study, Research Direction, or Degree Plan

Acceptance of the Fellowship award constitutes a commitment to pursue a research-based graduate degree in STEM, which includes STEM education. A Fellow's research and graduate study must meet the program eligibility requirements in the GRFP Program Solicitation. Fellows must enroll in a graduate degree program within the major field of study designated in their application and undertake a course of study leading to a research-based master's or doctoral degree.

Changes in Field of Study are classified as either a sub-field change or a major field change:

- A ***sub-field*** change in a Fellow's graduate program field of study or research direction is a change within the same major field of study (the GRFP Program Solicitation includes major fields of study). For example, changing from Chemical Synthesis to Environmental Chemical Systems is considered a sub-field change since both fall within the Chemistry major field of study.
- A ***major field*** 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 and reviewed with the Fellowship application (e.g., a change in major field of study; the GRFP Program Solicitation includes major fields of study). Changes in the major field of study during the first Fellowship year are not permitted. Acceptance of a Fellowship award is an explicit agreement that the Fellow will be enrolled in a graduate degree program of the major field of study indicated in their application by the beginning of the following academic year.

Using the GRFP Online Module, Fellows must submit change requests for subfield and major field of study changes and include a brief description of the revised proposed plan of study and research. ***Sub-field***

changes require CO approval only. ***Major field*** changes require approval from the CO and the NSF GRFP Office. The proposed field of study and/or graduate program resulting from a sub-field or major field change must meet the eligibility requirements detailed in the GRFP Program Solicitation. Questions regarding program eligibility should be directed to the CO.

Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID)

NSF encourages Fellows to include an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID®, https://orcid.org/) identifier in their Fellow record. ORCID 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 one researcher from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between researchers and their professional activities ensuring that all their work is recognized. The ORCID Registry is available free of charge to individuals who may obtain an ORCID identifier to manage their record of activities and search for others in the registry. While NSF encourages Fellows to include an ORCID identifier, submission is optional.

Communication

GRFP communications are conducted by e-mail. It is the Fellow's responsibility to keep their contact information (especially e-mail addresses and phone numbers) current. Fellows completing their Fellowships are required to update their contact information to allow the NSF GRFP Office to contact them. The NSF GRFP 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. Fellows should ensure spam, promotional, or other filters do not block messages from NSF GRFP (e-mail address: grfp@nsf.gov) and other e-mail addresses from @nsf.gov.

A Fellow's primary point of contact for inquiries is their IHE's CO, listed in the IHE Directory at the GRFP Online Module. If after consulting the GRFP CO at their IHE and reviewing this Guide, a Fellow needs to contact the NSF GRFP Office, only then should they e-mail 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, and copy their IHE's CO on the e-mail.

2.11 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 in 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 cannot exceed three months; and
3. The Fellow must request NSF approval and complete any required actions. Requests for NSF approval should be sent to grfp@nsf.gov.

Fellows will not receive a stipend during the transition period between the master's and doctoral programs but will remain Fellows even if they change IHEs. The interval of up to three months between enrollment counts as part of the Fellowship period, but no stipend can be used. 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 IHE. If there is a change in the field of study, see Section 2.10.

2.12 Fellowship Completion

Fellows who have completed their five-year Fellowship period or have graduated are considered Retired. At the time a Fellow's status is changed to Retired, they should submit the Annual Activities Report (AAR) or update the most current AAR through the GRFP Online Module by the specified deadline.

Fellows are entitled to stipend payments only for the months they are on Tenure at an IHE, provided all Fellowship Terms and Conditions were met during these months. No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except where a master's degree immediately (within 3 months) 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 awardee IHE and documented on the transcript. Under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF. Information on NSF Postdoctoral Research Opportunities, can be found here.

2.13 Fellowship Termination

Should a Fellow find it necessary to *voluntarily* 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 Online Module. The CO reviews and approves the request prior to NSF review and action.

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

1. Unsatisfactory progress towards an eligible research-based graduate degree as certified by the Academic/Research Advisor in the AAR, then confirmed by the CO.
2. Submit the AAR with signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form.
3. Declare Fellowship status by the specified deadlines.

Satisfactory progress must be certified by the CO. If at any time during the year the PI and CO determine that a Fellow is not making satisfactory progress, the Fellowship may 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.

2.14 Compliance with Relevant Policies, Regulations and Guidance

It is the responsibility of the Fellow, in conjunction with the awardee IHE, to ensure that all academic and research activities carried out within or outside the U.S. comply with: the laws, regulations, and governmentwide requirements of the U.S.; the policies and procedures of the awardee IHE and the laws, regulations, and governmentwide requirements of any jurisdiction to which the IHE is subject; and the laws, regulations, and governmentwide requirements of any foreign country in which the academic and/or research activities are conducted. Fellows must also comply with all NSF-mandated institutional training requirements.

All academic and research activities should be coordinated with the appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities, and necessary licenses, permits, or approvals must be obtained prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

Information on topics that often arise during a GRFP Fellowship is highlighted below.

Acknowledgment 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(s) (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(s) from their CO. If there are multiple sources of funding, all relevant grant numbers must be cited in the acknowledgment section.

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 awardee IHE (except for Fellows on Medical Leave or Military Leave).

Future Employment

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

Income Tax

Stipends may be considered taxable income. Fellows may find it helpful to consult the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Topic 421: Scholarships, Fellowship Grants, and Other Grants and Publication 970: Tax Benefits for Education. Specific questions regarding the taxation of Fellowship funding and personal tax liability should be referred to the IRS. NSF will not respond to questions regarding taxes.

Fellows are not, in any sense, considered salaried employees of 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. Institutional policies regarding the withholding of taxes from stipend payments vary, and Fellows bear the responsibility of filing and paying any taxes due.

GRFP fellowships are not provided as a condition of employment with either the federal government or the sponsoring institution. Institutions may not seek funds, or charge individual fellowship awards, for costs that normally would be associated with employee benefits (for example, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), which funds Social Security and Medicare, workman's compensation, life insurance, union dues, and unemployment insurance). Regarding union dues or similar costs that would otherwise be paid personally by the Fellow: The institution may accommodate requests to deduct these costs from the stipend, if requested by the Fellow. However, deductions will never be made automatically and will only occur with the explicit approval of the Fellow.

Legal Rights to Intellectual Property

The NSF 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 and trainees should note their obligation to include an Acknowledgment and Disclaimer in any publication.

Living Expenses

All living expenses are the responsibility of the Fellow.

Research Involving Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals

The Fellow is responsible for complying with all human subjects and vertebrate animal policies and requirements at their awardee IHE.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

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 Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research training requirements, see PAPPG Chapter IX.B.

Stipend Increase

Each Fellowship consists of three years of support, which is usable over a five-year Fellowship period. For each year of support, NSF provides a stipend to the Fellow and a COE allowance to the IHE. Any stipend increase approved for a Fellowship year will be provided to all Fellows on Tenure upon the availability of funds. Fellows who have graduated or whose Fellowship has been terminated are ineligible to receive any retroactive stipend increase.

Use of NSF Logo

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

Veteran's Benefits

Under Section 178(a) of Title 38, U.S. Code, educational benefits from the U.S. 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.

Workman's Compensation

Fellows should check applicable policies for graduate students at their IHE.

2.15 Evaluation Participation

The NSF GRFP Program may conduct evaluations to provide evidence on the impact of the GRFP on individuals' educational decisions, career preparations, aspirations, and progress, as well as professional pathways. The data provides information on whether the program policies are effective in achieving the program goals. It is useful 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 helpful information in evaluating the impact of the Program.

By accepting funding provided through the GRFP, Fellows and their IHEs agree to cooperate in GRFP Evaluations conducted by NSF or contracted evaluators.

3. Institutional Responsibilities

IHEs support and advise Fellows throughout their Fellowship period, receive NSF awards (grants) to financially support Fellows, and report to the NSF on Fellow and award activities. IHEs use the GRFP Online Module to manage their awards. IHEs must comply with the policies, rules and regulations contained in this Guide, and the Terms and Conditions found in the annual NSF GRFP Program Solicitation and the Notice of Grant Award. The current Guide is effective as of the date on the cover page.

The awardee IHE's Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR), in accepting the funds, also certifies that the Fellows are eligible to receive the Fellowship under the Terms and Conditions specified in this Guide and the GRFP Solicitation. The awardee IHE has full responsibility for the conduct of the project or activity supported under an NSF award and for the results achieved.

3.1 Award Structure Overview

GRFP awards are made to the IHEs in which a Fellow is or will be enrolled. The awardee IHE is responsible for the administrative and financial management of the award and disbursement of Fellowship funds to the individual Fellow. The IHE will administer awards, including any amendments, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of those awards, the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, and the provisions contained in this Guide.

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 results in nine-twelfths of the annual stipend). For stipend payment purposes, a month is defined as any calendar month in which a Fellow was on Tenure for 14 or more days at the IHE. A Fellow would not receive a stipend for periods of less than 14 days and would receive a full stipend for periods of 14 to 31 days of being on Tenure in a calendar month. If a Fellow is on active U.S. military status, a stipend is not allowable; also see section on COE allowance below.

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 established by their IHE and the NSF Terms and Conditions, NSF reserves the right to terminate the Fellowship.

Fellowship stipends are managed and disbursed by the awardee IHE. For disbursement procedures and schedules, Fellows should check with their CO. Regardless of the exact stipend payment schedule, NSF requires that the stipends be reported to NSF in no less than one-month increments.

The definition of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) in 2 CFR §200.1 (Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance) specifically excludes costs of scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of student aid from indirect cost rate recovery. Therefore, awardee IHEs should ensure that stipend payments are not reduced by items that the IHE would normally consider indirect costs or fringe benefits.

Stipend Increase

Each Fellowship consists of three years of support, which is usable over a five-year Fellowship period. For each year of support, NSF provides a stipend to the Fellow and a COE allowance to the IHE. Any stipend

increase approved for a Fellowship year will be provided to all Fellows on Tenure upon the availability of funds. Fellows who have graduated or whose Fellowship has been terminated are ineligible to receive any retroactive stipend increase.

Cost-of-Education (COE) Allowance

The Fellowship provides a fixed COE allowance payment in lieu of tuition and mandatory fees to the awardee IHE, ***not to the Fellow***. The allowance is specified each year in the Program Solicitation. The Fellowship provides three Tenure Years of financial support (stipend and Institutional COE allowance) and two Reserve Years (no financial support). The Tenure Year COE allowance is paid to the IHE in two parts: the first payment covers months one through five of the Tenure year, and the second payment covers months six through twelve. Fellow transfers impact which IHEs will receive the COE allowance. If a Fellow is at the original IHE for 6 months or more, that IHE would receive the full COE allowance. By approving a transfer at that stage, the receiving IHE acknowledges it will not receive any COE allowance for that Fellow for that Fellowship year. If a fellow is on active military status during a Tenure year, an institution can receive COE allowance.

IHEs accepting award funds agree to exempt Fellows on Tenure from paying required tuition and mandatory fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing. IHEs cannot require Fellows to participate in research assistantships or teaching assistantships as a method to make up the difference between the COE and the IHE's regular tuition and fees. Fellows may participate in assistantships but not as a means to reimburse the IHE for tuition or mandatory fees. The actual use of the COE allowance is at the discretion of the IHE.

While on Tenure, Fellows may be required to pay certain fees or deposits that are refundable in whole or in part, that are optional (e.g., non-required coursework or tuition at other IHEs 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).

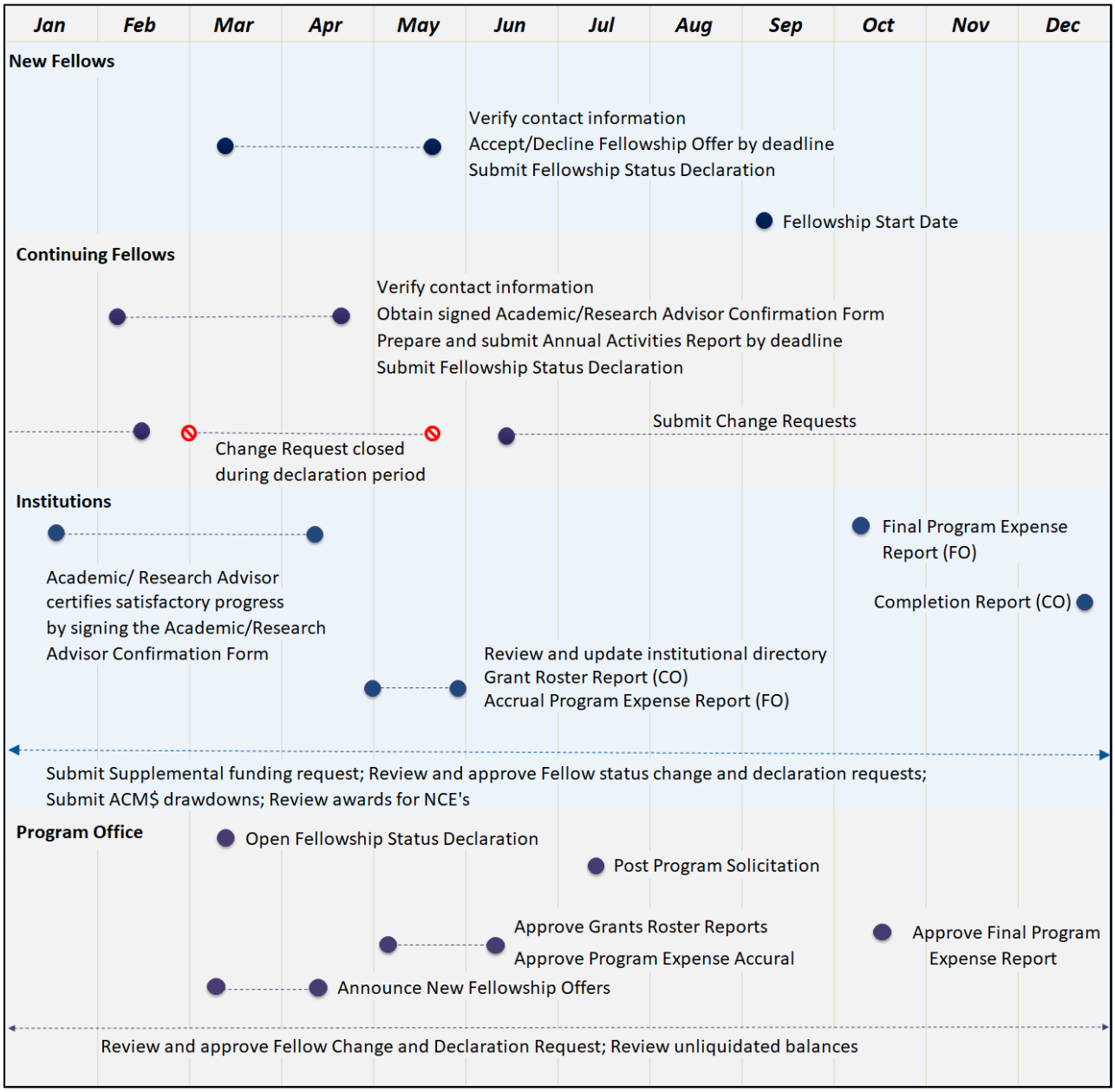
Shortfall Funding

GRFP funding generally is provided incrementally on an annual basis upon fulfillment of Institutional reporting requirements. Each year, any shortfall in funding is considered and addressed when determining the amount of the next award or amendment to an existing award.

3.2 Annual Program Cycle

GRFP operates on an annual cycle. All administrative actions are performed in the GRFP Online Module (deadlines will be communicated by the NSF GRFP Office; the deadline time is 11:59 PM, Eastern Time). The following graphic summarizes the annual program cycle.

Annual Program Cycle



3.3 Assignment of Roles

Awardee IHEs have important administrative and managerial responsibilities throughout the annual program cycle. Within an IHE, there are several GRFP roles, as listed in the table below. In some cases, an individual may fulfill more than one role (e.g., a Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) representative may serve as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR); the PI may also serve as the CO). The Fellows' Academic/Research Advisors are also integral to ensuring Fellows are making satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Role	Responsibilities
Academic/Research Advisor	• Monitors Fellows' degree progress. • Reviews Fellows' Annual Activities Reports and signs the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form verifying Fellows' satisfactory progress by the specified due date each year. • Recommends or approves, as appropriate, Fellows' participation in activities that require the Advisors' support. • Participates in the judicious planning of the Fellowship resources. • Ensures Fellows receive comprehensive mentoring that includes development of an Individual Development Plan that is updated annually and certified in the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form.
Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)	• Authorized to sign on behalf of the IHE; accepts the overall GRFP award. • Submits requests for supplemental funding to NSF at the request of the PI.
Coordinating Official (CO)	• Granted GRFP Online Module access. • Serves as the primary and day-to-day point of contact for Fellows and the NSF GRFP Office. • Advises Fellows on GRFP policies, procedures, Terms and Conditions, etc. • Applies GRFP policies in the context of the Institutional procedures (e.g., stipend payment schedules, enrollment requirements, etc.). • Reviews Fellow change requests in the GRFP Online Module and provides IHE approval/disapproval of such requests, as appropriate. • Reviews information on new and continuing Fellows for the IHE during the New Fellowship Announcement and Fellowship Status Declaration periods each spring. • Certifies the progress of continuing Fellows. • Prepares and submits the GRFP Grants Roster Report and the Completion Report which confirms the accuracy of the Fellows listed and their status for the next Fellowship year. • Participates in the preparation and submission of the GRFP Program Expense Report in coordination with the Financial Official. • Typically, the CO is in the graduate school or other academic office that oversees fellowships and/or graduate student financial support. The CO is sometimes part of the SPO or works with a representative from the SPO.

Financial Official (FO)	• Granted GRFP Online Module access. • Serves as the Institutional representative from the SPO (or equivalent organization) responsible for financial oversight of NSF awards. • Ensure that the GRFP Program Expense Report is submitted by the established deadlines. • Assists the PI with requests for supplemental funding, and notifications/requests for no-cost extensions (NCEs), etc. • Has the authority to manage award functions in the GRFP Online Module.
Principal Investigator (PI)	• Maintains overall responsibility for the IHE's GRFP award. • Submits requests for supplemental funding to the AOR. • The designated PI serves as the PI for all Fellows at the IHE. It is strongly recommended that the dean of the graduate school (or equivalent) serve in this capacity. The PI also may serve as the CO or as an alternate CO.
Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) Representatives	• Charged with entering/updating required information about Institutional GRFP Officials in Research.gov. • Has direct access to award functions in Research.gov such as requests for No-Cost Extensions.

Role assignments and changes are handled through Research.gov – not via the GRFP Online Module. The SPO modifies the User Profile in Research.gov to include the appropriate privileges based on the assigned role. Once the User Profile is updated, the individual may access the GRFP Online Module. Organizations are responsible for ensuring that GFRP roles are updated and active. NSF does not have the ability to delete or modify assigned roles, access, and permissions. For new IHEs, please contact grfp@nsf.gov for instructions.

IHEs that are new to NSF or have not had an active award in the past five years should work with NSF to obtain access to the GRFP Online Module and submit other necessary information. IHEs should be prepared to submit basic organization and management information and certifications to the applicable award-making division within the Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA). The requisite information is described in the NSF Prospective New Awardee Guide.

3.4 Fellow Management

Status Declaration

Fellows must be actively engaged, full-time, in a research-based graduate degree program in STEM, including STEM education at their IHE, except in the case of Military or Medical Leave. Institutional rules concerning enrollment apply; therefore, enrollment status will be *as documented on the transcript from the IHE Registrar*.

All Fellows must declare their status in the GRFP Online Module for the next Fellowship year by the specified due date. Fellows who fail to declare status by the specified date will not be allowed to continue their Fellowships beyond the current Fellowship year and their Fellowship will be terminated.

It is the responsibility of the CO to review Fellow change requests in the GRFP Online Module and provide IHE approval/disapproval of such requests. After the Declaration period, the CO prepares and

submits the GRFP Grants Roster Report and the Completion Report (Section 3.5) which confirms the accuracy of the Fellows listed and their status for the next Fellowship year.

Stipend & COE

Fellowship stipends are managed and disbursed by the awardee IHE. The COE allowance payment is paid to the awardee IHE in lieu of tuition and mandatory fees. Only Fellows on Tenure are eligible to receive GRFP funding, except for Fellows on paid Medical Leave, who may be eligible for up to 3 months of stipend.

It is the responsibility of the Financial Official (FO) to ensure that the GRFP Program Expense Report (PER) is submitted by the established deadlines. Only the FO may submit the PER; they should coordinate with the CO to ensure the accuracy of the report. NSF cannot administer awards to IHEs who have not submitted the PER.

Change Request

Change Requests are submitted by Fellows through the GRFP Online Module. It is the responsibility of the Coordinating Official (CO) to review Fellows' change requests in the GRFP Online Module and provide IHE approval/disapproval of such requests. For stipend payment purposes, a month of stipend would be any calendar month that the Fellow is enrolled full-time that contains 14 or more days. Prior to approving change requests, the CO should ensure that the requested change is in accordance with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions.

Once the institution has approved requests for Medical Leave, the Fellow must submit a change request for Medical Leave in the GRFP Online Module. The request should include 1) the amount of time, in whole months, for which the fellow is requesting leave, and 2) how many of those months will be paid leave, if applicable. The nature of the medical or family leave situation need not be disclosed to NSF in the change request. The IHE retains relevant documentation indicating that the condition merits a Medical Leave.

Completion/Graduation

Fellows who have completed their five-year Fellowship period or have graduated are considered Retired. Fellows must submit a change request at the completion of their fellowship. Fellows who completed the five-year Fellowship period before graduating with a degree will not have the option of declaring past the fifth year of their Fellowship.

It is the responsibility of the CO to submit the Completion Report certifying the completion status of Fellows at the awardee IHE (e.g., in progress, graduated, transferred, withdrawn) and degree, if the Fellow graduated.

3.5 Certification and Reporting Requirements

Awardee IHEs have the following certification and reporting requirements. The AOR Certification Form is part of the GRFP award process and is only necessary for new awards. IHEs are required to complete three mandatory reports, in adherence with OMB #3145-0223 and GRFP Terms and Conditions: Grants Roster Report, Program Expense Report (accrual and final), and Completion Report. Noncompliance with these reporting requirements will affect institutional funding.

AOR Certification Form

Awardee IHEs must complete and submit an AOR Certification form as part of the NSF GRFP award process. The form can be found in the GRFP Online Module. For continuing awards, NSF may reference a previously completed AOR Certification form. By signing and submitting the certification form, the IHE AOR: (1) certifies that statements made are true and complete to the best of the AOR's knowledge; (2) agrees to accept the obligation to comply with NSF award Terms and Conditions upon receipt of the NSF GRFP award; and (3) certifies that each fellow will be provided with, at a minimum, access to the mentoring activities described in an addendum to the AOR Certification Pages document that is entitled "Mentoring Plan." The Mentoring Plan addendum should describe the mentoring activities that will be available to all Fellows at the awardee IHE. This may include services and programs offered at the institutional, college, or department level as well as provided by each Fellows' advisor and graduate committee members. See the NSF PAPPG, specifically Chapter II.D.2.i(i) of NSF 24-1, for more information about mentoring plans.

Grants Roster Report

IHEs are required to submit a Grants Roster Report for the upcoming Fellowship year. The Grants Roster Report lists the Fellowship status of all new and continuing Fellows at the awardee IHE. The GRR opens after the conclusion of the Fellow declaration period (typically between February-May). COs ensure all declarations and change requests have been addressed prior to submission of the GRR. The CO submits the Grants Roster Report in the GRFP Online Module, which is typically due in May/June. Through submission of the Grants Roster Report, IHEs formally acknowledge and certify the status of all Fellows with respect to reporting requirements and rating of progress, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award (see Section 2.9).

IHEs may be 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 terminated. The Fellowships of individuals remaining in Undeclared Fellowship Status on the Grants Roster Report are terminated at the end of the current Fellowship year.

Program Expense Report

IHEs are required to submit two Program Expense Reports (PERs) in (1) June for accrual purposes and (2) October for the final PER. The PER covers the respective fellowship year cost for each Fellow attending the IHE. IHE's have the option to submit or amend up to five previous PER years in GRFP Module. Any changes to the status of the Fellows during the Fellowship Year must be reflected and reported in the PER. Comments are required for any Fellows who did not utilize the full extent of their NSF fellowship funding during the academic year. These comments are essential for accurate record-keeping and compliance purposes. This includes instances such as transferring, terminating early, changing status from reserve to active or vice versa, or forfeiting a portion of their support.

The required submission in June in the GRFP module is used for accrual purposes to estimate the IHEs funding requirement. The submission in October is required for accrual reversal and final financial reconciliation. Both the accrual and final PERs are mandatory, regardless of any changes or lack thereof. Rejected PERs must be revised and submitted before the GRFP Online Module deadline.

NSF will not issue an additional award to GRFP awardee institutions with an unsubmitted and/or outstanding PER. Only the designated GRFP FO can submit the report in the GRFP Online Module. By submitting the GRFP PER, awardee IHEs verify and certify that the PER is in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award.

Completion Report

IHEs are required to submit the GRFP Completion Report annually each December. The Completion Report allows IHEs to certify the status of each GRFP Fellow at the IHE. For Fellows who have graduated, the graduation date is a required reporting element. The Completion Report is submitted by the CO.

3.6 Award Management

Funds for all Fellows attending an awardee IHE are made available through the issuance of an award to the IHE. If required, funds thereafter may be provided by new awards, amendments, or supplements. The following documents also are incorporated into each award by reference:

- GRFP Program Solicitation; and
- NSF Agency Specific Requirements to the Research Terms and Conditions.

Following Fellow Status Declaration, the IHE uses the GRFP Online Module to certify the list of Fellows (the Grants Roster Report) at the awardee IHE. The stipend and COE funding per Fellow will be based on the stipend and COE allowance levels specified in the current GRFP Program Solicitation and listed in the GRFP Online Module.

Pre-Award Costs

Once an award is made, the start date cannot be changed; however, IHEs have the authority to incur pre-award costs as outlined in Chapter X of the PAPPG.

ACM$

NSF uses the Award Cash Management Service (ACM$) to award payments and post-award financial processes. Additional information on ACM$ is available in the PAPPG.

Fellowship Year

Upon accepting the Fellowship, new Fellows must select a fall start to coincide with the approximate graduate program start date for semesters beginning in August, September, or October. The Fellowship start date does not necessarily coincide with the formal summer or fall academic session of the IHE, and the program does not expect the academic start date to align with the beginning of the Fellowship Year. Tenure status is not defined by the date on which a stipend payment is issued. See also Section 2.2.

No-Cost Extension

GRFP funding generally is provided incrementally on an annual basis upon fulfillment of Institutional reporting requirements. Each year, any surplus funding is considered in determining the amount of the next award or amendment to an existing award. A No-Cost Extension (NCE) extends the award end date without additional funding. Therefore, in the event of surplus funds remaining at the time of an award's end date, an NCE request must be submitted electronically to allow for a drawdown against the award and/or any amendments or supplements to the original award. If there are no active Fellows at the time of award end date, IHEs may submit a NCE request if additional Fellows are expected to enroll in the future. Funds on expiring awards and/or award amendments or supplements that are not fully expended are forfeited by the IHE in the absence of an NCE. When there are active Fellows, the amount of the

forfeited funds becomes the responsibility of the IHE and will not be replaced by NSF. Forfeited funds will be subtracted from Fellowship funding provided in the next new award.

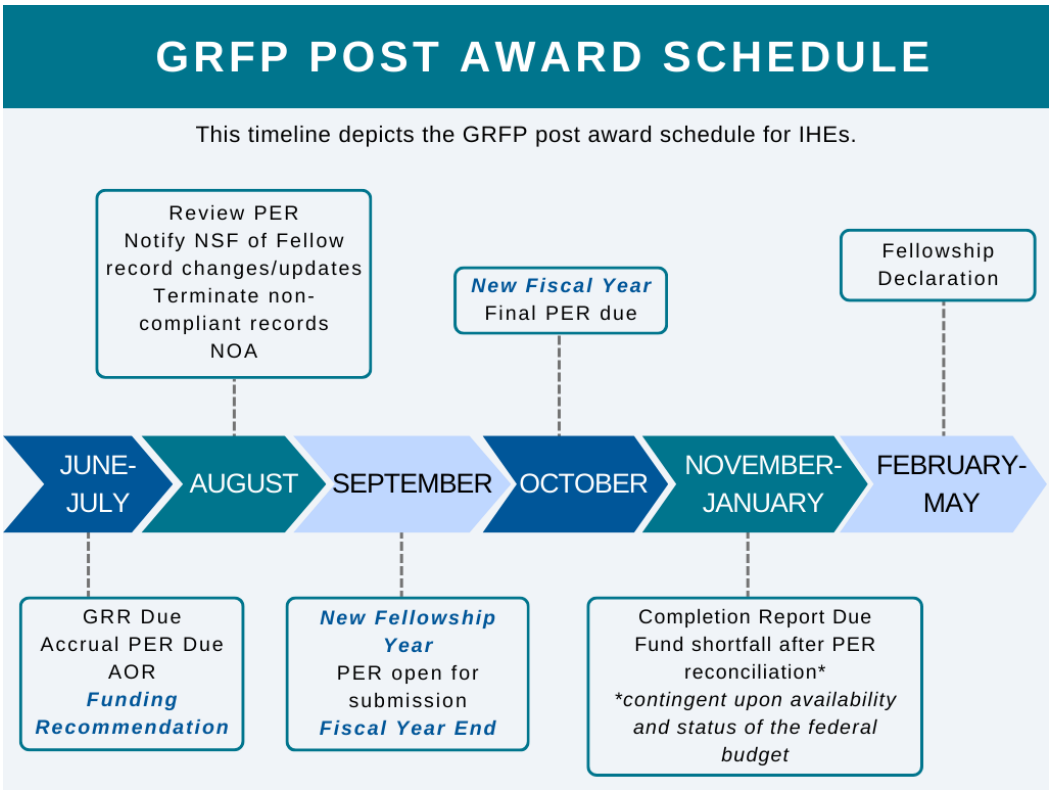
All NCE requests must be submitted through Research.gov. NCEs will be granted for active awards only; expired awards cannot be extended. The NSF GRFP Office strongly suggests IHEs submit a request for a NCE at least 45 days before the award expiration date to ensure funds do not expire.

The first NCE does not require NSF approval, it is grantee-approved. Awardee IHEs are not authorized to extend an award that contains a zero balance. An additional NCE requires NSF approval.

Additional information on NCEs is available in Chapter VI of the PAPPG.

Post Award Schedule

GRFP post award schedule and the key activities and tasks for Fellows and Institution Officials.



3.7 Monitoring

Part II of the PAPPG sets forth NSF guidance regarding the monitoring of grants and cooperative agreements. The awardee IHE has responsibility for the activities supported under the award and should monitor performance accordingly. NSF relies on the IHE's completion of the AOR Certification Form and submission of the Grants Roster Report, Completion Report, and the Program Expense Report.

3.8 Suspension and Termination

An IHE's award may be suspended or terminated by NSF for failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award. Refer to Chapter XII of the PAPPG for suspension and termination procedures.

3.9 Evaluation Participation

Refer to Section 2.15 Guide for information on evaluation of the impact of the Program.

4. Appendix

4.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Active Fellow	Fellow within the five-year Fellowship period enrolled in an IHE whose fellowship status is Tenure, Forfeited, or Reserve; *not* Deferred, Retired, or Terminated
Completed	Fellow who completed the five-year Fellowship period enrolled full-time in an IHE, before graduating with a degree
Completed with Degree	Fellow who graduated within the five-year Fellowship period
Completion Report	Report submitted by the institutional Coordinating Official (CO) certifying the completion status of Fellows at the awardee IHE (e.g., in progress, graduated, transferred, withdrawn) and degree, if the Fellow graduated
Cost-of-Education	Cost-of-Education (COE) allowance
Declare Fellowship Status	Fellow uses the NSF GRFP Online Module to declare Fellowship status for the next Fellowship year
Leave	Only for military or medical reasons – leaves for any other reasons are not allowed
Fellow ID	Fellow Identification Number (starts with award year); e.g., 2022123456
Fellowship Termination	Fellowship is revoked by NSF for failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award; *or* Fellowship is voluntarily discontinued by the Fellow or IHE
Fellowship Terms and Conditions	Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award that must be accepted by the applicant to be awarded the Fellowship. Fellows must abide by the Terms and Conditions and complete the required actions to maintain Fellowship status. Acceptance of NSF GRFP funds by an IHE indicates acceptance of and agreement to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the NSF GRFP award
Forfeited	Months of stipend not utilized during a Tenure year
Grants Roster Report	Report submitted by institutional CO certifying the status and progress (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory) of all Fellows at the IHE, affirming compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the NSF GRFP award; NSF uses the report to project the funding for the next Fellowship year
GRFP Online Module	Program website accessed via Research.gov for all requests, administrative transactions, and approvals
IHE Termination	GRFP award to IHE is terminated by NSF for failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award
NSF GRFP awardee IHE	Graduate degree granting IHE that accepts the NSF GRFP award, affirms compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the award,

	and is responsible for financial management of the award including stipend disbursement
NSF GRFP Office	NSF organizational unit responsible for GRFP management and oversight
Program Expense Report	Report submitted by the institutional Financial Official (FO) for the previous Fellowship year, certifying the Program Expense Report is in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award to the IHE
Reserve Status	Active Fellow not receiving NSF GRFP financial support during the Fellowship year; enrolled and certified by the IHE to be making satisfactory progress; also referred to as On Reserve
Retired Status	Individuals who graduated within the five-year Fellowship period or completed the five-year Fellowship period before graduating with a degree. Retired Status is automatically granted once these criteria are met
Satisfactory Progress	Defined and certified by the IHE; includes Fellow compliance with NSF GRFP reporting requirements and Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award
Status	Fellows must be in one of the status categories described in Section 2.4
Stipend	Fellowship payment to Fellows on Tenure or on NSF approved limited paid medical leave; pro-rated in whole-month increments
Tenure status	Active Fellow receiving GRFP financial support during the Fellowship year, certified by the IHE to be making satisfactory progress; also referred to as On Tenure

4.2 Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACM$	Award Cash Management Service
AOR	Authorized Organizational Representative
BFA	Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CLB	Career-Life Balance
CO	Coordinating Official
COE	Cost-of-Education
IHE	Institutions of Higher Education
FASED	Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities
FO	Financial Official
GRFP	Graduate Research Fellowship Program
INTERN	Non-Academic Research Internships for Graduate Students
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
MTDC	Modified Total Direct Cost
NCE	No-Cost Extension
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID
PAPPG	Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide
PI	Principal Investigator
SPO	Sponsored Projects Office
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

5. Terms and Conditions

Fellow Terms and Conditions

Fellows must abide by the Terms and Conditions and complete required actions to maintain Fellowship status.

Fellowship Acceptance and Enrollment

Accept Offer: New Fellows must both 1) accept and agree to the Fellowship Terms and Conditions and 2) declare fellow status for the upcoming fellowship year by the specified due date.

Full-Time Enrollment: Fellows must be enrolled in a full-time, eligible, research-based graduate program throughout the fellowship.

Fellowship Status Management

Status Declaration: Fellows must declare their status (On Tenure, On Reserve, Medical Leave, or Military Leave) annually through the GRFP Online Module.

Change Requests: Fellows must submit any requests for status changes, medical/military leave, or institution transfers.

Academic Progress and Reporting

Satisfactory Academic Progress: Fellows must maintain satisfactory progress towards their degree, as verified by their Academic/Research Advisor.

Annual Activities Report: Fellows must submit an Annual Activities Report along with the signed Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form.

Completion Report: Fellows must submit a Completion Report at the end of their Fellowship or upon graduation.

Financial Terms and Stipend Management

Receive Stipend: Fellows on Tenure status will receive the GRFP stipend through their institution. Fellows on Reserve or leave do not receive the stipend.

No Concurrent Federal Fellowships: Fellows cannot receive support from other federal fellowships concurrently with GRFP funding.

Leave Management

Request Leave: Fellows can request Medical or Military Leave, if necessary. Medical Leave may be paid for up to 3 months if the Fellow is on Tenure.

Document Leave: Fellows must provide required documentation for Medical or Military Leave, following institutional approval.

Research and Ethical Compliance

Responsible Conduct of Research: Fellows must complete required training on the responsible and ethical conduct of research as mandated by their institution.

Human and Animal Research Compliance: Fellows must follow regulations regarding research involving human subjects or vertebrate animals.

Fellow Terms and Conditions Continued

Fellows must abide by the Terms and Conditions and complete required actions to maintain Fellowship status.

Acknowledgment of NSF Support

Acknowledge NSF Support: Fellows must acknowledge NSF support in all publications, presentations, or creative works arising from their Fellowship.

Fellowship Termination

Voluntary Termination: Fellows may voluntarily terminate their Fellowship by submitting a termination request via the GRFP Online Module.

Fellowship Revocation: NSF may terminate a Fellowship for failure to maintain satisfactory progress, submit reports, or comply with Terms and Conditions.

Program Evaluation Participation

Cooperate with Evaluations: Fellows may be contacted by NSF for program evaluations regarding their educational and career outcomes. Participation is expected as part of the Fellowship Terms and Conditions.

Completion Report: Fellows must submit a Completion Report at the end of their Fellowship or upon graduation.

IHE Officials Terms and Conditions

Acceptance of NSF GRFP funds by an IHE indicates acceptance of and agreement to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the NSF GRFP award.

Fellowship Acceptance and Enrollment

Ensure Enrollment: The Coordinating Official (CO) must verify that Fellows are enrolled in a full-time graduate program and eligible for GRFP funding.

AOR Certification: The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) certifies institutional compliance with GRFP terms upon acceptance of the award.

Fellowship Status Management

Review Status Declarations: The CO reviews and certifies the Fellowship status of all Fellows and submits the Grants Roster Report (GRR) annually.

Approve Change Requests: COs must approve or disapprove all change requests (e.g., leave, transfers) submitted by Fellows before NSF review.

Academic Progress and Reporting

Monitor Academic Progress: The Academic/Research Advisor monitors Fellows' academic progress and certifies this by signing the Advisor Confirmation Form.

Submit Grants Roster and Completion Reports: The CO submits the Grants Roster Report and the Completion Report, ensuring accurate status certification of all Fellows.

Financial Terms and Stipend Management

Disburse Stipend: The Financial Official (FO) ensures timely stipend disbursement to Fellows on Tenure and manages any necessary financial reports.

Handle COE Allowance: The institution receives a Cost-of-Education (COE) allowance for Fellows on Tenure, which covers tuition and fees. The FO manages the financial distribution of the COE allowance.

Submit Program Expense Reports: The FO must submit the Program Expense Report (PER) for all institutional Fellows by the deadline.

Leave Management

Approve Leave: The CO reviews and approves Medical or Military Leave requests, ensuring that the institution supports the Fellow's leave request.

Maintain Documentation: The CO and institution retain documentation for any approved leave and update the Fellow's status in the GRFP Online Module.

IHE Officials Terms and Conditions Continued

Acceptance of NSF GRFP funds by an IHE indicates acceptance of and agreement to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the NSF GRFP award.

Research and Ethical Compliance

Ensure Ethical Training: The CO ensures that Fellows meet institutional and NSF requirements for Responsible Conduct of Research training.

Monitor Research Compliance: The institution ensures that Fellows adhere to policies related to research ethics, especially when involving human subjects or vertebrate animals.

Acknowledgment of NSF Support

Verify NSF Acknowledgment: Officials may review Fellows' publications or outputs to ensure that proper NSF acknowledgment is included where applicable.

Fellowship Termination

Certify Termination Requests: The CO must review and certify all termination requests submitted by Fellows.

Monitor Satisfactory Progress: If a Fellow fails to maintain satisfactory progress or fulfill other requirements, the CO must notify NSF for potential Fellowship termination.

Program Evaluation Participation

Support Program Evaluation: The institution agrees to cooperate with NSF in any GRFP evaluations, providing data or contact information for program assessments as required.