Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)
NSFGRFP.org

EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTORATE (EHR)

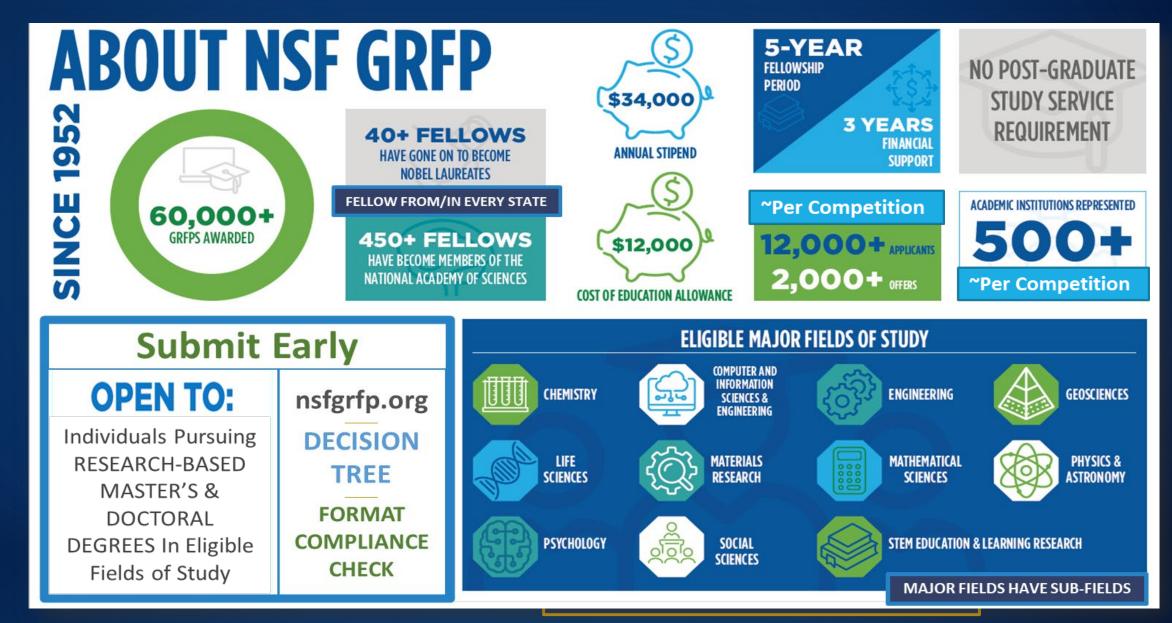**DIVISION OF GRADUATE EDUCATION (DGE)**

Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

Education and Human Resources (EHR)

Division of Graduate Education (DGE)

www.nsf.gov/grfp

info@nsfgrfp.org

www.nsfgrfp.org

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ABOUT NSF GRFP

SINCE 1952

60,000+ GRFPS AWARDED

40+ FELLOWS HAVE GONE ON TO BECOME NOBEL LAUREATES

FELLOW FROM/IN EVERY STATE

450+ FELLOWS HAVE BECOME MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

$34,000 ANNUAL STIPEND

$12,000 COST OF EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

5-YEAR FELLOWSHIP PERIOD

3 YEARS FINANCIAL SUPPORT

NO POST-GRADUATE STUDY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

~Per Competition
12,000+ APPLICANTS
2,000+ OFFERS

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED
500+
~Per Competition

Submit Early

OPEN TO:
Individuals Pursuing RESEARCH-BASED MASTER'S & DOCTORAL DEGREES In Eligible Fields of Study

nsfgrfp.org
DECISION TREE
FORMAT COMPLIANCE CHECK

ELIGIBLE MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY

- CHEMISTRY
- COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES & ENGINEERING
- ENGINEERING
- GEOSCIENCES
- LIFE SCIENCES
- MATERIALS RESEARCH
- MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
- PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY
- PSYCHOLOGY
- SOCIAL SCIENCES
- STEM EDUCATION & LEARNING RESEARCH

MAJOR FIELDS HAVE SUB-FIELDS

National Science Foundation

Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

DESCRIPTION

NSF Graduate Research Fellowships

Five Year Awards – $138,000

Three years of financial support

- $34,000 stipend each year to the graduate institution
- $12,000 educational allowance directly to graduate institution
- In lieu of tuition and fees

Other NSF Opportunities

- INTERN – non-academic internship program
- FASED Individuals with Disabilities support
- Career-Life Balance Initiative (family leave)

GRFP Benefits

- <u>Fellowship</u>: Awarded to individual, paid through the attended graduate institution
- <u>Flexible</u>: Choice of project, advisor, and graduate program
- <u>Unrestricted</u>: No service requirement after completion
- <u>Portable</u>: Can be used at any accredited, non-profit, US institution of higher education, with campus in US research-based master's and doctoral degrees

- 2010 - 2019: ~2,000 Fellowships yearly
- 2016: ~16,800 Applications - ~12% success rate
- 2017: ~13,200 Applications - ~15% success rate
- 2018: ~12,400 Applications - ~16% success rate
- **2019: ~12,200 Applications - ~16% success rate**

GRFP Goals

The overall goal of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program is to recruit individuals into Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields

- To select, recognize, and financially support individuals who have <u>demonstrated the potential</u> to be high achieving scientists and engineers, <u>early in their careers</u>

- To <u>broaden participation</u> in science and engineering of underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and veterans

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Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

ELIGIBILITY

GRFP Eligibility - NSF 21-602

- U.S. citizens, nationals, and permanent residents
- Early-career: undergrad & graduate students
- Pursuing research-based master's and/or doctoral degrees (no professional degrees)
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) or STEM Education
- Full-time enrollment in graduate degree program at accredited, non-profit US institution of higher education
- NO foreign institutions

Level 1: Seniors/bachelor's degree: no graduate study

Level 2: 1st-year graduate students
- Joint bachelor's-master's (completed 3 years)

Level 3: Second-year graduate students
- No more than 1 academic year completed in 1st graduate degree program
- For joint BS/MS holders ONLY, can apply as 1st year doctoral students if went directly into PhD program, after completing joint bachelor's-master's degree)

Level 4: Returning graduate students
- > 2-year interruption in graduate study
- No doctorates or >1 academic year in graduate program
- NOT ENROLLED in graduate program at application deadline

Only apply once in grad school

Ineligible Degree Programs

- Professional degree programs
  - E.g., MBA, MD, JD, DVM, DDS
- Joint science-professional degree programs
  - E.g., MD/PhD, JD/PhD
- Community, Global, or Public Health (MPH)
- Counseling, Social Work (MSW)
- Education (except STEM education)
- History (except history of science)

See Detailed Eligibility Requirements in the GRFP Solicitation

Ineligible Fields of Study

Research with directly health-related goals
- Etiology, diagnosis, or treatment of disease or disorder
- Animal models of disease for drug development/testing
- Epidemiology
- Disease prevention
- Public, community, global health
- Clinical research
- Patient-oriented research
- Epidemiological and behavioral studies

Outcomes research
- Health services, standard of care, health policy
- Research directly leading to clinical trials

Applied research on plant pathology
- Maximizing agricultural production

Impacts on food safety

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Application Package

GRFP
Complete Application

Complete Application Package:

1) Personal Information, Education, Work/Research Experience, Proposed Major Field of Study, Honors, Awards, Publications

2) Personal, Relevant Background and Future Goals Statement (3-page PDF)

3) Graduate Research Statement (2-page PDF)

4) Transcripts (**PDFs; mandatory**)

5) Letters of reference (may provide up to five names of reference letter writers)

- <u>3 reference letter writer names are mandatory</u> and 2 reference letters are mandatory for your application to be reviewed

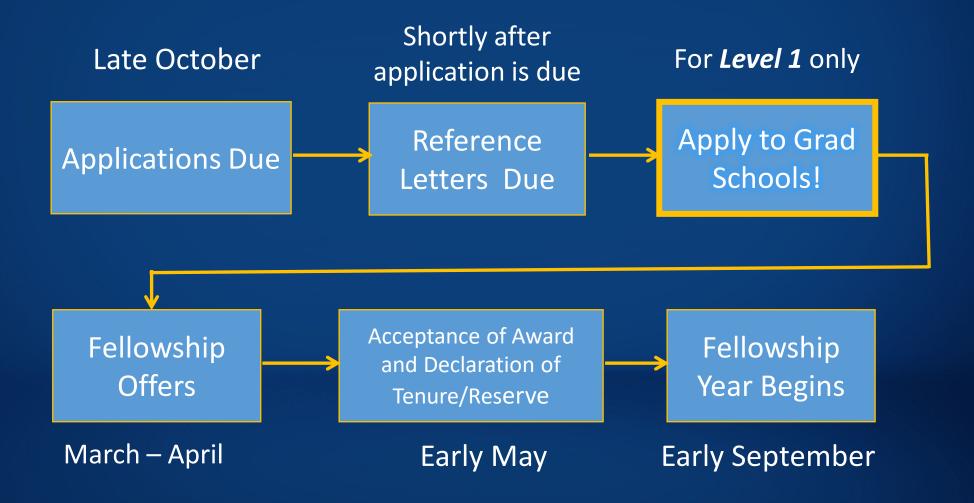14

GRFP Complete Application

EXAMPLE

DEADLINES (5 p.m. local applicant mailing address):

- Oct. 18, 2021: Life Sciences
- Oct. 19, 2021: CISE, Materials Research, Psychology, Social Sciences, STEM Education and Learning
- Oct. 21, 2021 : Engineering
- Oct. 22, 2021 : Chemistry, Geosciences, Math, Physics & Astronomy

Read the GRFP Solicitation for detailed application instructions and requirements **(NSF 21-602, latest)**

If accessibility accommodations are required, please contact **info@nsfgrfp.org** at least four weeks before the application deadline

Example GRFP Application Timeline

Late October

Shortly after application is due

For *Level 1* only

Applications Due	→	Reference Letters Due	→	Apply to Grad Schools!

Fellowship Offers	→	Acceptance of Award and Declaration of Tenure/Reserve	→	Fellowship Year Begins

March – April

Early May

Early September

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Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)

Personal and Research Statements

Two Statements

Personal, Relevant Background & Goals (3-page PDF)

Research Statement

Personal, Relevant Background & Goals

Tell your story; demonstrate your potential for STEM research

Experiences (professional and personal) that contributed to your motivation and preparation for pursuing a STEM career

Career aspirations and future goals

- How have your experiences shaped your goals?

Research, industrial, professional experience

- What was the project, what was your role?

- How did you become involved? Where was it done?

- Why was this project worth doing? What have you learned? Any advanced course work?

- What was your contribution to the project and how did it fit into the whole?

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Two Statements

Personal, Relevant Background & Goals

Research Statement (2-page PDF)

Research Statement

Describe your proposed research plan:

- Communicate your research idea and approach

- Explain your research plan and methods

- What do you expect to learn? How will you know if the project is successful?

- What would you do next?

Keep in mind:

- Avoid jargon
- Communicate clearly for non-specialists
- Make your contributions clear

Clearly address NSF's Merit Review Criteria – Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts – under separate headings

Reference Letters and Transcripts

Reference Letters

- 5 names of potential references are *optional*
- <u>3 names *must be listed*</u> as part of the application
- <u>NSF must receive at least 2 letters</u> to accept your application for review
- Three (3) reference letters are STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
- *Two (2) reference letters are MANDATORY*
- List and rank up to 5 reference letter writers
        - Top 3 will be seen by reviewers

Transcripts

- All applicants must submit bachelor's degree transcript
- Transcripts are **<u>required</u>** for all degree-programs
- Graduate transcripts for all graduate degree enrollment
- Official or unofficial transcripts accepted

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Review Criteria

Comprehensive Review

National Science Board-approved merit review criteria

Intellectual Merit

- How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge within its own field or across different fields?

Broader Impacts

- How well does the proposed activity benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes?

Comprehensive Review

Applicants are reviewed based on:

- Their demonstrated potential for significant achievement in STEM
- Using a comprehensive, holistic approach
- A balanced consideration to all components of the application
  - Including the educational and research record, leadership, outreach, service activities, plans for the future, individual competencies, experiences, and other attributes

Intellectual Merit

Potential to advance knowledge

Evidence of potential, such as ability to:

- Demonstrated intellectual ability (grades, curricula, awards, publications, presentations, etc.)

- Plan and conduct research

- Work as a member of a team as well as independently

- Interpret and communicate research

- Take initiative, solve problems, persist

- The potential of your approach to your major field of study and your Research Plan to advance knowledge

Evidence of Intellectual Merit can be found in all parts of the application: Personal Statement, Research Plan, letters, experiences, awards, achievements, and transcripts

Broader Impacts

Potential impact of the individual and/or the research on society; why it's important

Societal benefits may include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing participation of underrepresented groups, women, persons with disabilities, veterans
- Outreach: Mentoring; improving STEM education in schools
- Increasing public scientific literacy; increased public engagement with STEM
- Community outreach: science clubs, radio, TV, newspapers, blogs
- Increasing collaboration between academia, industry, others

Evidence of Broader Impacts can be in all parts of the application: Personal Statement, Research Plan, letters, experiences, awards, achievements

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