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**-REVISED-**

**National Science Foundation  
Graduate Research Fellowship  
Program**  
*Administrative Guide for Fellows  
and Coordinating Officials*

**NSF 12-061  
2012**

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**National Science Foundation  
Directorate for Education & Human Resources  
Division of Graduate Education  
(Replaces [NSF 11-031](#))**

## FOREWORD

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

The Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) is NSF's oldest program, dating to the Foundation's first fully funded year of 1952. Since then, the GRFP has supported over 46,000 US citizens, nationals, and permanent residents to pursue advanced degrees in science and engineering. Among its alumni are over 30 Nobel Laureates, 440 members of the National Academy of Sciences, thousands of science and engineering faculty, and many notable individuals in industry, government, and the non-profit sector. Additional information on the program may be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/grfp> and <http://www.nsfgrfp.org>.

This [Guide](#) outlines the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and GRFP Institutions. The Fellowship Terms and Conditions incorporate all policies found in the Fellowship Offer Letter, the annual GRFP [Program Solicitation](#), and this [Guide \(NSF 12-061\)](#). The current [Guide](#) applies to the 2012–2013 Fellowship year forward, unless otherwise noted or superseded by an updated version. **Please note that the Fellowship Terms and Conditions are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the Fellow and the Grantee GRFP Institution to ensure compliance with them.**

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

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## COMMON ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, TERMS, LINKS, AND CONTACTS

Active	Fellow within the five-year Fellowship Period; not Completed or Terminated
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
CO(s)	Coordinating Official(s)
COE	Cost of Education; 1-5 (½ COE) or 6-12 (full COE) months Tenure
Completed	Inactive Fellow with no Tenure years left or who has graduated
Continuing Fellow	Active Fellow in good standing with time left on the Fellowship
Declare Tenure deferral	The Fellow uses the GRFP FastLane Module to declare Fellowship Status for the next fellowship year, (Tenure, Reserve, Military/Medical 1, or Forfeit)
Deferral	Only approved for Military/Medical – there is no other deferral of the Fellowship
FASED Fellow	Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities Active NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program Fellow
Fellow ID	Fellow Identification Number; e.g., 2010123456
FFR	Federal Financial Report
FO	Financial Official
Forfeit	Active Fellow on Tenure, or beyond the two-year Reserve limit, who is not eligible to receive GRFP financial support for a period of time
GRFP	Graduate Research Fellowship Program
GRFP FastLane Module	Program website for all requests, administrative transactions, and approvals
Guide	<a href="#"><u>NSF GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials</u></a>
GRFP Institution	Fellow’s graduate, degree-granting institution
Month	14 or more days in a calendar month
NCE	No-Cost Extension; relevant only for GRFP Institution Awards
New Fellow	Accepted Fellowship Offer and starting the first Fellowship Year
Non-enrolled Period	Period of time approved by GRFP Institution when fellow is actively engaged in activities furthering graduate study and is not enrolled
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	White House Office of Management and Budget
PI	Principal Investigator
Program Office	NSF unit responsible for GRFP program management and oversight
Reserve Service	Active Fellow in good standing; not receiving GRFP financial support Time
Stipend	Fellowship payment to Fellows on Tenure; prorated in whole-month increments
Tenure	Active Fellow in good standing; receiving GRFP financial support
XSEDE	Cyberinfrastructure resource
Terminated	Fellowship discontinued by NSF or Fellow

### NSF Documents and Publications

[Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide:](#)

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/>

[GRFP Program Solicitation:](#)

[http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?WT.z\\_pims\\_id=6201&ods\\_key=nsf11582](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=6201&ods_key=nsf11582)

[Research Terms and Conditions, and associated NSF Agency Specific Requirements:](#)

<http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>

[ARRA Terms and Conditions:](#) [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/arra/arratc\\_509.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/arra/arratc_509.pdf)

### **Websites**

NSF: <http://www.nsf.gov>

GRFP Program: <http://www.nsf.gov/grfp> and <http://www.nsfgrfp.org>

GRFP FastLane Module: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp>

### **Contacts**

Program Office: [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov)

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

## **ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE**

GRFP operates on an annual cycle. The following are critical dates for administrative actions that are performed in the GRFP FastLane Module:

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

- Announce new Fellowships

### **May 1** New Fellow

- Accept/Decline Fellowship Offer
- Verify contact information, GRFP Institution, Field of Study, and start date
- Submit annual Tenure Declaration for upcoming Fellowship Year

### Continuing Fellow

- Submit Annual Activities Report and upload signed [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#)
- Verify contact information
- Submit annual Tenure Declaration for upcoming Fellowship Year

### Academic/Research Advisor

- Verify satisfactory progress and sign [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#)

### **May 15** **CO certifies eligibility and satisfactory progress of all Fellows**

### **Summer** Program Office

- Start incremental funding of GRFP Institution Awards

### **October 1** PI/FO/CO

- Submit Institution Annual Report

### **Quarterly** FO

- Submit FFR

### **Annually** Program Office

- Issue Guide

### **Anytime** All Fellows

- Submit Change Requests for Field-of-Study, GRFP Institution, Tenure-Status

### Program Office and COs

- Review and approve/disapprove Fellow requests

### **Deadlines**

Failure to meet the established GRFP Deadlines will result in termination of the Fellowship. When in doubt, Fellows are strongly encouraged to contact their CO.

## FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES

### Fellowship Acceptance

New Fellows are sent a Fellowship Offer Letter by email (APPENDIX I). New Fellows must formally Accept the Fellowship and Declare Tenure Status. Confirmation of acceptance in an NSF-approved graduate degree program is required at the time of fellowship acceptance. Declaring Tenure means the Fellow uses the GRFP FastLane Module to indicate his or her intention to be on Tenure, on Reserve, or on Military or Medical Deferral for the next fellowship year. Upon acceptance of an NSF GRFP Fellowship, Fellows must certify that they meet all of the eligibility requirements (see **APPENDIX II**), as described in the [Program Solicitation](#) and Program Certifications. Acceptance of the Fellowship constitutes a commitment to pursue a graduate degree in an eligible science or engineering field, as described in the [Program Solicitation](#) (see **APPENDIX II**). Failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions will result in revocation of the Fellowship and render individuals ineligible to re-apply. In cases where Fellows have misrepresented their eligibility, or have failed to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, the Fellowship will be revoked, and the case may be referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. This action may result in requiring the Fellow to repay Fellowship funds to the National Science Foundation.

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

### Fellowship Year

Each Fellowship Year is comprised of twelve months. The Tenure-Status Effective Date of the Fellowship is the date on which a Fellow actually begins the Fellowship (Summer/June 1 or Fall/September 1), and Tenure is computed from that date. Upon accepting the Fellowship, the Fellow selects Summer/June 1 or Fall/September 1 to coincide with the approximate graduate program start date (e.g., Fall for Fellows starting graduate school in August/September/October). The Fellowship Start Date does not necessarily coincide with the formal summer or fall academic session of the GRFP Institution, and Fellowship Tenure Status is not defined by the date on which a Stipend Payment is issued. The exact starting date of graduate study is mutually determined by the Fellow and the CO. All Fellows must Declare Tenure Status by May 1 for the subsequent Fellowship Year. This task is accomplished in the GRFP FastLane Module. Fellowship year start date (summer or fall) may only be changed for the next year at the time of Tenure declaration when going from Tenure to Reserve Status, or vice versa.

Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate programs throughout the Fellowship Year. New Fellows may begin their Fellowship either during the Summer (June 1) or the Fall (September 1) immediately following the Fellowship Offer, provided they are actively engaged in research or coursework at the time of the Fellowship start. New Fellows who are between programs or not actively engaged in a graduate program during the summer, are only eligible for a Fall Start. GRFP Institutional rules concerning enrollment apply; therefore, Summer Starts do not require summer enrollment *per se*, but active engagement in the graduate

program is required. Fellows should check with their COs concerning enrollment requirements. The Fellowship may not be used retroactively for academic work prior to the summer immediately following the Fellowship Offer.

Fellows are not permitted to receive more than the equivalent of 12 months of GRFP Stipend Support during a single Fellowship Year, and no Fellow is eligible to receive more than 36 months cumulative GRFP Support. Only Fellows with Tenure Status are eligible to receive Stipend Payments. Fellows are expected to be engaged in their graduate program and research, irrespective of their Fellowship Status.

### **Satisfactory Progress**

Fellows are expected to make satisfactory progress towards completion of their graduate degrees. Satisfactory progress is defined by the Fellow's GRFP Institution. A Fellow's Academic/Research Advisor is required to annually review the Fellow's Annual Activities Report and verify the Fellow's eligibility and degree progress by signing the [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#) (Appendix III), which is then uploaded by the Fellow. Once the Fellow and Advisor complete these actions, the Coordinating Official (CO) certifies satisfactory progress. Fellows certified by the CO for the GRFP Award to be making unsatisfactory progress will have their Fellowships Terminated by NSF. If at any time during the year the PI and CO determine that the Fellow is making unsatisfactory progress, the Fellowship will be Terminated.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research**

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

In response to the America Competes Act, all Fellows supported by NSF to conduct research are required to receive appropriate training and oversight in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (effective with the 2010 Competition). Fellows should check with the CO about the Responsible Conduct of Research training requirement. Fellows whose Fellowship Offers were prior to the 2010 Competition are strongly encouraged to participate in such training, and their GRFP Institutions may require this training.

### **Acknowledgment of NSF Support**

The grantee is responsible for assuring that an acknowledgment of NSF support:

1. Is made in any publication (including World Wide Web pages) of any material based on or development under this project, in the following terms:

“This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. (NSF grant number).”

(Fellows should obtain the NSF grant number from their CO.)

2. Is orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

## **Disclaimer**

The grantee is responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including World Wide Web pages) based on or developed under this award, except scientific articles or papers appearing scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following disclaimer:

“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.”

## **NSF Fellowship Service Requirement**

NSF requires no formal service of Fellows, beyond the expectation that Fellows meet Fellowship requirements and actively engage in their graduate programs and research throughout the Fellowship at the GRFP Institution, irrespective of their Tenure Status.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Irrespective of Tenure Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year, via the GRFP FastLane Module: an Annual Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration. A description of each of these reports is included below.

#### Annual Activities Report

Irrespective of Tenure Status, all Fellows are required to submit an Annual Activities Report by May 1, via the GRFP FastLane Module. Also by May 1 of each year the Annual Activities Report must be reviewed and approved by the Academic/Research Advisor, who signs the [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#) (Appendix III). The Fellow completes the Annual Activities Report and uploads the [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#) (Appendix III).

By May 15 of each year the Coordinating Official of the GRFP Institution certifies eligibility and satisfactory progress of the Fellow.

Fellows graduating (Completing) or Terminating (discontinuing) their Fellowship during the year are required to submit a Final Activities report within 30 days of Completion/Termination. Annual Activities Reports should be brief and informative, following the templates and instructions provided. In addition, NSF is interested in receiving captioned photographs and being informed of any noteworthy accomplishments that merit public attention. Major highlights, such as publications, awards, patents, or discoveries, are particularly useful. These

may be submitted to NSF ([grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov)). Advance notification about important events or announcements, such as embargoed research publications, is most useful.

### Fellowship Tenure Declaration

By May 1, all Fellows must Declare Tenure Status for the following year. Retroactive requests to Change Tenure Status after this date are generally not permitted. Failure to Declare by the deadline will result in Termination of the Fellowship. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated.

At the time when Tenure Status is declared, the Fellows also complete the online certifications on the E-signature page (APPENDIX IV).

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

Fellows are expected to enroll in the program of study proposed in their application and to follow the course of study in that program. Minor changes (e.g., mechanical to electrical engineering) in a Fellow's graduate program or research may be made, subject to the approval of the CO. A major change in a Fellow's graduate program or research constitutes a "change in scope" — one that alters the program to the extent that it is significantly different from that originally submitted with the Fellowship Application (e.g., a change in primary Field of Study, such as psychology to biology; see **APPENDIX II** for primary Fields of Study). Such changes require a written rationale, which must receive the prior approval of the CO and NSF.

The proposed Field of Study and/or graduate program resulting from a minor or major change must meet the eligibility requirements detailed in the [Program Solicitation](#) (see **APPENDIX II**). Any questions regarding program eligibility should be directed to the Program Office. Using the GRFP FastLane Module, Fellows must submit Tenure Change requests for minor and major Field-of-Study Changes and include a revised proposed plan of study and research. Additional information may be required by NSF.

Fellows do not need to request NSF approval to change between a master's and a doctoral degree when there is no field of study or institutional change. Fellows should update their GRFP FastLane profile to reflect the appropriate degree.

### **Communication**

GRFP communications are conducted predominantly by e-mail. Therefore, it is the Fellow's responsibility to keep their Contact Information, (especially e-mail addresses and phone numbers) up to date. Fellows completing their Fellowships should update their contact information to allow the Program Office to contact them in the future.

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

## **GRFP INSTITUTION**

All Fellows from the point of Acceptance through Completion or Termination of the Fellowship must be associated with an NSF-approved and accredited US degree-granting institution, which becomes a GRFP Institution. When submitting the GRFP Application, applicants must indicate a proposed GRFP Institution. Until a Change Request is submitted by the Fellow and approved by the GRFP Institution CO, NSF assumes association with the proposed GRFP Institution. It is the Fellow's responsibility to arrange for admission to the GRFP Institution and graduate program and to request approval from the CO and NSF, via the GRFP FastLane Module, for any institutional changes. Because Fellowship Funding is made through an Award to the GRFP Institution on record, Fellows with incorrect institutional affiliations risk delay or forfeiture of Stipend Payments. It is particularly important for new Fellows to confirm that their GRFP Record properly reflects their graduate GRFP Institution.

### **Change of GRFP Institution**

With NSF approval, Fellows are permitted to change GRFP Institutions. However, when transitioning from one GRFP Institution to another, Fellows should not plan to have a significant break in enrollment. Full-time engagement in a graduate research program is expected; therefore, any break exceeding one month requires prior NSF approval. Enrollment breaks between graduate programs or GRFP Institutions exceeding three or more months are generally not approved, and if approved, may require forfeiture of Stipend Payments. See specific scenarios below for more information.

#### Before Starting Tenure

If a new Fellow wishes to study at a GRFP Institution other than the proposed GRFP Institution listed on their original Fellowship Application, a Change Request must be submitted for NSF approval via the GRFP FastLane Module. The CO at the proposed new institution must approve the request. This action should be completed by May 1 following the Fellowship Offer.

#### Between Fellowship Years

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

#### During a Fellowship Year

If a Fellow wishes to transfer from one GRFP Institution to another during a Fellowship Year, the Fellow must submit a Tenure Change Request to NSF. COs at both the current and proposed GRFP Institutions and NSF must approve the request. Upon approval, the Program Office adjusts the Fellow's financial records in the GRFP FastLane Module.

## **FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS**

During the Fellowship Period (five-year maximum), the Fellowship provides up to three Tenure Years of Financial Support (Stipend and institutional Cost-of-Education Allowance) and two Reserve Years. Tenure Status ensures that Fellows have the resources (time and financial support) to devote full-time effort to their graduate programs of study, and Reserve Status ensures that Fellows have the option and flexibility to participate in other education and training opportunities. During the Fellowship Period, Fellows must be in one of the following Fellowship Statuses: Tenure, Reserve, Forfeit, Medical Deferral, or Military Deferral. Tenure and Reserve Status is only assigned on an annual basis (12-month increments). Fellows not on NSF-approved Military or Medical Deferrals who have used two years of Reserve Status must choose Tenure or Forfeit Status for subsequent years. The Fellowship may not be deferred for other reasons. A Fellow may change between Statuses from one year to the next, but may only change the Fellowship Year start (Summer or Fall) when switching between Statuses (e.g., Reserve to Tenure). As noted above, Annual Activities Reports are required for all Statuses. With the assistance of an Academic/Research Advisor, Fellows should plan for the judicious use of Fellowship resources at the beginning of their Fellowship. Retroactive changes are not permitted.

### **Non-Enrollment Periods**

For Fellows who are pursuing activities where institutional enrollment is not required or permitted, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster and to approve the specific arrangement of non-enrollment status. A non-enrolled Fellow can be on Tenure or Reserve Status. In all cases, the expectation is that the Fellow is engaged full-time, working toward completion of an eligible graduate degree.

### **Tenure Status**

Fellowship Tenure Status is the period of time during which Fellows actively utilize Fellowship Support – receiving a Stipend and/or institutional COE. This includes situations where all or part of the Support is Forfeited (lost). There is a maximum of three Tenure Years.

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

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

Fellows on Tenure must be actively engaged full-time in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow on Tenure has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the CO must approve the non-enrollment period as part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution and conforming to the terms in this Guide.

In all cases, the expectation is that the Fellow is engaged full-time, working toward completion of an eligible graduate degree.

### **Reserve Status**

Fellows may use Reserve Status to postpone Fellowship Support for up to two years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship Period. Both Reserve and Tenure Statuses are only granted in 12-month increments, contained within one Fellowship Year (Summer or Fall Start). Portions of an unused year of Reserve or Tenure Status cannot be held for later use.

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

Fellows on Reserve must be actively engaged in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow on Reserve has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the CO must approve the non-enrollment period as part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution and conforming to the terms in this Guide.

If the Fellow is in the final year of Tenure (completing 36 months of financial support) with Reserve left, he/she may choose to go on Reserve, to continue to participate in Fellowship opportunities, or complete the Fellowship (i.e., surrender the two remaining years of Fellowship eligibility on Reserve). The default is to complete the Fellowship after 36 months of financial support; Fellows wanting to be placed on Reserve for the following year must request this status by emailing [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) by May 1. Completed Fellows (i.e., used 36 months of Stipend Payments prior to completion of the five-year Fellowship Period) with one or two years of

Reserve Status unused may continue to take part in future GRFP opportunities, such as the Nordic Research Opportunity. To do so, Fellows must Declare Tenure Status or contact the Program Office [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) by the subsequent Tenure Declaration Deadline. Reserve Status will be granted if the Fellow has not utilized fully two years of Reserve Status and is still within the 5-year period of the Fellowship. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated. For Fellows choosing to remain on Reserve, see FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION AND TERMINATION for procedural details.

### **Forfeit Status**

Any months of funding not utilized during a year of Tenure are Forfeited (lost). Fellows on Forfeit Status must remain full-time students (as defined by their GRFP Institution) and be actively engaged in research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible graduate degree in an NSF-supported field. Annual Activities Reports are required during Forfeit Status.

### **Medical Deferral Status**

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

To request Medical Deferrals, Fellows should first contact their CO and secure an institutionally approved medical or family leave based on the GRFP Institution's graduate student leave policies. Using the GRFP FastLane Module, Fellows must formally submit a Request for a Medical Deferral. The Request should provide an estimate of the length of time (in whole months) needed for the approved Deferral, which will establish the time period to be recorded for the Deferral. The nature of the medical or family situation need not be disclosed to NSF in the documentation provided. The Deferral Request is approved by the CO and forwarded to NSF.. The GRFP Institution retains relevant documentation indicating that the condition merits a Medical Deferral. A Medical Deferral must be renewed if the Deferral extends into a new Fellowship Year. Failure to renew a Medical Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected.

## Tenure Status

For Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, there is a limited paid leave option: (1) If the GRFP Institution's graduate student leave policies allow for paid leave, those leave policies apply; or (2) In the absence of paid graduate student leave policies at the GRFP Institution, Fellows may continue to receive stipend payments for a period not to exceed three months total during the three Tenure Years. The three months may be broken up into shorter, monthly time frames across multiple Tenure Years (e.g., use of two months of Stipend under Medical Deferral in Tenure Year 1 and one month in Tenure Year 3).

## **Military Deferral Status**

Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for Active Duty. Fellows must request Military Deferrals, via the GRFP FastLane Module, and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the GRFP Institution. Military Deferral must be renewed each year, and a new copy of duty orders must be submitted to the CO at the GRFP Institution. Failure to renew Military Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship. In cases of an NSF-approved Military Deferral, active enrollment is not required; however, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

Within a given Fellowship Year, duly authorized military service or training is permitted without penalty to the Fellow with the approval of the CO and NSF, if the service does not compromise the Fellow's enrollment status and degree progress. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected.

## **TENURE BEYOND MASTER'S DEGREE COMPLETION**

GRFP Fellows who have not completed their five-year Fellowship Period and are completing a Master's degree have the option of continuing their original Fellowship by enrolling in an NSF-approved doctoral degree program. To remain a Fellow:

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

During the transition period, Tenure (on Tenure Fellows) or Reserve (on Reserve Fellows) months are forfeited. Requests with supporting documentation should be sent to [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov).

## **FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION AND TERMINATION**

The Fellowship expires upon completion of 36 months of Stipend Payments, three years Tenure Status, or five years after Fellowship start, whichever comes first. The GRFP FastLane Module default is to convert Fellows to Completed status after 36 months of support. Completed Fellows (i.e., used 36 months of Stipend Payments prior to the five-year Fellowship Period) with one or two years of Reserve Status unused may continue to take part in future Fellowship opportunities, such as the Nordic Research Opportunity. To do so, Fellows must Declare Tenure Status or contact the Program Office [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) by the subsequent Tenure Declaration Deadline. Requests after the deadline are not approved.

In cases where a Fellow fails to comply with Fellowship Terms and Conditions, to make satisfactory progress towards an eligible graduate degree, to submit the Annual Activities Report, or to Declare Tenure Status by the posted deadlines, NSF will Terminate the Fellowship. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated.

Should a Fellow find it necessary to Terminate their Fellowship before completion of the 36 months of support, the Fellow is required to notify their CO and the Program Office and to submit a request to Terminate the Fellowship, via the GRFP FastLane Module. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated.

If a Fellow Terminates affiliation with the GRFP Institution prior to the completion of a Tenure Period, the Fellow is entitled to Stipend Payments only for those months on Tenure at the GRFP Institution, provided the Fellowship Terms and Conditions were met. For Stipend Payment purposes, the last month of Tenure is defined as that month which contained 14 or more days in a calendar month on Tenure at the GRFP Institution.

No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as indicated above where a Master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program. There is no continued Fellowship support upon degree completion and under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF.

## **FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS**

Starting with the 2011 Fellows forward, GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with another Federal Fellowship, irrespective of the Fellow's Status. Federal Fellowships are defined as awards that are made to individuals from the US Government (e.g., Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institutes of Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Agriculture, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, etc.).

### **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., graduation after nine months of Tenure results in nine-twelfths of the annual Stipend). No dependent, research, or travel allowances are

provided. Only Fellows on Tenure in good standing are eligible to receive Stipend Payments. If a Fellow does not conform to the Standards of Conduct of the GRFP Institution and/or the NSF, NSF reserves the right to withhold a Fellow's Stipend Payments or Terminate a Fellowship.

Fellowship Stipends are managed by the GRFP Institution. For disbursement procedures and schedules, Fellows should check with the CO. Regardless of the exact Stipend Payment Schedule, NSF requires that the Stipends be reported in no less than 1-month increments. 2 CFR Part 220 (Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21) specifically excludes the costs of scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of student aid from indirect cost rate recovery; therefore, GRFP Institutions should ensure that Stipend Payments are not reduced by items that the GRFP Institution would normally consider indirect costs or fringe benefits.

### Stipend Supplementation

Each Fellow is expected to devote full time to advanced scientific study or work during Tenure. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable part of the education and training of many graduate students, a Fellow may undertake a reasonable amount of such activities, without NSF approval. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and the gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not service to the institution as such, will govern these activities. Compensation for such activities is permitted based on the affiliated institution's policies and the general employment policies outlined in this document.

Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept, from NSF or other Federal and private sources, support for research expenses, such as laboratory supplies, instrumentation usage fees, field-station usage fees, travel expenses, conference/registration fees, workshop expenses, or subscription fees. For Fellows on Tenure, support for living expenses associated with off-site research activities will require approval by the CO.

### Income Tax

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

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

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

The Fellowship provides a fixed COE Allowance to the GRFP Institution, not to the Fellow. The COE Allowance is specified each year in the [Program Solicitation](#). The actual use of the COE Allowance is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution. The COE Allowance is without regard to the actual amount of tuition and fees involved. For Fellows in good standing on Tenure for six months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive the full COE Allowance. For Fellows in good standing on Tenure for one to five months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive ½ of the COE Allowance. If a Fellow transfers institutions mid-year (at 6 months), each institution will receive one-half of the COE Allowance.

## **Tuition and Fees**

### Required

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

### Optional/Refundable

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

## **Living Expenses**

All living expenses are the responsibility of the Fellow.

## **Veteran's Benefits**

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

## **Future Employment**

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

## **Long-Term Fellow and GRFP Institution Responsibilities**

As detailed in the [2011 Program Solicitation](#), NSF conducts evaluations to determine how effectively the GRFP achieves its aim of responding to the Nation's need for a diverse,

internationally competitive and globally engaged science and engineering workforce. Additionally, it is highly desirable to have a structured means of tracking Fellows beyond graduation to gauge the extent to which they follow a career path consistent with the goals of the GRFP and to assess the impact the Fellowship has had on their graduate education experience. Accordingly, Fellows may be contacted during and after the completion of this Fellowship for updates on various aspects of their employment history, professional activities and accomplishments, participation in international research collaborations, and other information helpful in evaluating the impact of the Program. Fellows and their GRFP Institutions agree to cooperate in GRFP Evaluations conducted by the NSF and/or contracted evaluators.

## **FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES**

### **XSEDE Resources**

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

### **Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities**

Fellows who have disabilities may apply for funding for special assistance or equipment through the Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) program. See **APPENDIX VI** for additional details.

### **Additional Opportunities**

NSF may periodically alert Fellows about additional professional development opportunities that may be of interest (e.g., [NSF GRFP Engineering Innovation Fellows Program pilot](#)). Email notifications and “Dear Colleague Letters” are the typical vehicle for communications of this nature.

## **FELLOWS ABROAD**

The Fellows Abroad Option has been discontinued (see SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCES below). This option supported students in advanced degree programs at non-US institutions. GRFP no longer supports any new Fellows who are not affiliated with advanced degree programs at US institutions. Currently enrolled Fellows Abroad may continue their graduate programs at non-US institutions until the completion of their Fellowships. Fellows who are currently enrolled in US GRFP Institutions may not elect to go on Tenure at non-US institutions, as part of the Fellows Abroad Option, after September 1, 2011 (Fall Start). Any Fellow may be on Reserve (i.e., not receiving Support) at non-US institutions in accordance with the policies of their GRFP Institution. Current Fellows Abroad should refer to the APPENDIX VII for instructions concerning the Discontinued Fellows Abroad Option.

While applicants must be affiliated with a US-based institution, NSF encourages graduate students to establish collaborations with international researchers.

## **SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCES**

NSF encourages Fellows to establish collaborative relationships with international researchers (e.g., [Nordic Research Opportunity](#)). Fellows will receive instructions on how to apply for additional support for participating in international collaborative research opportunities via a “Dear Colleague Letter” in 2012.

## **OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEREST**

Other compatible funding and international opportunities may be available directly through NSF or other agencies and organizations. Visit the [NSF website](#) and the [GRFP website](#) for additional information.

## **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

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

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

### **Principal Investigator**

Each GRFP Institution is required to designate a Principal Investigator (PI) for the GRFP Award. The designated PI serves as the PI for all institutional Fellows. It is strongly recommended that the dean of the graduate school (or equivalent) serve in this capacity. In addition to being able to submit requests for Supplemental funding requests, such as the Nordic Research Opportunity and FASED, advantages also include direct access to regular Award Functions on FastLane, such as requests for No-Cost Extensions (NCE). The PI also may serve as the CO or as an Alternate CO.

In coordination with the CO and FO, the PI is responsible for ensuring that the GRFP Annual Report is submitted by the annual deadline of October 1.

PI changes are handled through the normal NSF FastLane notification and request process – not via the GRFP FastLane Module. For new GRFP Institutions or those without an active GRFP Award, submit the request (PI's name, NSF Biosketch and Current and Pending Support information) to [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov).

### **Coordinating Officials**

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

To appoint a CO, the GRFP Institution modifies the NSF FastLane User Profile of the prospective CO to include GRFP Coordinating Official or Alternate GRFP Coordinating Official privileges. An Alternate CO is a secondary or additional CO. Once the NSF FastLane User Profile is updated, the CO may access the GRFP FastLane Module.

COs perform the following duties:

1. advise Fellows on GRFP Policies, Procedures, Terms and Conditions, etc.;
2. interpret GRFP Policies in the context of their institutional procedures (e.g., Stipend Payment Schedules, enrollment requirements, etc.);
3. review Fellow requests in the GRFP FastLane Module and provide GRFP Institution Approval/Disapproval of such requests, as appropriate;
4. review information on New and Continuing Fellows for the GRFP Institution during the New Fellowship Announcement and Tenure Declaration Periods each spring;
5. confirm the accuracy of the Fellows listed and their statuses for the upcoming Fellowship Year; and
6. certify satisfactory progress of continuing Fellows.
7. participate in the preparation and submission of the GRFP Annual Report (due October 1) in coordination with the PI and FO.

### **Financial Official**

The FO is the GRFP Institutional representative from the Office of Sponsored Projects (or equivalent organization) responsible for financial oversight of NSF awards. In coordination with the PI and CO, the FO is responsible for ensuring that the quarterly Federal Financial Reports (FFR) and the GRFP Annual Report (due October 1 in the NSF GRFP FastLane Module) are submitted by the established deadlines. The FO also is responsible for assisting the PI/CO with NSF FastLane requests for Supplemental funding requests, NCE, etc.

The FO should have the authority to manage Award functions in NSF FastLane. To appoint an FO, the GRFP Institution modifies the NSF FastLane User Profile of the prospective FO to include GRFP Financial Official privileges. Once the NSF FastLane User Profile is updated, the FO may access the GRFP FastLane Module.

### **Academic/Research Advisor**

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

1. monitoring Fellows' degree progress;
2. reviewing Fellows' Annual Activities Reports and signing the [Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form](#) (Appendix III) verifying Fellows' satisfactory progress by May 1 each year; and
3. recommending or approving, as appropriate, Fellows' participation in activities that require the Advisors' support, such as the [Nordic Research Opportunity](#).

Academic/Research Advisors are also strongly encouraged to participate in the judicious planning of the Fellowship Resources, such as Tenure versus Reserve Years.

### **Fellowship Awards**

Funds for all Fellows attending a GRFP Institution are made available through issuance of a Continuing Award to the GRFP Institution. If required, funds thereafter are provided by Awards, Amendments, and Supplements. The following documents also are incorporated into each Award by reference:

- [2011 GRFP Program Solicitation](#);
- [Research Terms and Conditions and associated NSF Agency Specific Requirements](#);
- [NSF GRFP Administrative Guide](#); and
- [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act \(ARRA\) Terms and Conditions](#), when applicable.

Immediately following Fellow Declaration of Tenure Status, the GRFP FastLane Module will update the list of Fellows at the GRFP Institution. The new, annual obligation per Fellow will be based on the Stipend and COE Allowance levels specified in the current [Program Solicitation](#) and listed in the GRFP FastLane Module.

### **AWARD MANAGEMENT**

GRFP funding generally is provided incrementally on an annual basis upon fulfillment of institutional reporting requirements. Each year, the surplus/deficit funding is taken into account in determining the amount of the next Award or Amendment to an existing Award. Therefore, in the event of surplus funds remaining at the time of the Award expiration, a no cost extension (NCE) request must be submitted electronically to fully expend the Award and/or any Amendments or Supplements to the original Award. In the event that there are no Active Fellows at the time of Award expiration, it is prudent to still submit a NCE

request because additional Fellows may affiliate with the GRFP Institution in the near future. Funds on expiring Awards and/or Award Amendments or Supplements that are not fully expended are forfeited by the GRFP Institution in the absence of a NCE. Due to the timing of the GRFP Awards with respect to Fiscal Years, NSF cannot deobligate excess Award Funds for GRFP Institutions. When there are active Fellows, the amount of the forfeited funds becomes the responsibility of the GRFP Institution and will not be replaced by the Foundation. Forfeited funds will be subtracted from Fellowship Funding provided in the next new Award.

## APPENDIX I. Sample Fellowship Offer Letter

APPLICANT NAME                      March 30, 2012  
ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE ZIP  
COUNTRY

Application Number: APPLICANT ID

Dear APPLICANT:

Congratulations! I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive a 2012 National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Fellowship. Your selection was based on your outstanding abilities and accomplishments, as well as your potential to contribute to strengthening the vitality of the US science and engineering enterprise.

The stipend rate for 2012-13 is \$30,000 per twelve-month Fellowship Year, given in increments of \$2,500 per month. Fellowships are funded for a maximum of three years and may be used in any three, 12-month units, starting in Summer (June 1) or Fall (September 1) over a five-year period that begins in 2012 (your award year). Please see the next pages for GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions, responsibilities, and instructions to formally accept your Fellowship and to view your rating sheets.

We encourage you to consider additional opportunities offered through the GRFP. Email notifications and “Dear Colleague Letters” on the [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov) web site are the typical vehicle for communications of this nature. We look forward to hearing about your achievements and contributions during your graduate study and beyond.

Again, congratulations on your selection as a Graduate Research Fellowship Program Fellow. We wish you success in your graduate studies and continued success in achieving your career aspirations.

Sincerely,

James H. Lightbourne, III  
Director  
Division of Graduate Education  
Dear Fellow,

On behalf of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program, the Program Directors would like to also congratulate you and extend a warm welcome to the NSF community. Please read all of the information below and take action as appropriate.

Regards,

Gisele Muller-Parker, Doris Carver, Gilbert John, Richard McCourt  
GRFP Program Directors

- Fellows must be actively engaged full time in a graduate degree program at an accredited US university, college, or non-profit academic institution of higher education offering advanced degrees in science and engineering by **Fall 2012**. Confirmation of acceptance in an NSF-approved graduate degree program is required at the time of Fellowship acceptance, by **May 1, 2012**.
- Acceptance of the Fellowship is an explicit agreement that the Fellow will be in an NSF-approved graduate degree program in the field of study indicated in their application by the **Fall of 2012**.
- By **May 1, 2012**, you will need to formally accept and agree to the terms and conditions of the Fellowship. The “Information for Graduate Fellows” link opens the [NSF GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows & Coordinating Officials \(Guide\)](#). This is a crucial document that includes the terms and conditions that apply to your Fellowship, in addition to the eligibility requirements and Certifications. You will need to complete the Certifications section on the GRFP FastLane website, which certifies that you are eligible for a Fellowship and will comply with GRFP guidelines and rules (see below, also in Appendix VII). These are the same certifications you have already attested to in the application. Visit the NSF GRFP FastLane website (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/>) to review the eligibility requirements, certifications, terms and conditions and to electronically accept this Fellowship, no later than **May 1, 2012**.
- You should familiarize yourself with the NSF GRFP FastLane website (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/>), as most GRFP actions and requests are handled through this site. The Guide is found here, and we ask that you take read it carefully as soon as possible. The Guide contains the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and GRFP Institutions. Please review it before contacting your Coordinating Official (CO) or the Program Office.
- You should contact the GRFP Coordinating Official at your intended institution of graduate study to inform her or him that you have accepted an NSF GRFP Fellowship. The Coordinating Officials Directory may be found at the link above. The CO will assist you in effectively managing your Fellowship and should be your first point of contact in the event the “Information for Graduate Fellows” does not answer your questions.
- Following acceptance of the Fellowship you will need to declare your Tenure Status by **May 1, 2012**. Tenure Status is explained in the Guide. The Tenure Declaration period will open **April 3, 2012** and will close **May 1, 2012** (Note: The last day for accepting the Fellowship and declaring Tenure Status are the same, therefore, plan accordingly). You will need to declare your tenure intentions each year by May 1 of that year. Failure to declare tenure can result in delay of stipend payments or revocation of the Fellowship altogether.

- Upon completion of each year of your Fellowship, you are required to provide an Annual Activities Report that documents your activities, accomplishments, progress, and productivity upon completion of each Fellowship year, whether you were on Tenure, Reserve, or Forfeit status. The NSF GRFP Office uses Activities Reports extensively to demonstrate the productivity of Fellows for a variety of audiences, including media outlets, academic institutions, NSF administration, and Congress. You will not be allowed to submit a tenure declaration for a given year until your Activities Report for the preceding year is submitted. You must also upload an Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form signed by your advisor, verifying satisfactory progress in your degree program.
- In response to the America Competes Act, all Fellows are required to receive appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research. Please check with the campus CO about the Responsible Conduct of Research training requirement at your (proposed) institution.
- You are responsible for obtaining appropriate permissions and complying with all institutional policies concerning human subjects, hazardous materials, vertebrate animals, or endangered species and copyright and intellectual property.
- All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP Support 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 under Grant No. (NSF grant number). Any opinion, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation."

- NSF Fellows are also eligible to apply for supercomputing time. Cyberinfrastructure resources available to GRFP Fellows are described in the [Guide](#).
- Please ensure that the following email address is not subject to a spam filter: [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov). The GRFP Office will send out notices and updates using this address. It is also important that you keep your contact information and email addresses current, as NSF will use your email address to communicate with you on a regular basis about related opportunities (e.g., [Nordic Research Opportunity](#) webpage and [NSF GRFP Engineering Innovation Fellows Program pilot](#) website).
- Unless you have previously requested otherwise, your name will be included in the Awardee list. The NSF publishes lists of Fellowship and Honorable Mention recipients on the GRFP website at <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp> in April 2012. This information is extracted from the applications and cannot be changed.

Applications were reviewed according to the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. Application reviews will be available in three business days. To view the application reviews, please navigate to the NSF GRFP FastLane website and login using your FastLane GRFP login credentials.

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

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

**It is recommended that you print or save a copy of the Reviews PDF for your records, as these will be available online for a limited time period.**

#### Certifications by Fellow (APPENDIX IV in the Guide)

You must read and agree to all the certifications and terms and conditions as indicated in the information below before you can declare tenure.

There are four certifications which must be made by all Fellows, and a fifth certification that must be made by 2012 Fellows only, before the National Science Foundation can authorize funds for a fellowship award.

The following four certifications apply to all current GRFP Fellows:

**I certify that:**

1. I will not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in the conduct of any activity with this fellowship award.
2. I am not delinquent on repayment of any Federal debt.
3. To the best of my knowledge and belief,
  - (a) I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
  - (b) I have not within a three-year period preceding my application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against me for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

- (c) I am not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (3) (b) of this certification;
  - (d) I have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or local) terminated for cause or default.
4. The essays (personal statement, previous research experience and proposed plan of research) and proposed research in the application are my own original work.
- One additional certification applies to 2012 GRFP Fellows and beyond:
5. **I have read the NSF GRFP eligibility criteria and to the best of my knowledge and belief I certify that I am eligible for this fellowship.** [See the [Program Solicitation](#) eligibility criteria.]

By electronically signing the request, I am certifying that (a) the statements made herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge; (b) I have not previously accepted an NSF Graduate Research or Predoctoral Fellowship; and (c) I agree to comply with NSF GRFP Fellowship terms and conditions if the request is granted.

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

## **APPENDIX II. GRFP [Program Solicitation](#) Excerpts**

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

### Citizenship

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

### Eligible Fields of Study

These are the major (bolded, capitalized headings) and minor (listings under each heading) Fields of Study supported by NSF. See the [Program Solicitation](#) or contact the Program Office for more information.

Please note that the Fields of Study were revised extensively in 2011. Continuing Fellows retain their original Fields of Study.

### **CHEMISTRY**

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

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

- Algorithms and Theoretical Foundations
- Communication and Information Theory
- Computational Science and Engineering
- Computer and Information Security
- Computer Architecture
- Computer Systems, Networking, and Embedded Systems
- Databases
- Data Mining and Information Retrieval
- Graphics and Visualization
- Human Computer Interaction

Informatics  
Machine Learning  
Natural Language Processing  
Robotics and Computer Vision  
Software Systems and Software Engineering  
CISE, other (specify)

## **ENGINEERING**

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

## **GEOSCIENCES**

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

## **LIFE SCIENCES**

Biochemistry  
Biophysics  
Cell Biology  
Developmental Biology  
Ecology  
Environmental Science  
Evolutionary Biology  
Genetics  
Genomics  
Microbiology  
Molecular Biology  
Neurosciences  
Organismal Biology  
Physiology  
Proteomics  
Structural Biology  
Systematic Biology  
Life Sciences, other (specify)

## **MATERIALS RESEARCH**

Biomaterials  
Ceramics  
Chemistry of materials  
Electronic materials  
Materials theory  
Metallic materials  
Photonic materials  
Physics of materials  
Polymers  
Materials Research, other (specify)

## **MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES**

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

## **PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY**

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

## **PSYCHOLOGY**

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

## **SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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

## **STEM EDUCATION AND LEARNING RESEARCH**

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

### **Ineligible Categories and Programs of Study**

The following programs and areas of study and research are ineligible:

- Practice-oriented professional degree programs, joint professional degree-science programs (MD/PhD and JD/PhD), or medical, dental, law, and public health programs are not eligible. Examples of typical ineligible degree programs include MBA, MPH, MSW, and ED.
- Clinical (see below), counseling, business administration or management, social work, education (except in science and engineering education in an NSF-supported discipline), or history (except in history of science) areas of study are not supported.
  - Clinical study that is ineligible includes patient-oriented research, epidemiological and behavioral studies, outcomes research and health services research. For example, clinical study that is ineligible includes investigations to provide evidence leading to a scientific basis for consideration of a change in health policy or standard of care, and includes pharmacologic, non-pharmacologic, and behavioral interventions for disease prevention, prophylaxis, diagnosis, or therapy. Community- and other population-based intervention trials are also ineligible.
- Research with disease-related goals, including work on the etiology, diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals, is normally not supported. Animal models of such conditions or the development or testing of drugs or other procedures for their treatment also are not eligible for support. However, research in bioengineering, with diagnosis- or treatment-related goals, that applies engineering principles to problems in biology and medicine while advancing engineering knowledge is eligible for support. Bioengineering research to aid persons with disabilities also is eligible.



**APPENDIX III. Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form**

Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form

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

In accordance with the policy of NSF (NSF 12-061), Academic/Research advisors are responsible for reviewing Fellows' Annual Activities Reports and verifying Fellows' satisfactory progress and continued eligibility by May 1 each year.

Please print this page and have your advisor review your Annual Activity Report. Following the review, please obtain the required signature from your Academic/Research Advisor. Upload a copy of the signed signature page to your Activities Report. You must complete this requirement in order to comply with the terms of your NSF Graduate Fellowship. Failure to meet the established GRFP Deadlines will result in termination of the Fellowship.

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

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

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

#### **APPENDIX IV. Certifications by Fellow**

**The system shall display the following certifications on the E-Signature Page:  
You must read and agree to all the certifications and terms and conditions as indicated in the information below before you can declare tenure.**

**There are four certifications which must be made by all Fellows, and a fifth certification that must be made by 2012 Fellows only, before the National Science Foundation can authorize funds for a fellowship award.**

**The following four certifications apply to all current GRFP Fellows:**

**I certify that:**

- 6. I will not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in the conduct of any activity with this fellowship award.**
- 7. I am not delinquent on repayment of any Federal debt.**
- 8. To the best of my knowledge and belief,**
  - (a) I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;**
  - (b) I have not within a three-year period preceding my application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against me for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;**
  - (c) I am not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (3) (b) of this certification;**
  - (d) I have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or local) terminated for cause or default.**
- 9. The essays (personal statement, previous research experience and proposed plan of research) and proposed research in the application are my own original work.**

**One additional certification applies to 2012 GRFP Fellows and beyond:**

**10. I have read the NSF GRFP eligibility criteria and to the best of my knowledge and belief I certify that I am eligible for this fellowship. [See the [Program Solicitation](#) for eligibility criteria.]**

**By electronically signing the request, I am certifying that (a) the statements made herein are true and complete to the best of my knowledge; (b) I have not previously accepted an NSF Graduate Research or Predoctoral Fellowship; and (c) I agree to comply with NSF GRFP Fellowship terms and conditions if the request is granted. Willful provision of false information in this request and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001).**

## **APPENDIX V. XSEDE Resources**

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

## **APPENDIX VI. Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED)**

Fellows who have disabilities may apply for funding for special assistance or equipment through the [Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities \(FASED\) program](#). The PI will be responsible for submitting the NSF proposal for a Supplemental funding request to the existing GRFP Institutional Award. If multi-year funding is requested, the PI is responsible for requesting continuation of the FASED, based on the Fellow's satisfactory progress.

### Proposal

Fellows should discuss their accommodation needs with their CO and prepare a proposal including any ancillary documents, such as the research advisor's letter of support. The proposal should include an overview of current research and a detailed budget (annual and cumulative) and justification, including amount contributed by the GRFP Institution. The GRFP Institution submits the proposal, as a Supplemental funding request to the existing GRFP Institution Award. Requests must be submitted at least two months before funds are needed. Funding decisions will be made on the basis of the justification and availability of program funds, with any resultant funding provided through a formal amendment of the existing GRFP Institution Award. FASED proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Program Office.

### Reporting

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

## **APPENDIX VII. Discontinued Fellows Abroad Option**

The Fellows Abroad Option allowing a Fellow to be enrolled solely at a non-US institution has been discontinued. GRFP no longer supports any Fellows who are not in advanced degree programs at US institutions. Instructions for current Fellows Abroad are included below, for reference only.

### Foreign Affiliation

Fellows electing to affiliate with a foreign institution must submit to NSF, as soon as possible, evidence of acceptance from that institution for study in a graduate degree program in one of the fields supported by NSF (unless such evidence was submitted with the Fellowship application materials). Post-graduate degree programs of study leading to an Honors degree at the baccalaureate level are not acceptable. Fellows are responsible for all arrangements for affiliation with the foreign institution and provision for living quarters. Fellows also are responsible for making all arrangements for securing any necessary passport or visas.

It is the responsibility of the Fellow to assure that any academic and research activities carried on outside the US comply with the laws or regulations of the US and of the foreign country in which the research is to be conducted. These include appropriate human subjects, animal welfare, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other laws as appropriate. All research activities should be coordinated with the appropriate US and foreign government authorities, and necessary licenses, permits, or approvals should be obtained prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

### Science Advisor

The Science Advisor is the principal professor under whose guidance Fellows Abroad are pursuing Fellowship activities. These are the individuals whom the NSF will contact to verify satisfactory academic progress and tenure change requests and to respond to questions and issues that may arise concerning the Fellow.

### Stipend Payments

Fellows affiliated with foreign institutions must submit a Fellowship Starting Certificate (NSF Form 349) via FastLane as soon as possible after beginning tenure. In addition, the National Science Foundation Faststart Direct Deposit Form (NSF Form 1379), must be completed and submitted on the GRFP FastLane Module. Regular monthly stipend payments will not be authorized until these forms are properly submitted to NSF. Since it may require four to six weeks to process these forms (particularly the first year as a Fellow Abroad), a Fellow should make provisions for support during this period.

### Special Fellowship Processing

In addition to Fellowship award acceptance and tenure declaration, Fellows Abroad must submit a Fellowship Starting Certificate on FastLane before beginning each Fellowship year and a Fellowship Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report (NSF Form 453) at the end of each Fellowship year. These options are available up to 90 days prior to the Fellowship start date for each Fellow (June 1 for Summer starts, September 1 for Fall starts). Additionally, Fellows Abroad must submit the National Science Foundation Faststart Direct Deposit Form each year to ensure timely deposits of stipend payments.

### Payment of Tuition and Fees

Upon submission to NSF of either an invoice or bill from the university bursar regarding tuition and fees that are due or a certified paid receipt for eligible charges from the affiliated foreign institution, NSF will pay to the Fellow the annual cost-of-education allowance in the same manner as the stipend is paid. Fellows abroad are responsible for all expenses incurred in excess of the specified annual (Fellowship year) cost-of-education allowance during any tenure year. These costs will not be paid by NSF.

## APPENDIX VIII. Sample Award Letter to GRFP Institution.

Award Date: January 30, 2012

Award No. DGE-xxxx

Amendment No. 005

Proposal No. DGE-xxxx

Dr. xxx

University xxx

Vice President for Research

xxx

xxx

Dear Dr. xx:

The National Science Foundation hereby awards \$xx,xxx to University of xxx for additional support of the project described below.

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

"Graduate Research Fellowship."

The purpose of this amendment is to increase the award by an additional \$xx,xxx. The cumulative amount awarded under this GRFP award now totals \$xxx,xxx.

The amount of this award is based on 12 months of tenure at \$30,000 (taxable) per Fellow as a maximum annual stipend and \$10,500 per Fellow as a cost-of-education institutional allowance.

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

This award expires on xxx xx, xxxx or such earlier date as funds are expended.

This grant is awarded pursuant to the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1861-75).

Except as modified by this amendment, the provisions of the "[Program Solicitation](#)" (NSF 12.xxx) and "Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials" (NSF 12-xxx, 2012) available at URLxxx, respectively, are applicable to this grant.

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

The cognizant NSF program official for this grant is Gisele T. Muller-Parker (703) 292-7468.

The cognizant NSF grants official contact is Angela A. Turner (703) 292-7524.

Sincerely,

Jason M. Madigan  
Grants Officer

CFDA No. 47.076  
[michelle.shows@usm.edu](mailto:michelle.shows@usm.edu)

