



***INFORMATION FOR***  
***2009***  
***NSF MINORITY POSTDOCTORAL***  
***RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS IN BIOLOGY***

***July 2009***

National Science Foundation  
Directorate for Biological Sciences  
Division of Biological Infrastructure

## **IMPORTANT**

This information outlines the terms and conditions of your National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology for FY 2009 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.

The NSF program officer for your fellowship is Carter Kimsey, Program Manager, [ckimsey@nsf.gov](mailto:ckimsey@nsf.gov), 703 292 7170. Administrative support is provided by Pamela Brooks-Pope, [pbrooks@nsf.gov](mailto:pbrooks@nsf.gov), 703 292 7259. We share a **fax** machine at 703 292 9063 and the same mailing address:

DBI/BIO, Room 615  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA 22230

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 the Foundation.

### **1. 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.

### **2. HOST INSTITUTION**

By law, as a Fellow, you must affiliate with an appropriate research (usually, nonprofit) 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 letter 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.

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 in writing (email is fine) from your NSF Fellowship program officer prior to making the change. 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 FastLane 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 email 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.

### **3. SPONSORING SCIENTIST**

In your application, you 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 the sponsoring scientist cannot answer should be referred for resolution to other appropriate officials within the host institution, such as a department chair, dean, or a designated institutional representative.

### **4. ENTRANCE UPON TENURE**

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, 2010. 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.

You start the fellowship by submitting a Fellowship Starting Certificate, NSF Form 349 (06/2009). Fellowships may be started only on the first of the month. To expedite your stipend and allowance payments, you should fax your starting certificate on the day you begin your fellowship (or the next day if the first of the month falls on a weekend or Federal holiday) to Mrs. Brooks-Pope at 703-292-9063. Or, you may scan and email your completed starting certificate to her at [pbrooks@nsf.gov](mailto:pbrooks@nsf.gov). We don't 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, a Starting Certificate is required for each portion of tenure.

## 5. CHANGES IN YOUR RESEARCH AND TRAINING PLAN

You must request prior approval from the Program Officer for any major change in your research and training plan proposed in your original or revised application. However, minor changes may be made at your discretion and with the concurrence of your sponsoring scientist. If you are considering major changes, you should outline and justify them in full in an email to the Program Officer who will determine if the revised research and training plan falls within the intent of the award prior to granting approval.

## 6. STIPEND

### a. Amount

The stipend will be paid at the rate of \$3,750 per month for the first 12 months; \$4,000 for months 13-24; and \$4,250 for months 25-36 of the fellowship. Fellowships are made for either 24 or 36 months. Unlike salary, stipend payments are made in advance. Stipend payments are processed by NSF around the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for the **following** month and are paid by the US Treasury into your account at a US financial institution normally within 3 to 5 business days. If you haven't received payment by the first of the month, please contact Ms. Brooks-Pope. Because stipends are paid in advance, you will not receive a stipend payment at the end of your last month.

### b. Payments

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) by either:

email ([NSFForm1379@nsf.gov](mailto:NSFForm1379@nsf.gov));

fax (703) 292-9006;

**or** mail to:

National Science Foundation  
DFM Accounts Payable Section  
4201 Wilson Blvd., Stafford II, Rm. 605  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

Please be sure to check the "Fellow" box and name Carter Kimsey as the "cognizant Program Officer" 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'll need to file a revised FastStart Direct Deposit Form. Since stipend payments are processed around the 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **7. OTHER ALLOWANCES**

### **a. Special Allowance**

The special allowance is paid at the rate of \$10,000 per year of the fellowship. It is paid as a lump sum with your first stipend payment. The special allowance is intended to aid in defraying costs of your research including special travel, such as short-term visits to other institutions or laboratories or attendance at scientific meetings and training, special equipment, supplies, publication costs, and other research expenses. It is expendable at your discretion, except for foreign travel (see section 11 below). You may use your special allowance to purchase health insurance for yourself and family.

If a fellowship is terminated early, a prorated portion of the special allowance must be returned to the National Science Foundation. No funds may be spent after the expiration date of your fellowship and funds cannot be converted to another use.

### **b. Institutional Allowance**

On your behalf, the National Science Foundation will, upon request, provide the host institution with an allowance of \$5,000 for each year of the fellowship for partial reimbursement for expenses incurred in support of the research such as space, supplies, equipment, necessary services, and fringe benefits. This allowance may be used for health insurance. If you plan to stay at the same institution for the entire tenure, the host institution should request a lump sum payment at the beginning of your fellowship. If you plan to divide your tenure between institutions, the primary host institution and the other institution(s) may request appropriately prorated institutional allowances or an arrangement for reimbursement to the other institutions may be made through the primary host institution. If you are going abroad, the institutional allowance for a foreign host institution is paid directly to you; after which you pay it to the foreign institution and provide a receipt to NSF. It is your responsibility to make an appropriate arrangement prior to starting the fellowship.

The host institution is responsible for the disbursement of these funds, and such disbursements are at the discretion of the institution.

NSF is not responsible for any charges incurred by you or on your behalf by the Institution. If a fellowship is terminated early the unused portion of the institution allowance must be returned on a *pro rata* basis to the National Science Foundation. No funds may be spent after the

expiration date of the fellowship or converted to another use.

## **8. PROJECT REPORTS**

Annual and final project reports in FastLane are required. Interim reports may be submitted at any time in FastLane.

### **a. Annual Project Reports**

1. **Submission Requirement.** You are required to submit an annual project report electronically via the NSF FastLane system which may be accessed at <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.
2. **Content of Annual Project Reports.** FastLane provides a format for annual reports that includes scientific progress, educational and outreach activities, and broader impacts. Please also address progress on your training goals. You may attach other materials as you wish.
3. **Timing of Annual Project Reports.** Annual project reports are due at the end of each 12-month award period, except the final one. The final annual report serves as the project's final report and must be submitted in accordance with paragraph b below.

### **b. Final Project Report**

1. **Submission Requirement.** You must submit a Final Project Report within 90 days following the expiration date of the award.
2. **Content of Final Project Report.** If you have other feedback not covered in the standardized format, please feel free to attach it to the final report or email it to the Program Officer.
3. In addition, at the end of the Fellowship tenure period, you must submit (by fax or email) the Fellowship Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report, NSF Form 453 (06/2009) to the Program Officer

## **9. CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Please report any changes in contact information and addresses promptly to Mrs. Brooks-Pope.

## **10. TRAVEL**

There is no allowance for travel and moving expenses to the fellowship institution. You can use your special allowance to pay these costs once the fellowship begins.

## **Allowability of Travel Expenses**

1. You may use your special allowance (and your host institution may allow you to use your institutional 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
2. You must travel economy airfare. If this isn't possible, please contact the grants officer listed in your award notice for exceptions. 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, however, could have been performed by air, the allowance will not normally exceed that for jet economy airfare.

### **11. 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 with an email to the Program Officer. The only fellowship funds available for such travel are within the Special Allowance or, at the host institution's discretion, the Institutional 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 time 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. Details are given below. **No exceptions can be made to these regulations.**

#### **a. Use of U.S.-Flag Air Carriers**

1. In accordance with the Fly America Act (49 USC 40118), any air transportation to, from, between, or within a country other than the U.S. of persons or property, the expense of which will be assisted by NSF funding, must be performed by or under a code-sharing arrangement with a U.S.-flag air carrier if service provided by such a carrier is available (see Comptroller General Decision B-240956, dated September 25, 1991). Tickets (or documentation for electronic tickets) must identify the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code and flight number.
2. For the purposes of this requirement, U.S.-flag air carrier service is considered available even though:
  - (a) comparable or a different kind of service can be provided at less cost by a foreign-flag air carrier;

(b) foreign-flag air carrier service is preferred by, or is more convenient for, NSF or traveler;  
or

(c) service by a foreign-flag air carrier can be paid for in excess foreign currency.

3. The following rules apply unless their application would result in the first or last leg of travel from or to the U.S. being performed by a foreign-flag air carrier:

(a) a U.S.-flag air carrier shall be used to destination or, in the absence of direct or through service, to the farthest interchange point on a usually traveled route.

(b) if a U.S.-flag air carrier does not serve an origin or interchange point, a foreign-flag air carrier shall be used only to the nearest interchange point on a usually traveled route to connect with a U.S. flag air carrier.

**b. Use of Foreign-Flag Air Carriers**

There are limited circumstances under which use of a foreign-flag air carrier is permissible. These circumstances are outlined below:

1. *Airline "Open Skies" Agreements:* A foreign flag air carrier may be used if the transportation is provided under an air transportation agreement between the United States and a foreign government, which the Department of Transportation has determined meets the requirements of the Fly America Act. For example, in 2008, the U.S. entered into an "Open Skies" Agreement with the European Union. This Agreement gives European Community airlines (airlines of Member States) the right to transport passengers and cargo on flights funded by the U.S. government, when the transportation is between a point in the United States and any point in a Member State or between any two points outside the United States. In accordance with the Agreement, however, a U.S.-flag air carrier must be used if: (a) transportation is between points for which there is a city-pair contract fare in effect for air passenger transportation services; or (b) transportation is obtained or funded by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of a Military Department. The conditions for use of a Member State airline apply to non-Federal employees as well (e.g., fellows). So, even though Fellows are ineligible for city-pair contract fares, they must still use a U.S.-flag air carrier if a city-pair contract fare exists. For information on other "open skies" agreements in which the United States has entered, please refer to GSA's website: [http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA\\_BASIC&contentId=24833&noc=T](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentType=GSA_BASIC&contentId=24833&noc=T)

2. *Involuntary Rerouting:* Travel on a foreign-flag carrier is permitted if a U.S.-flag air carrier involuntarily reroutes the traveler via a foreign-flag air carrier, notwithstanding the availability of alternative U.S.-flag air carrier service.

3. *Travel To and From the U.S.*

Use of a foreign-flag air carrier is permissible if the airport abroad is:

- (a) the traveler's origin or destination airport, and use of U.S.-flag air carrier service would extend the time in a travel status by at least 24 hours more than travel by a foreign-flag air carrier; or
- (b) an interchange point, and use of U.S.-flag air carrier service would increase the number of aircraft changes the traveler must make outside of the U.S. by two or more, would require the traveler to wait four hours or more to make connections at that point, or would extend the time in a travel status by at least six hours more than travel by a foreign-flag air carrier.

4. *Travel Between Points Outside the U.S.*

Use of a foreign-flag air carrier is permissible if:

- (a) travel by a foreign-flag air carrier would eliminate two or more aircraft changes en route;
- (b) travel by a U.S.-flag air carrier would require a connecting time of four hours or more at an overseas interchange point; or
- (c) the travel is not part of the trip to or from the U.S., and use of a U.S.-flag air carrier would extend the time in a travel status by at least six hours more than travel by a foreign-flag air carrier.

5. *Short Distance Travel.* For all short distance travel, regardless of origin and destination, use of a foreign-flag air carrier is permissible if the elapsed travel time on a scheduled flight from origin to destination airport by a foreign-flag air carrier is three hours or less and service by a U.S.-flag air carrier would double the travel time.

## **12. FOREIGN TENURE**

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.

### **13. ADDITIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROVISIONS**

#### **a. Length of Tenure and Leaves of Absence**

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 in paragraph b. and c. below. If the fellowship start is delayed beyond the effective date stated in the grant letter, 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.

#### **b. Supplementary Activities**

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.

#### **c. Interruptions**

You may interrupt the tenure of your fellowship only with the prior approval of the Foundation or in an emergency. Interruptions of tenure are granted on a case-by-case basis under extenuating circumstances, normally for health reasons or situations not under your control. When an interruption of tenure is granted, the fellowship may be extended without additional funds for a similar time period through a no-cost extension. Parental leave is also handled on a case-by-case basis. Usually Fellows follow the policies and practices in place at their host institutions; but special cases should be discussed with the Program Officer.

#### **d. Vacations**

NSF fellowships do not provide a vacation period, as such, 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 a vacation period. 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 Foundation approval, to carry on the work; or suspension of the fellowship for that period of time should be requested from the Foundation.

**e. Health Insurance**

Health insurance is not available through NSF but you are strongly encouraged to secure health insurance. You should discuss with your Host Institution whether or not you can participate in a group plan or if you need an individual policy. You may find COBRA coverage is available to you. The institutional allowance may be used to purchase your health insurance. Be sure that your insurance is applicable to destinations abroad if you have chosen a host institution outside the United States.

**f. Military Status**

Brief interruption of a Fellowship for duly authorized military service or training will be permitted with prior Foundation approval. 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.

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, you should notify the Foundation immediately in writing of your plans, and request further instructions.

**g. 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.

**h. 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.

**i. 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.

**j. 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.

**k. Publications**

You are 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 developed from the fellowship-supported research, in the following terms:

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Award No. (NSF award number)."

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

You are 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 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 also 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.

**l. 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.

**m. Sharing of Findings, Data and Other Research Products**

You are expected to agree to complete and open sharing of data and material in an expeditious manner. You are responsible for compliance with the following NSF guidelines on 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.

**n. Government Permits and Activities Abroad**

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

2. You 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 your compliance with the laws and regulations of the country in which the work is to be conducted.

3. You 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.

**o. 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](mailto:oig@nsf.gov); [www.nsf.gov/oig](http://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.

**p. Income Taxes**

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*. These publications are available at all IRS district offices or the IRS homepage at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

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 special allowance) will be issued by the Division of Financial Management of the Foundation 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.

**q. Special Considerations**

A number of situations frequently 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.

1. research which has an actual and/or potential impact on the environment;
2. research at a registered historic or cultural property;
3. research involving the use of in vitro generated recombinant DNA molecules;
4. research involving 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 provision 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.

**r. Additional Reports**

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 would like to track each of our Fellows over a ten-year period with respect to positions (and addresses), grants received, lists of publications,

and research related honors and awards. It would be helpful if you would provide this information without solicitation as a continuing responsibility.

**s. Tracking Data**

It would be very helpful if you keep NSF informed of your current address after completion of the fellowship and your continuing role in science.

**14. TERMINATION OF FELLOWSHIP**

A Fellowship Termination Certificate, NSF Form 453 (6/2009), will be made available with your award notice. 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; the Fellowship will be considered to have terminated as of that date. 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 the Foundation all Fellowship funds which were received during Fellowship tenure.

**15. 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 faxed or electronically mailed to NSF at the address given at the beginning of this document, at the appropriate time in the tenure of the Fellowship, as described above.

- [Fellowship Starting Certificate, NSF Form 349 \(06/2009\)](#)
- [FastStart Direct Deposit Form, NSF Form 1379 \(06/2009\)](#)
- [Fellowship Termination Certificate, NSF Form 453 \(06/2009\)](#)

**16. SPECIAL STARTER GRANT FOR TENURE-TRACK POSITION**

Fellows who elect to pursue an academic career and accept a tenure-track position at a U.S. institution eligible to receive NSF funding immediately following their fellowships may apply for a special one-year, nonrenewable starter grant to assist in establishing an independent research program. Starter grant proposals must be submitted through the sponsored research office at the employing institution within one year following the end of the fellowship. Starter grant proposals may be submitted only between October 1 and March 1 each fiscal year. The maximum amount of the starter grant is \$50,000. Starter grants do not require matching funds but you must report the amount of start up funds provided by the employing institution in your proposal. "Start up funds" are defined as the amount of cash that the new faculty member controls, not salary for the former Fellow or renovation costs for laboratories, offices and facilities; and they must be documented in the starter grant proposal, either in the budget justification section or in supplemental documents.

Starter grants may be used for equipment purchase or other allowable direct costs related to the conduct of research that falls within the purview of the research programs of the Directorate for Biological Sciences, descriptions of which are found at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/bio>. Starter grants do not pay indirect costs or salary for the former Fellow.

Directions for applying are found at [www.fastlane.nsf.gov](http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov). Click on “postdoctoral fellowships,” then “I am an applicant,” then “Minority Postdoctoral Fellowships,” then “how to apply.” Instructions for starter grants are at the bottom of the document.

Starter grants are not fellowships but provide research support; therefore, requests are assigned to the cognizant research program in the Directorate for Biological Sciences for staff review and decision. The starter grant is submitted to the Division of Biological Infrastructure who consults with program officers to determine the appropriate program assignment for the starter grant request and notifies the applicant of the NSF program assignment.

## **17. PROGRAMS OF INTEREST AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR FELLOWSHIP**

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 *Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER)*. Another program of interest is sponsored by the Directorate for Biological Sciences and called *Research Initiation Grants for Broadening Participation (RIG BP)*. See [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov) for more information.