



**National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230**



Administrative Guide for the

2013 POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS IN BIOLOGY Program

April 2013

National Science Foundation
Directorate for Biological Sciences
Division of Biological Infrastructure

NSF 13-091

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 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology (PRFB) Program awards Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology to recent recipients of the doctoral degree for research and training in selected areas supported by BIO and with special goals for human resource development in biology. Additional information on the program may be found at http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503622.

This Guide outlines the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and PRFB Institutions and incorporates all policies found in the Fellowship Offer Letter and the annual PRFB Program Solicitation. This guide does not supersede the award letter terms and conditions. The current Guide applies to the 2013 Fellowship year forward, unless otherwise noted or superseded by an updated version.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 PRFB Host Institution to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Fellowship Program.**

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COMMON ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, TERMS, LINKS, AND CONTACTS

Active	Fellow within the two or three-year Fellowship Period, not completed or terminated.
AAG	NSF Award and Administration Guide ; contains official NSF policies on awards.
Completed	Inactive Fellow with no Tenure years left
Continuing Fellow	Active Fellow in good standing with time left on the Fellowship
Deferral	Only approved for Military/Medical – there is no other deferral of the Fellowship
FASED	Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities
Fellow	Active NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology Fellow
Fellow ID	Fellow Identification Number assigned in FastLane; e.g., 2010123456
Forfeit	Active Fellow on Tenure, or beyond the two-year Reserve limit, who is not eligible to receive PRFB financial support
GPG	NSF Grant Proposal Guide; contains official NSF policies on grants.
Host Institution	Research institution where Fellow is working
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
Month	14 or more days in a calendar month
NCE	No-cost extension; relevant only in cases of fellowship deferral
New Fellow	Accepted Fellowship Offer and starting the first Fellowship Year
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	White House Office of Management and Budget
PAPP-G	Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide
PI	Principal Investigator
Program Office	NSF unit responsible for PRFB program management and oversight
PO	Program Officer, the person who oversees your grant
PRFB	Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology
Stipend	Fellowship payment to Fellows on Tenure; prorated in whole-month increments
Tenure	Active Fellow in good standing
Terminated	Fellowship discontinued by NSF or Fellow

NSF Documents and Publications

Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide: [NSF 13-1](#)

PRFB Program Solicitation: [NSF 12-497](#)

Contacts

When communicating with the PRFB program by e-mail, please include your award number in the subject line.

For Competitive Areas 1 (Broadening Participation in Biology), 2 (Intersections of Biology and Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Engineering) and 4 (International Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology):

PRFB Program Office: bio-dbi-prfb@nsf.gov

DBI/BIO, Room 615
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA 22230
Phone: 703 292 8470; Fax: 703 292 9063

For Competitive Area 3 (National Plant Genome Initiative Postdoctoral Research Fellowships)

NPGI PRF Program Office: dbipgr@nsf.gov

IOS/BIO, Room 685
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA 22230
Phone: 703 292 4400; Fax: 703 292 9062

ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE

PRFP operates on an annual cycle. The following are critical dates for administrative actions:

March/April Program Office

- Makes new fellowship offers

Fellow applicant

- Accepts/declines fellowship offer

May 1 New Fellow

- Verifies contact information, host institution, start date in FastLane
- Submits descriptive short title and abstract for fellowship work
- Obtains IRB or IACUC certifications if needed

Summer Program Office

- Officially notifies New Fellow of award

June 1-Jan 1 New Fellow

- Submits Postdoctoral Fellow Degree Certification form
- Submits FastStart Direct Deposit Form ([NSF Form 1379](#)) to the Division of Financial Management (Information on Form)
- Submits Fellowship Starting Certificate ([NSF Form 349](#)) to Program Office when fellowship begins

Annually Continuing Fellow

- Submits Annual Project Report via Research.gov
- Verifies Contact information in FastLane
- Updates IACUC certification, if needed

Anytime All Fellows

- Submits change requests for foreign travel or change in tenure-status by e-mail
- Submits request for a major change in research direction via the Notification and Request module in FastLane
- Submits starting certificates ([NSF Form 349](#)) for host institutions when changing institutions

Program Office

- Reviews and approves/disapproves Fellow requests

Termination All Fellows

- Submit final project report *via* Research.gov
- Submit Project Outcomes Report for the General Public *via* Research.gov
- E-mail signed termination certificate ([NSF Form 453](#)) for host institution

Program Office

- Reviews and approves/disapproves final report

This information outlines the terms and conditions of your National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology for FY 2013 and provides general information for use during your tenure. Read it carefully and refer to it whenever you have a question about your fellowship. NSF and your host institution will thus be able to serve you more quickly and efficiently, and unnecessary correspondence will be avoided.

As a recipient of NSF funds, you are responsible for fulfilling the academic and fiscal obligations of your award. Failure on your part to observe all the terms and conditions of this fellowship award constitutes sufficient grounds for its revocation by and repayment to NSF.

INTRODUCTION

Your National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology has been awarded by the National Science Foundation in recognition of your accomplishments to date, and with the expectation that the experience you obtain during the tenure of your fellowship will increase your scientific competence and the scientific potential of the United States.

FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellowship Acceptance and Degree Certification

NSF expects that you will begin fellowship activities on the effective date of your fellowship shown in your notice of award but not later than January 1, 2014. If you are not able to begin tenure by this date, you must contact the program officer and you may decline the fellowship. This declination will not prejudice any future application.

Before you may begin your postdoctoral fellowship, NSF must have on record a certification of receipt of the doctoral degree and the date of receipt. If the degree is not received prior to the starting date of tenure, you must submit evidence that all requirements for the degree have been completed before beginning fellowship tenure.

Entrance upon Tenure

You start the fellowship by submitting a Fellowship Starting Certificate, [NSF Form 349](#) (06/2009) to the program office. Fellowships may be started only on the first day of the month. To expedite your stipend and allowance payments, you should either fax or e-mail your signed starting certificate to the program office on the day you begin your fellowship (or the next day if the first day of the month falls on a weekend or Federal holiday). We do not consider your fellowship to have started until we receive your starting certificate and cannot authorize payments until it is received. If you affiliate with more than one institution over the course of the fellowship, a Starting Certificate is required each time you change institutions.

Responsible Conduct of Research

It is the responsibility of the Fellow, in conjunction with the Host Institution, to ensure that all academic and research activities carried out in or outside the U.S. comply with the laws or regulations of the U.S. 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 U.S. and foreign government authorities, and necessary licenses, permits, or approvals must be obtained prior

to undertaking the proposed activities.

Some situations frequently encountered in the conduct of research require special information and supporting documentation before starting tenure. These include research involving:

1. An actual and/or potential impact on the environment;
2. A registered historic or cultural property;
3. The use of *in vitro* generated recombinant DNA molecules;
4. The use of human subjects, hazardous materials, vertebrate animals, or endangered species.

You must provide information on the status of any special permissions, clearances or provisions related to the above items **before** an award notice can be issued. Assessment of environmental impact will be required when appropriate. Specific guidance on the need for such additional documentation may be obtained from your host institution's Research Administration Office or the NSF Award & Administration Guide.

Use of Vertebrate Animals

The Fellow is responsible for the humane care and treatment of any vertebrate animals used or intended for use in such activities as field or laboratory research/experiments/testing, development, and training, or for related purposes supported by NSF grants. The NSF [Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II.D.6.](#) outlines the PI's responsibilities with regard to proposals involving vertebrate animals. In accordance with these requirements; fellowship projects involving use of any vertebrate animal for research or education must be approved by the submitting organization's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before an award can be made. For this approval to be accepted by NSF, the organization must have a current Public Health Service (PHS) Approved Assurance.

You must provide this PHS number AND get an IACUC approval letter as an amendment which adds you, the project PI, onto the approval for your sponsoring scientist's lab. This letter must contain your name, the **exact title** of your project and the expiration date of the approval. These amendments are generally applicable for a year, so **you may need to send NSF a new approval each year** of your grant. If the host institution does not already have a PHS approval or you are working overseas, please contact your program officer to determine the proper steps.

Use of Human Subjects

The Fellow must ensure that subjects are protected from research risks in conformance with the relevant federal policy known as the Common Rule (*Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects*, [45 CFR 690](#)). The NSF [Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II.D.7](#) outlines the PI's responsibilities with regard to proposals involving human subjects. All projects involving human subjects must either (1) have approval from the organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before issuance of an NSF award or, (2) must affirm that the IRB has declared the research exempt from IRB review.

You must provide the IRB approval or exemption letter with the name of the project PI. This letter must contain your name and the **exact title** of your project. If the project is to be performed outside of the U.S., evidence of IRB approval is required.

Acknowledgement of NSF Support

All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the fellowship must acknowledge NSF PRFB Support:

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology under Grant No. (NSF grant number)."

NSF support should also be acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

You are also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including Web pages) based on or developed under this award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in 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."

You are responsible for assuring that your cognizant NSF Program Officer is provided access to, either electronically or in paper form, a copy of every publication of material based on or developed under this award, clearly labeled with the award number and other appropriate identifying information, promptly after publication.

Sharing of Findings, Data and Other Research Products

NSF expects significant findings from research and education activities it supports to be promptly submitted for publication, with authorship that accurately reflects the contributions of those involved. It expects Fellows to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials created or gathered in the course of the work. It also encourages Fellows to share software and inventions or otherwise act to make the innovations they embody widely useful and usable.

Adjustments and, where essential, exceptions may be allowed to safeguard the rights of individuals and subjects, the validity of results, or the integrity of collections or to accommodate legitimate interests of NSF-supported Fellows.

Reporting Requirements

Annual Reports

- 1) Submission Requirement. Fellows are required to submit an annual project report.
- 2) Content of Annual Project Reports. Fellows are required to submit annual reports electronically via the Project Reports System in [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). The content requirements for annual project reports are specified in the system.
- 3) Timing of Annual Project Reports. Unless otherwise specified in the award, annual project reports shall be submitted at least 90 days prior to the end of each 12-month award period. It

should be noted that the final annual report serves as the project's final report and must be submitted in accordance with the section below. Continued funding for the second and third years of the Fellowship will be contingent on the approval of annual project reports, and it is the Fellow's responsibility to ensure that annual reports are submitted in a timely fashion so that stipend payments are not interrupted.

Final Project Reports and Documents

1) Final Project Report. Within 90 days following expiration of the grant, a final project report must be submitted electronically via the Project Reporting System in [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov).

2) Project Outcomes Report for the General Public. Within 90 days following expiration of the grant, a project outcomes report for the general public must be submitted electronically via [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov). This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted in the Research Spending and Results section of the [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov) website exactly as it is submitted and will be accompanied by the following disclaimer:

"This Project Outcomes Report for the General Public is displayed verbatim as submitted by the Principal Investigator (PI) for this award. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this Report are those of the PI and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation; NSF has not approved or endorsed its content."

Fellows are to ensure that the report does not contain any confidential, proprietary business information; unpublished conclusions or data that might compromise the ability to publish results in the research literature; or invention disclosures that might adversely affect the patent rights or those of the organization, in a subject invention under the award. Responses are not to contain any private personally identifiable information such as home contact information, individual demographic data or individually identifiable information collected from human research participants.

3) Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report. In addition, at the end of the Fellowship tenure period, Fellows must submit (by fax or email) to the cognizant NSF Program Officer the Fellowship Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report, [NSF Form 453](#) (06/2009).

Other Reports

The Foundation would be pleased to receive an account of the Fellow's progress at any time, especially if there are particularly significant developments during a given Fellowship year. These reports can be submitted electronically as an interim report, via the Project Reports System in [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov).

NSF may periodically ask you to respond to questionnaires or other inquiries as a part of the follow-up activities of the program. Minimally, we like to track each Fellow over 10 years with respect to positions, grants received, lists of publications, and research related honors and awards. Please update your contact information in FastLane after completion of the fellowship and keep NSF up-to-date on your continuing role in science.

Change in Research Plan

Minor changes in your research and training plan proposed in your original or revised

application may be made at your discretion and with the concurrence of your sponsoring scientist. However, you must obtain prior approval from the Program Office for any major change by outlining and justifying the changes in full. The request should be submitted electronically via use of the Notification and Request module in FastLane. The Program Officer will determine if the revised research and training plan falls within the intent of the award prior to granting approval.

Communication

PRFB communications are conducted predominately by e-mail. Therefore, it is the Fellow's responsibility to keep their Contact Information current (especially e-mail addresses and phone numbers). 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 bio-dbi-prfb@nsf.gov (Competitive Areas 1, 2, and 4) or dbipgr@nsf.gov (Competitive Area 3) and include his or her full name, Fellow ID, and details of the issue or request. Please ensure spam filters do not block the NSF PRFB e-mail address. The Program will follow-up with Fellows, *via* e-mail or phone, depending on the nature of the request.

HOST INSTITUTION

By law, as a Fellow, you must affiliate with an appropriate research institution during the entire fellowship tenure. You are responsible for making all arrangements for such affiliation with the host institution. A clear relationship should be established with the chosen institution before beginning tenure, to assure both you and the Foundation that it will be possible for you to carry out the program of research and training for which the fellowship was awarded. Therefore, you should share information about your fellowship (e.g., a copy of the award notice and this instruction booklet) with both your sponsoring scientist and administrative personnel at your host institution. They may have no experience with NSF fellowships and may not be familiar with the special conditions of fellowships versus research grants and cooperative agreements.

Sponsoring Scientist

Your application named a staff member(s) at the host institution(s) to serve as your sponsoring scientist(s). The sponsoring scientist will be the institutional representative responsible for your activities during the fellowship and must sign your starting and termination certificates in this role unless your host institution has other requirements for signatures or your sponsoring scientist is absent, in which case an appropriate official of the host institution may sign. If you have arranged co-sponsorship, only one sponsoring scientist at each location needs to sign the certificates.

Any questions relating to your status at the host institution, which cannot be answered by your sponsoring scientist, should be referred for resolution to other appropriate officials within the host institution, such as a department chair, dean, or a designated institutional representative.

Change of Host Institution

If it becomes necessary or desirable to affiliate with an institution other than the one listed in the application and/or with a different sponsoring scientist, you must request permission from your Program Officer **prior to** making the change via use of the Notification and Request module in FastLane. The request must state the reasons for the proposed change and explain the

appropriateness of the new institution for the proposed plan of study. The request must contain a new sponsoring scientist's statement using the format from the fellowship instructions as in the original application, including the new sponsor's CV. This must be done **before** final arrangements with the new institution are completed. **You may not begin tenure at the new institution until your Program Officer approves all changes.**

If the change in institutions is because your sponsoring scientist is moving to a new institution, an e-mail explaining the move will suffice as long as the new institution provides you the same or equivalent opportunities to conduct the research and receive your planned training.

FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS

Tenure Status

The Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology are awarded for a 24-month or 36-month continuous period. The maximum tenure of your fellowship is 36 months, barring any extension as outlined below. If the fellowship start is delayed beyond the effective date stated in the award notice, NSF may grant a no-cost extension to cover the delay and permit the full tenure. You (as an individual registered in FastLane) must request the extension through FastLane. The sponsored research office at your host institution cannot grant a no-cost extension to your fellowship.

During the tenure of the fellowship, you are expected to devote full time to the scientific research and training outlined in the application for which the award was granted. You may not engage in activities for compensation (except for brief military obligations) or receive another fellowship or research award without the prior approval of the Foundation. Such approval is granted only under exceptional circumstances.

Paid Leave

Within the fellowship period, one month per year of fellowship duration may be used for paid leave, including parental or family leave. The paid leave cannot be used to increase the level of NSF support beyond the duration of the fellowship. NSF enables career-life balance through a variety of mechanisms. Support to address dependent care issues may be available for awardees. For more information, please see <http://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance/>.

Unpaid Leave

Interruptions in tenure or extensions without additional cost to NSF are permitted only for extenuating circumstances, including medical leave or dependent care. The leave cannot be used to increase the level of Fellow salary support beyond 24 or 36 full-time-equivalent months. A no-cost extension may be requested to extend the fellowship award in order to complete the research and broadening participation goals, but no supplemental funds will be provided for this purpose.

Military Deferral Status

Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their postdoctoral research for Active Duty. Fellows must request Military Deferrals from the program office. Military Deferral must be renewed each year, and a new copy of duty orders must be submitted to the Program Officer. Failure to renew Military Deferral Status may result in termination of the fellowship.

Within a given fellowship year, duly authorized military service or training is permitted without penalty to the Fellow with the approval of the NSF, if the service does not compromise the Fellow's research progress. Requests for such interruptions of tenure should be directed to the Foundation in writing as soon as plans are final. Interruptions of less than four days do not require approval.

Paid Teaching

The Fellow may opt to accept a teaching position paid by the host institution (i.e., not as part of the "teaching option" and paid through the fellowship). Because, as a Fellow, you may not be paid concurrently for time on the fellowship and time teaching, you must defer the fellowship stipend during the teaching interval. Please work with your program officer to initiate the process for deferring the fellowship in advance of the start of the teaching assignment. The deferment should be in whole month increments, and should have the sponsor's concurrence. It is your responsibility to apply for a no-cost extension to extend the fellowship period for the number of months deferred.

Vacations

NSF fellowships provide paid leave during fellowship tenure. You are entitled to the short holiday periods observed by your host institution, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring holidays. These holiday periods cannot be accumulated for use at a later date as vacation. If your host institution should "close" for a period in excess of two weeks, you will be expected to have made prior arrangements for the use of necessary facilities to carry out the approved program. If it is not possible for you to make these arrangements at the host institution, other arrangements must be made, with prior NSF approval, to carry on the work; or suspension of the fellowship for that period of time should be requested from your Program Officer.

FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION AND TERMINATION

At the end of the fellowship tenure period, you must submit (by fax or e-mail) the Fellowship Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report, [NSF Form 453](#) (06/2009) to the Program Officer. This certificate must be signed by your sponsoring scientist or an appropriate official at your host institution and should show the date you actually completed fellowship activities. If you affiliate with more than one institution, a Termination Certificate is required from each institution. Submission of this certificate is necessary to comply with governmental accounting procedures. In the event the certificate is not submitted, you may be requested to return to NSF all fellowship funds that were received during fellowship tenure.

FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS

Stipend

The stipend for fellowships is specified in the solicitation that was active at the time of the award. Fellowships are typically made for either 24 or 36 months. Unlike salary, stipend payments are made in advance. Stipend payments are processed by NSF around the 20th of the month for the following month and are paid by the U.S. Treasury into your account at a U.S. financial institution normally within 3 to 5 business days. If you have not received payment by the first of the month, please contact your Program Officer. As stipends are paid in advance, you will not receive a stipend payment at the end of your last month.

Stipend payments are made directly to you via electronic funds transfer to a U.S. account. The fellowship is an award to you as an individual and payment cannot be deposited directly into the host institution's account. To receive payments from the fellowship, you must complete the FastStart Direct Deposit Form, [NSF Form 1379](#). **The form must be signed and submitted to the NSF Division of Financial Management (DFM) as shown on the form.** Please be sure to check the "Fellow" box and name your Program Officer as the NSF Contact at the top of the form. Your home address must be provided; your financial institution must be located in the United States; and you must sign the form to certify the accuracy of the information contained on the form and that you have read the Privacy Act Statement.

The first stipend will be paid as soon as possible after the completed forms are received by NSF, usually within 2 weeks -- but delays are possible. You are encouraged to make arrangements for your account prior to starting your fellowship. If you change accounts during your fellowship, you must file a revised FastStart Direct Deposit Form. Since stipend payments are processed around the 20th of each month, please submit a revised form in the preceding month to allow sufficient processing time and keep the old account open until a payment is received in the new account.

Fellowship Allowance

The fellowship allowance is paid at the rate of \$15,000 per year of the fellowship. This allowance is intended to cover costs of the fellowship and fringe benefits. It is paid either as a pro-rated monthly amount or annually at the beginning of each fellowship year as selected by the fellow at fellowship initiation. The fellowship allowance is spent at the fellow's discretion, except for foreign travel, which requires prior NSF approval. Allowable research costs include travel, such as short-term visits to other institutions or laboratories, field work, and attendance at scientific meetings, training, special equipment, IT equipment and software, supplies, publication costs, access fees for databases and other research-related expenses. Allowable costs for fringe benefits include individual or family health insurance (any combination of medical, vision, and/or dental) whether purchased as a group or individual plan, disability insurance, retirement savings, dependent care, and moving expenses. The Fellow should keep records to document expenditures. All payments are made directly to the Fellow as an electronic funds transfer into a personal account at a financial institution.

If a fellowship is terminated early, a prorated portion (calculated as a fraction of the completed fellowship versus the planned duration) of the fellowship allowance may need to be returned to NSF. No funds may be spent after the expiration date of your fellowship and funds cannot be converted to another use.

Income Tax

No income tax will be withheld from any stipend or allowance. Provision, therefore, must be made by you for payment of any tax, domestic or foreign, when due. Final authority as to the taxability of awards rests with the Internal Revenue Service and the courts. Specific questions should be referred to the Internal Revenue Service. IRS Publication 970 and Tax Topic 421 address tax issues on fellowships. Fellows going abroad may find it helpful to consult IRS Publication No. 54, Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad.

Fellows are not in any sense employees of the National Science Foundation. Therefore, no funds will be deducted from the stipends; no Social Security taxes will be paid by the Foundation; no W-2 forms will be issued; and provision must be made by you for the filing of

any necessary estimate of taxes due and for payment of all income taxes which may become due. A statement of funds received (including the fellowship allowance) will be issued by the Division of Financial Management of the Foundation upon your written request.

NSF is unable to supply information concerning the income tax or other tax provisions of any foreign country. Inquiries should be directed to the authorities in the appropriate countries.

Travel

There is no separate allowance for travel and moving expenses to the fellowship institution. You may use your fellowship allowance to pay these costs once the fellowship begins. You may use your fellowship allowance for your expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence and related items when you are in travel status on business related to your NSF-supported project. Travel within the U.S. does not require prior NSF approval. Information regarding foreign travel can be found in the INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES section of this document.

You must travel using economy airfare. If this is not possible, please contact your Program Officer. Train, bus or other surface carriers may be used in lieu of, or as a supplement to, air travel at the lowest first-class rate by the transportation facility used. If such travel could have been made by air, the allowance will not normally exceed that for economy airfare.

Stipend Supplementation

Each fellow is expected to devote full time to research during tenure of the Fellowship. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activities constitute a valuable part of the education and training, 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 not permitted.

Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept 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.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is not available through NSF but you are strongly encouraged to secure health insurance. The fellowship allowance may be used for its purchase. You should discuss with your host institution whether you can participate in a group plan or if you need to purchase your own policy. You may find COBRA coverage is available to you. If you have chosen a host institution outside the United States, be sure that your insurance is applicable there.

Veteran's Benefits

As a result of the enactment of P.L. 91-219, effective March 26, 1970, educational benefits payments from the Veterans Administration may now be received concurrently with and supplementary to fellowship payments from the National Science Foundation.

Future Employment

The award and acceptance of a Postdoctoral Fellowship does not obligate a Fellow, the National Science Foundation, or the United States Government with regard to future employment or future service of any kind.

Federal and/or Armed Forces Employees

If, during any part of a Fellowship tenure, you will be a member of the Armed Forces or on leave from a position in the Federal Service, a statement must be filed from a cognizant official of the Government organization involved specifying (1) the funds, if any, that will be made available to you during tenure and the purpose for which they will be provided, and (2) the funds, if any, that will be made available to your host Institution on your behalf. NSF and your host institution must reach a mutually satisfactory agreement regarding your support during tenure before any funds can be provided under the fellowship.

Liability

NSF cannot assume any liability for accidents, illnesses or claims arising out of any work supported by your award or for unauthorized use of patented or copyrighted materials. You are advised to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to insure or protect yourself and your property.

Rights to Inventions or Writings

NSF claims no rights to any inventions or writings that may result from its fellowship awards. However, you should be aware that NSF, other Federal agencies, or private parties may acquire such rights through other grant support. Fellows at foreign institutions should be aware that specific provisions regarding allocations of intellectual property rights apply to particular countries, and you should be cognizant of any such provisions before commencing work.

Referrals to the NSF Office of the Inspector General

The NSF Inspector General is responsible for investigating all allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as allegations of research misconduct in connection with NSF programs and operations. You shall promptly refer to the NSF Inspector General (oig@nsf.gov; www.nsf.gov/oig or 1-800-428-2189) any allegations or credible evidence of research misconduct or criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to misappropriation, fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct involving NSF funds.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

[AAG Chapter VI.G.](#) details NSF requirements for international travel and research.

Foreign Tenure

International affiliations, either short-term or for the duration of the fellowship award, are allowed and encouraged. All arrangements for affiliation with a fellowship institution abroad and provision for housing are the responsibility of the Fellow. Some Fellows, particularly those with families, have experienced difficulty in finding suitable housing in foreign countries. Fellows should be aware that housing shortages exist in many foreign cities, and that living costs may exceed those in comparable cities in the United States. Early correspondence with the host institution regarding housing needs is recommended.

For Fellows going abroad, travel time from the United States to a fellowship institution and from that institution to the United States, up to a maximum of one week each way, may be considered as part of tenure. Thus, the actual tenure at the fellowship institution, as shown on the Starting and Termination Certificates, may be up to two weeks less than the total authorized tenure for which stipends are to be paid.

Additional funding from the Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) may be available for awards with international host institutions. Please contact your Program Officer for details. Allowable expenses for OISE support of fellowship awards may include:

- Round trip economy airfare, necessary ground transportation, baggage allowance
- In-country travel at foreign location
- Relocation allowance
- Living allowance
- Health insurance allowance
- Support for field/lab expenses, materials, supplies and equipment
- Partial support for language training
- Return professional visit(s)
- Dependent support
- Institutional allowance

Foreign Travel

If you and your sponsoring scientist judge it appropriate for you to travel abroad, you must seek NSF approval before you travel. You can request prior approval by e-mail from your Program Officer. The only fellowship funds available for such travel are within the Fellowship Allowance. In your e-mail, please include the purpose of the trip and an itinerary. If you are attending a scientific meeting, it is expected that you will be giving a presentation; therefore please give the title of your presentation and the name, place, and date of the meeting in the request for approval.

You are responsible for making all arrangements for securing a passport and visa. Visa regulations vary greatly by country, and to avoid the possibility of lengthy delay, you should make the necessary applications well before departure.

All travel to be reimbursed from Federal funds must be made via use of U.S. flag carriers if such service is available per the Fly America Act (for restrictions concerning the use of non-U.S. Flag carriers while on foreign travel, see [AAG Chapter VI.G.1](#)).

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Research Opportunities in Europe for NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows

U.S. scientists and engineers with NSF-funded Postdoctoral Research Fellowships may pursue research collaboration with European colleagues supported through EU-funded European Research Council (ERC) grants. The Dear Colleague Letter [NSF 13-051](#) gives details on how to apply and requirements. This letter invites current Postdoctoral Research Fellows to apply for research visits to any identified, appropriate European research group.

Opportunities as a Principal Investigator

As you begin your independent research career, you may wish to apply for NSF research grants. Especially appropriate for new investigators is an NSF-wide “cross-cutting” program called the Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER). See www.nsf.gov for more information.

APPENDIX I.

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 (FASSED) program, GPG.II.D.3 ([http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp - 23IID3](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp-23IID3)). The Fellow will be responsible for submitting the NSF proposal for a Supplemental funding request to the existing PRFB Award. If multi-year funding is requested, the Fellow is responsible for requesting continuation of the FASSED, based on a Fellow's satisfactory progress.

Proposal

Fellows should discuss their accommodation needs with their host institution and sponsoring scientist and prepare a proposal including any ancillary documents, such as the sponsoring scientist's letter of support. The proposal should include an overview of current research and a detailed budget (annual and cumulative) and justification. The Fellow submits the proposal as a supplemental funding request to the existing PRFB 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 PRFB award. FASSED proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the PRFB Program Office.

Reporting

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