



*Information for MPS-Ascend
Postdoctoral Fellows*

October 2022

National Science Foundation
Directorate for Mathematical and
Physical Sciences

IMPORTANT

This booklet outlines the terms and conditions of your National Science Foundation Mathematical and Physical Sciences Ascending Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (MPS-Ascend) and provides general information for use during your tenure. Read it carefully and refer to it whenever you have a question about your Fellowship. In some cases, the information quoted is from the [NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide](#) (PAPPG), which governs all NSF awards. In these cases, the relevant PAPPG sections will be included.

You may contact the Program directly via the cognizant NSF Program Officer.

Electronic correspondence is preferred. If you must send hard copy mail, please alert the cognizant NSF program officer and unless otherwise noted, address all forms and correspondence to:

Mathematical and Physical Sciences Ascending Postdoctoral Research Fellowships
Office of Multidisciplinary Activities
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

This guide outlines the administrative policies and procedures for MPS-Ascend Postdoctoral Fellows and host institutions and incorporates all policies found in the MPS-Ascend Program Solicitation. This guide does not supersede the award letter terms and conditions. The current guide applies to the 2021 and 2022 Fellowship years and forward, unless otherwise noted or superseded by an updated version.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 Postdoctoral Fellow to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Fellowship Program. As a recipient of NSF funds, you are responsible for fulfilling the academic and fiscal obligations of your award.

Failure on the part of a Fellow to observe all the terms and conditions of a Fellowship award constitutes sufficient grounds for its revocation by the Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

You have been awarded a National Science Foundation Mathematical and Physical Sciences Ascending Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (MPS-Ascend) in recognition of your proposed research, broadening participation, and education activities, and with the hope that the experience you obtain during your Fellowship tenure will enhance your development as a scientist and educator and contribute to the scientific and educational effort of the United States. Upon acceptance of an award under this program, the Foundation will issue an award notice based on the information submitted in your Fellowship application.

The information in this booklet outlines the terms and conditions of your National Science Foundation MPS-Ascend Postdoctoral Research Fellowship 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.

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.

1. FELLOWSHIP INSTITUTION

As a condition of receiving this Fellowship, 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 NSF 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 administrative guide) with both your scientific mentor and administrative personnel at your host institution. Holding the fellowship at more than one institution concurrently is also possible. In such cases, the Fellow must identify a primary host institution.

If it becomes necessary or desirable to seek affiliation with an institution other than the one proposed at the time of application, the Fellow must request permission **in writing/email** from the Foundation, stating the reasons for the proposed change and explaining the appropriateness of the new institution for the proposed plan for research and education. This must be done **before** final arrangements with the new institution are completed. A Fellow may not enter on tenure until the Foundation approves all changes, including the new scientific mentor. If the change in institutions is because your scientific mentor 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.

Before a Fellow enters on tenure at an institution at which a full-time position or appointment is presently held, the Foundation must receive a letter from an appropriate official stating that the Fellow will be relieved of all prior institutional duties during the tenure of the Fellowship.

2. SCIENTIFIC MENTOR (FORMERLY KNOWN AS SPONSORING SCIENTIST)

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

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

3. FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS TENURE STATUS

A Postdoctoral Fellow must begin Fellowship activities as stated in the program solicitation. A Fellow who is unable to begin tenure as indicated in the solicitation is expected to decline the Fellowship. This declination will not prejudice any future application. Before a Fellow may enter upon tenure of a Postdoctoral Fellowship, the Foundation must have on record that the Ph.D. has been awarded or that all requirements for the Ph.D. have been completed. An official paper transcript, e-transcript or Certificate of Completion of Ph.D. will suffice. A certification form for this purpose will be made available by the cognizant NSF Program Officer and is also attached as an appendix to this document.

MPS-Ascend Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are awarded for continuous period of 12-36 months (depending on the proposal). The maximum tenure of your Fellowship is that requested in the proposal barring any extension as outlined below. If the start of the Fellowship 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 Research.gov) must request the no-cost extension through Research.gov. The sponsored projects 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 any activities for compensation (except for teaching as approved by the program office and military obligations) or receive another fellowship or research award without the prior approval of NSF. Such approval is granted only under exceptional circumstances.

A set of starting materials, including a Fellowship Starting Certificate, [NSF Form 349](#), will be made available to you after issuance of your award notice. Fellowship tenure starts on the date a Fellow begins Fellowship activities and terminates on the date Fellowship activities are completed at the Fellow's institution, as indicated on the Starting Certificate and award notice.

This is a requirement which the Foundation must ask Fellows to fulfill in order to comply with governmental accounting regulations. If a Fellow interrupts tenure or affiliates with more than one institution, a Starting Certificate is required for each portion of tenure. Stipend payments (with the exception described in the section on Stipends below) will not be authorized until a Starting Certificate has been received by the Foundation.

PAID LEAVE

Within the Fellowship period, paid leave, including parental or family leave, can be accumulated up to one day of paid leave earned per month if the following conditions are met: (1) a written notification for paid leave must be submitted by the Fellow and acknowledged by the cognizant Program Officer; and (2) paid leave cannot be used to increase the level of the Fellow's salary support beyond 36 months. NSF enables career-life balance through a variety of mechanisms. For more information, please see <https://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance/>.

UNPAID LEAVE

Interruptions may be approved with written justification for a period or periods of up to 12 months in total. Please contact the cognizant Program Officer as soon as the possible before planning such an interruption. The leave cannot be used to increase the level of Fellow salary support beyond the originally approved length of tenure. 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. Interruptions of less than four days do not require approval.

In the case of a longer interruption resulting from active military service or from certain activities in lieu of service with the regular U.S. Armed Forces, provision can be made for reservations of a Fellowship (or the balance of it), and reinstatement of the unused portion at a later date. In such cases Fellows should notify the Foundation immediately in writing of their plans and request further instructions.

PAID TEACHING

The Fellow may opt to accept a teaching position paid by the host institution. Limited amounts of teaching activity (a limit of one such semester course per year, and no more than two such courses over the entirety of the postdoc Fellowship) may be incorporated into the training activities as such teaching experience is valuable for the Fellow's future career development. The Fellowship support must be reduced by the amount paid by the institution for the teaching duties, as the Fellowship does not cover teaching. Discussion with the cognizant Program Officer is strongly encouraged in advance of such arrangements.

VACATIONS

NSF Fellowships do not provide a vacation period, as such, during the Fellowship tenure. Paid leave is accumulated as noted above at a rate of 1 day per month. This allotment applies to all paid leave, including parental and family leave. Fellows are entitled to the short holiday periods observed by their Fellowship institutions, such as Thanksgiving and winter and spring holidays. These holiday periods cannot be accumulated for use at a later date as a vacation period. There is considerable variation in institutional practices in this area, but if an institution should "close" for a period of more than 2 weeks, each Fellow attending such an institution 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 the Fellow to make these arrangements at the Fellowship institution, other satisfactory arrangements must be made with prior Foundation approval, to carry on the work, or request the Foundation to permit suspension of the Fellowship for that period of time.

EXTENSION OF TENURE AND REQUESTS FOR NO COST EXTENSIONS

If additional time beyond the established end date of the award is required by the Fellow to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work within the funds already made available, a formal request must be submitted to NSF via Research.gov at: <https://www.research.gov>. The request must be submitted to NSF at least 45 days prior to the expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. The plan must adhere to the previously approved objectives of the project. Before submitting a no-cost extension, note that Fellows may not receive additional compensation while on active Fellowship tenure.

TERMINATION

TERMINATION means the ending of the Fellowship award, in whole or in part at any time prior to the planned end of the period of performance. The Fellowship is terminated 120 days after the formal award end date, unless the award end date is formally amended to accommodate an unpaid interruption or a no-cost extension.

If a Fellowship award is terminated early, the Fellow must return unused Fellowship allowance funds to NSF. Generally, the Fellow would return a prorated portion of the allowance, e.g., if the Fellowship were terminated after six months, \$15,000 of the \$30,000 annual allowance would be returned. Exceptions may be considered for such things as equipment purchases and should be discussed with the cognizant NSF Program Officer.

Any suspension or termination action taken by NSF must be issued by a cognizant NSF Grants Officer and will be in accordance with this article, [2 CFR § 200.340](#), and PAPPG Chapter XII.A.2.b. The Fellowship award may be suspended or terminated in whole or in part in any of the following situations:

1. By NSF, if the fellow fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the Fellowship award;
2. By NSF, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities;
3. By NSF, with the consent of the Fellow, in which case the two parties must agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and the amount of annual allowance that must be remitted to NSF;
4. By the Fellow upon sending to NSF written notification setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and the amount of annual allowance that must be remitted to NSF;
5. By NSF, pursuant to termination provisions included in the NSF award; or
6. By NSF, when ordered by the Deputy Director under NSF's Regulation on Research Misconduct [[45 CFR Part 689](#)].

PROGRAM CHANGES

Any major change in the program of research, broadening participation activities, or education from that proposed at the time of application, and any change in tenure or in the institution(s) with which a Fellow is associated, must receive the **prior** approval of the Foundation. Although it is expected that each Fellow will carry out the program as approved at the time of application, **minor** changes may be made at the discretion of the Fellow and with concurrence by the scientific mentor. However, any **major** changes must be outlined and justified in full in writing so that a determination may be made by the Foundation as to whether the new program falls within the intent of the award.

The likely impact of both the scientific mentor and the Fellowship institution on the professional development of the Fellow is an important factor in the proposal evaluation process; thus, the selection of these, especially for the first year of Fellowship tenure, will normally be viewed as a commitment on the part of the applicant to fulfill the plan for research, broadening participation, and education as outlined in the original proposal. However, changes in the Fellowship institution may be approved by the Foundation following review of the potential impacts on the Fellow's activities. Approval of the change will be contingent on the qualifications and suitability of the proposed Fellowship institution to provide the resources, facilities, and mentoring needed to support the Fellow's research, broadening participation, and education activities as well as professional development.

Requests to change the Fellowship institution should be submitted in writing to the cognizant Program Officer at least three months prior to the requested start date at the new Fellowship institution and should provide a new scientific mentor statement that how the change impacts the Fellow's research, broadening participation, and education activities as well as the other elements described in the MPS-Ascend solicitation. The new scientific mentor's statement should be signed by the new scientific mentor as well as the Department Chair (or equivalent) as described in the solicitation.

4. STIPENDS AMOUNT

The stipend will be paid at a monthly rate that totals \$70,000 for each 12-month period of Fellowship tenure.

PAYMENT

Stipend payments will be authorized in NSF's payment system, the Award Cash Management Service (ACMS), after submission of a properly completed Fellowship Starting Certificate, [NSF Form 349](#) and the Fellow's banking information in Research.gov.

(1) [Fellowship Starting Certificate, NSF Form 349](#). The Fellow must complete and submit to the cognizant Program Officer the Fellowship Starting Certificate, NSF Form 349. This form will serve as the authority to begin your stipend payments and will provide the Fellow's statement of tenure information. The form is countersigned by your scientific mentor or other appropriate official at your institution.

(2) Stipend payments are made directly to the Fellow via electronic funds transfer to a U.S. bank account. The Fellowship is awarded to the Fellow as an individual, and payment cannot be deposited directly into the host institution's account. To receive Fellowship payments, the Fellow must submit banking data via the Individual Banking portal of Research.gov. Please see the [Individual Banking How-to Guide](#) for specific guidance related to individual banking. The Fellow will be notified via automated email of the steps that must be completed in [Research.gov](#) to initiate NSF payments. The automated email will be sent from the "NSF Individual Banking Bot" email address (btdfm005@associates.nsf.gov) with "ACTION REQUIRED: Steps to Initiate NSF Payments" in the subject line. The Fellow's home address must be provided, their financial institution must be located in the United States, and they must complete the Certification in Research.gov to certify the accuracy of the information contained on the form and that you have read the Privacy Act Statement. **No funds will be released to the Fellow without submission of this information.** Additional information including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available on the Research.gov [About Individual Banking](#) page.

(3) Fellows may request the first stipend in ACMS after the completed Starting Certificate ([NSF Form 349](#)) and banking information is submitted in Research.gov and acknowledged by the Foundation. Fellows are encouraged to make arrangements for accounts prior to the start of their Fellowship tenure, so that the initial processing may proceed without delay. In addition, **Fellows are requested to use the same account for the entire period of their Fellowship tenure, as any changes may involve significant delays in the processing of stipends.** However, bank account updates may be made in Research.gov. See the [Individual Banking How-to Guide](#) for instructions. Although every effort will be made to make the first payment available immediately

after receipt of the form and banking information in Research.gov, it is incumbent upon the Fellow to provide all required documents and information in a timely manner and Fellows are advised to plan for possible delays in processing.

(4) Any changes or interruptions in stipend payment or any other miscellaneous actions should be requested and described on the [Fellowship Action Form, NSF Form 383](#) also made available with the starting materials.

(5) Drawing Funds in ACM\$ System. Once the Program Office has verified that you have successfully set up your account in the payment system, we will send you another set of instructions on how to draw down your funds from the ACM\$ System. Regardless of any problems you may encounter with setting up your ACM\$ account, we here at NSF, are committed to making sure that the funds are transferred to your bank account at the appropriate time. In order for us to better facilitate assisting you, there are a few guidelines we would like you to follow:

- Please use the Mozilla Firefox browser when using the ACM\$ System in Research.gov as it is the most effective method to ensure processing of all actions with this program.
- The contact person for financial questions with your award will be provided when the award is made. You must always include your award number when contacting NSF.
- When drawing funds, you will receive a notification email that your funds have been released to you. You cannot draw funds until the next day after the date given. For example, funds released on December 28, 2022, cannot be requested until December 29, 2022.
- On the day you draw down funds from the ACM\$ System, you must allow 2-3 days for processing before you can expect to see payment in your bank account.

INITIAL STIPEND ADVANCE

Because Starting Certificates are not to be submitted until after tenure begins, Fellows may request payment of the first month's stipend in advance, in order to receive assistance during the processing period. A form to request this advance, [Request for Stipend Advance, NSF Form 929](#), will be made available with the starting materials. In order to be processed, requests for advances must be preceded by submission of your banking information in Research.gov, which is described above. **If you receive an advance and do not subsequently begin tenure as planned, the amount of the advance must be returned to NSF immediately.**

DELAYED OR LOST STIPEND PAYMENT

If an anticipated stipend or other Fellowship payment is not received on time, the Fellow should notify the cognizant NSF Program Officer immediately. If the payment in question has posted for payment but was not received, inquiry should be made at the Fellow's bank to see if the payment can be traced. If it is still missing after a week, the Fellow should email the Foundation or write to the address given on page one of this booklet requesting that the payment be stopped and that a replacement be processed. The Foundation will forward the appropriate fiscal information to the

Treasury Department. In addition, an official of the bank should also write the Foundation stating that the bank did not receive the stipend payment. Such replacement payments usually require at least two months for processing. If the stipend is paid in the meantime, the Foundation should be notified immediately.

5. ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP ALLOWANCE

As soon as possible after the Foundation receives the Starting Certificate, each Fellow will be able to request a first annual payment representing a Fellowship Allowance of \$30,000; this allowance will be paid electronically to the Fellow through ACMS and is intended to cover costs of the Fellowship as described in the solicitation:

- a. expenses directly related to the conduct of the research, such as some materials and supplies (the majority of materials and supplies should be provided by the host institution, especially anything that is restricted or larger equipment), subscription fees and recovery costs for databases, travel, and publication expenses and/or
- b. support of fringe benefits.

These may include (1) expenses directly related to the conduct of the proposed research and broadening participation activities, including but not limited to materials and supplies, equipment, computing resources, access to databases, travel, publication charges, and subscription fees; (2) expenses in support of the Fellow such as general-purpose supplies and use of equipment, facilities and other institutional resources; (3) expenses in support of fringe benefits, including but not limited to individual or family health insurance provided through a group or individual plan, dental and/or vision insurance, disability insurance, retirement savings, dependent care, and moving expenses.

The Foundation is not responsible for any charges incurred by or on behalf of the Fellow by the fellowship institution.

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.

Fellows are not employees of the National Science Foundation. Therefore, no funds will be deducted from the stipends, no Social Security taxes will be paid by NSF, no W-2 or 1099 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 NSF's Division of Financial Management upon your written request.

The Foundation 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 Foreign Travel 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 participate in these activities to the extent that they do not interfere with or duplicate the proposed research and training plan. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not service to the institution as such, will govern these activities.

Scientific mentors and host institutions may supplement a Fellow's stipend with non-Federal funds contingent upon NSF approval. Fellows may solicit and accept non-Federal support within the host institution for research expenses, such as laboratory supplies, instrumentation usage fees, field-station usage fees, travel expenses, conference/registration fees, workshop expenses, and subscription fees.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance is not available through NSF but you are strongly encouraged to secure health insurance as it is now required by law. 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.

VETERANS 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 SERVICES 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.

6. ANNUAL & FINAL PROJECT REPORTS ANNUAL PROJECT REPORTS

Submission Requirement. Fellows are required to submit an annual project report.

Content of Annual Project Reports. Fellows are required to submit annual reports electronically via the project reporting system in Research.gov. The Research.gov system may be accessed at <https://www.research.gov>. The content requirements for annual project reports are specified in the Research.gov system and may be supplemented in the award document.

Timing of Annual Project Reports. Unless otherwise specified in the award, annual project reports shall be submitted no later than 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 paragraph 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.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) Chapter VII, available electronically on the NSF website at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg.

FINAL PROJECT REPORT AND PROJECT OUTCOMES REPORT

Submission Requirement. The Fellow shall submit a Final Project Report and a Project Outcomes Report no later than 120 days following the end date of the award.

Content of Final Project Report and Project Outcomes Report. The Fellow shall submit both reports electronically via the project reporting system in Research.gov. The Research.gov system may be accessed at <https://www.research.gov>.

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. Fellows may use the Interim Project Report capability in Research.gov to submit such updates.

7. CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A change in postal and/or electronic mail address should be reported promptly to the cognizant NSF Program Officer via email. Fellows are also expected to maintain updated contact information in Research.gov at <https://www.research.gov> both as the Principal Investigator and Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) on the Fellowship award. Award amendments will be mailed electronically to the AOR email address on file in Research.gov.

8. FOREIGN TRAVEL

All travel to be reimbursed from Federal funds **must** be made via use of U.S. flag carriers if such service is available. For details, please see PAPPG Chapter XI.F.1. **No exceptions can be made to these regulations.** Due to the complexity of the travel requirements, Fellows are encouraged to consult with their Fellowship Host Institution's Sponsored Projects Office (or equivalent) regarding any travel issues.

9. ADDITIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROVISIONS

Intellectual Property

NSF claims no rights to any inventions or writings that may result from its Fellowship awards. However, Fellows 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 Fellows should be cognizant of any such provisions before commencing work. Guidance about the policies, rules and regulations governing intellectual property is contained in PAPPG Chapter XI.D.

Publications

- a. Acknowledgement of Support. Unless otherwise provided in the award, the Fellow is responsible for assuring that an acknowledgment of NSF support is made:
 - (i) in any publication (including web pages) of any material based on or developed under this project; and
 - (ii) NSF support also must be orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television, and news magazines.
- b. Disclaimer. The grantee is responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including web pages) based on or developed under an NSF award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains a

- c. disclaimer that specifies that the opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.
- d. Copies for NSF. The grantee is responsible for assuring that the 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.
- e. Compliance with NSF Public Access Policy. The grantee is responsible for ensuring that copyrighted material published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals and papers in juried conference proceedings are accessible to the public in accordance with the grant general terms and conditions.
- f. Grantees also should note their obligations in regard to copyrights (see PAPPG Chapter XI.D.2) and their responsibilities as members of the scientific and engineering community to disseminate and share research results (see PAPPG Chapter XI.D.4).
- g. Each NSF grant contains as part of the grant general terms and conditions, an article implementing the grantee obligations regarding the acknowledgement of support and disclaimer.

LIABILITY

NSF cannot assume any liability for accidents, bodily injury, illness, breach of contract, any other damages or loss, or any claims arising out of any activities undertaken pursuant to the grant, whether with respect to persons or property of the grantee or third parties. The grantee is advised to insure or otherwise protect itself or others, as it may deem desirable. As described previously, for these awards the grantee is the Fellow. Details can be found in PAPPG Chapter XI.M.1.

SHARING OF FINDINGS, DATA AND OTHER RESEARCH PRODUCTS

NSF has expectations and rules about the dissemination and sharing of research results and findings from NSF grants. Details can be found in PAPPG Chapter XI.E.

GOVERNMENT PERMITS AND ACTIVITIES ABROAD

For awards that include activities requiring permits from appropriate Federal, State, or local government authorities, the Fellow should obtain any required permits prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

The Fellow must comply with the laws and regulations of any foreign country in which research is to be conducted. Areas of potential concern include: (1) requirements for advance approval to conduct research or surveys; (2) special arrangements for the participation of foreign scientists and engineers; and (3) special visas for persons engaged in research or studies. NSF does not assume responsibility for the Fellow's compliance with the laws and regulations of the country in which the work is to be conducted.

The Fellow also should assure that activities carried on outside the U.S. are coordinated as necessary with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities and that necessary licenses, permits or approvals are obtained prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

REFERRALS TO THE NSF OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Fellow shall promptly refer to the NSF Inspector General any credible evidence that a principal, employee, agent, contractor, sub-grantee, subcontractor, or other person has submitted a false claim under the False Claims Act or has committed a criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct involving those funds.

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY

During the tenure of the Fellowship, the Fellows are expected to devote full time to the program of scientific research, broadening participation, and education activities outlined in their proposal, for which the award was granted. A Fellow may not engage in activities for compensation (except for brief military obligations) or receive another Fellowship or similar award while pursuing Fellowship activities without **prior** approval of the Foundation. Such approval may be granted only under exceptional circumstances.

These Fellowships are not designed to support the writing of textbooks.

Special travel may not be undertaken without the prior approval of the Fellow's advisor, but it will not be necessary to obtain similar approval from the Foundation, unless foreign travel is involved.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of situations possibly encountered in the conduct of research require special information and supporting documentation before starting tenure. Among these are the following, some mandated by Federal law.

- research which has an actual and/or potential impact on the environment;
- research at a registered historic or cultural property;
- research involving the use of in vitro generated recombinant DNA molecules;
- research involving the use of human subjects, hazardous materials, vertebrate animals, or endangered species.

Fellows must provide information on the status of any special permissions, clearances or provision related to the above items before beginning tenure. Specific guidance on the need for such additional documentation may be obtained from the Fellowship institution's Research Administration Office or Chapter XI.B and Chapter XI.J of the PAPPG.

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 subjects, 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 invitro 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 PAPPG.

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 PAPPG outlines the Fellow'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 scientific mentor'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, 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 CFR690](#)). The PAPPG outlines the Fellow'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, (2) provide a Determination Notice **signed by an IRB official** at the host institution, or (3) affirm that the IRB has declared the research exempt from IRB review. 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 Support:

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation MPS-Ascend Postdoctoral Research Fellowship 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 webpages) 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 submitted promptly 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, the integrity of collections or to accommodate legitimate interests of NSF-supported Fellows.

10. ASSOCIATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

The following documents will be made available with the award notice and are referred to in this document. These forms should be electronically mailed to the cognizant Program Officer at NSF, at the appropriate time in the tenure of the Fellowship, as described above.

- [Fellowship Starting Certificate, NSF Form 349 \(04/2020\)](#)
- [Request for Stipend Advance, NSF Form 929 \(06/2009\)](#)
- [Fellowship Payment Record, NSF Form 1367 \(06/2009\)](#)
- [Fellowship Action Form, NSF Form 383 \(06/2009\)](#)

Other information relevant to the NSF MPS-Ascend Program may also be found here: https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505879

NSF MPS Ascend Postdoctoral Fellowships

In order to complete our records and verify your eligibility to receive a Fellowship award, please have this form completed by the Dean of your graduate school and return it to us at an early date via email from their account. If you prefer to send us an official transcript showing the awarding of the degree, it will be acceptable in lieu of this form. However, confirmation of your Ph.D. degree, or that you have completed all the requirements of your Ph.D. degree will be necessary before your Fellowship starting certificate may be processed and payment of funds are authorized in connection with your award.

Please return this form as an email or email attachment to the cognizant Program Officer

1) _____ received the Ph.D. degree from
(name of fellow)

_____ On _____
(name of institution, date)

Verified by: _____
(name of Dean, graduate school)

Or

2) _____ has completed all the Ph.D. degree
requirements from
(name of fellow)

_____ On _____
(name of institution, date)

Verified by: _____
(name of Dean, graduate school)