



National Science Foundation
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Arlington, Virginia 22230

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Dear Colleague Letter: NSF Graduate Research Fellows Nordic Research Opportunity

The Division of Graduate Education and the Office of International Science and Engineering announce an international research opportunity for NSF Graduate Research Fellows. Available as a Supplemental Award, this special opportunity enables Fellows to gain international research experience and establish collaborations with counterparts at Norwegian, Finnish, Danish or Swedish research institutions. The U. S. National Science Foundation (NSF), the [Research Council of Norway](#) (RCN), the [Academy of Finland and the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation](#) (TEKES), the [Danish National Research Foundation](#) (DNRF) and the [Swedish Research Council](#) (VR) will support research visits - on a competitive basis - between two and twelve months duration, depending on the host country. This international research opportunity is intended to enrich the Graduate Research Fellows' experience through cooperative activities with leading Nordic scientists and institutions, thus enabling them to develop early-career collaborations with international research partners. Results of the research collaboration are expected to expand opportunities for innovation and add an international dimension to Fellow research projects. Interested NSF Graduate Research Fellows who have completed at least one year of graduate study and who are studying at U.S. institutions are encouraged to contact potential Nordic host institutions for detailed information on current research activities at that site. Details for each participating country are provided below.

Norway

A list of potential host institutions in Norway may be found at:

<http://www.forskningradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Informasjonstekst&cid=1224066993924&p=1224066982949&pagename=internasjonale-stipend%2FHovedsidemal>. Proposed activities at Norwegian Centers of Excellence and Norwegian Centers for Research-Based Innovation are strongly encouraged. One research visit between three and twelve months will be supported. A mobility supplement of NOK 12,500 per month is provided by the Research Council of Norway (double rate for those bringing spouses or dependents; the request for spousal or dependent accommodation must be included in the application). According to the tax convention between the U.S. and Norway, income from the Norwegian supplement under this program will be exempt from Norwegian income tax.

Finland

A list of potential host institutions in Finland may be found at: <http://www.tekes.fi/NSFfellows> and <http://www.aka.fi/NSFFellow>. For the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, Fellows are strongly encouraged to propose activities related to research projects funded by the agency. For the Academy of Finland, research activities may be proposed at Centers of Excellence and with Academy Professors. One research visit between three and twelve months will be supported. The Finnish host institutions are prepared to cover the Fellow's living costs, typically as salary, as well as research-related costs in Finland. Salary paid by the Finnish organization will be subject to Finnish tax laws.

Denmark

A list of potential host institutions in Denmark may be found at: <http://www.dg.dk/en/centers-of-excellence-2/list-of-centers/>. Eligible host institutions are the DNRF Centers of Excellence. One research visit between two and twelve months will be supported. In Denmark, support for the visiting Fellow's research, education and additional living expenses will be provided by the Danish National Research Foundation through the Danish host institution. Anticipated support for additional living expenses will be approximately 9000 DKK per month.

Sweden

A list of potential host institutions in Sweden may be found at: <http://www.vr.se/4.37eca2ee12a87a82021800045.html>. Graduate Research Fellows are strongly encouraged to contact potential collaborators at the listed Swedish Centres of Excellence. One research visit between two and twelve months will be supported. In Sweden, support for the visiting Fellow's research, education and additional living expenses will be provided by the Swedish Research Council through the Swedish host institution. Anticipated support for additional living expenses will be approximately 12,500 SEK per month.

SUPPLEMENTAL AWARD INFORMATION AND ALLOWABLE COSTS

Graduate Research Fellows "on tenure"¹ selected for the Nordic research experience will continue to receive their NSF stipend through their home U. S. institution. Awardees will receive NSF supplements of \$5,000 to cover costs associated with the research opportunity, such as travel to and from the host country. The NSF stipend remains subject to U. S. tax laws. Fellows "on reserve"¹ for any or all of the research experience period will not receive the NSF stipend while "on reserve," but will be eligible to receive the NSF and Nordic supplements, including travel funds.

¹ Fellowship Tenure status is the period of time during which Fellows receive a Stipend and/or institutional cost-of-education allowance. A Fellow on Reserve status is an active Fellow who is a full-time student in good standing at the affiliated institution and who is not receiving GRFP financial support.

PROPOSAL DEADLINES

Anticipated Supplement Request and Consideration:

- October 2011 - December 2011. Contact proposed host institution and secure a letter of collaboration that includes a plan for the stay in Norway, Finland, Denmark, or Sweden, and a biographical sketch of the responsible professor/researcher at the host institution.
- January 20, 2012. Deadline for receipt of a Nordic research opportunity supplemental funding request from the Graduate Research Fellow through FastLane, as an individual supplement to the host U. S. institution's Graduate Research Fellowship Program award.
- February, 2012. NSF internal panel review of supplemental funding requests.
- March, 2012. Final review of supplemental funding requests by NSF and the Research Council of Norway (for applicants proposing to work in Norway), the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation or the Academy of Finland (for applicants proposing to work in Finland), the Danish National Research Foundation (for applicants proposing to work in Denmark), or the Swedish Research Council (for applicants proposing to work in Sweden).
- April, 2012. Announcement of supplemental Nordic Research Opportunity awards.

Successful applicants may commence their research stay as early as June 1, 2012 by mutual consent with the Nordic host institution, and no later than December 1, 2012. The research visit must be completed by the dates posted on the host country website.

All supplemental awards are subject to the availability of funds, review of the quality of proposals, and acceptance by the National Science Foundation and the Research Council of Norway, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, the Academy of Finland, the Danish National Research Foundation, or the Swedish Research Council.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT

The Nordic Research Opportunity (NRO) is open to all NSF Graduate Research Fellows who will be active Fellows (on tenure or reserve) at a U. S. institution during the period of time proposed for the research activity in Norway, Finland, Denmark, or Sweden, and who have not previously received an NRO Supplement. NSF Graduate Research Fellows must have completed at least one year of graduate school before applying.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING SUPPLEMENT REQUESTS

Applications for supplemental funding to the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Nordic Research Opportunity are submitted by the PI of the GRFP institutional award via FastLane, as a request for a supplement to the graduate institution's current GRFP award. Each Nordic Research Opportunity application must be submitted as a separate supplement request. Fellow access to FastLane (not the GRFP FastLane module) to upload text or complete sections of the proposal module will require the assistance of the GRFP Coordinating Official (CO), the student's faculty advisor, or the Office of Sponsored Projects at the institution.

The request must include the following elements for each applicant:

1. Name of Graduate Research Fellow, Fellow ID, Project Title, Proposed Nordic Host Institution, and Proposed Dates and Duration of Visit.
2. **Project Summary.** A one-page summary addressing the [Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts](#) of the work to be accomplished in the time period proposed for study and research in Norway, Finland,

Denmark or Sweden.

3. **Project Description.** Limit: 5 pages. A concise, substantive summary of the proposed plan for research and general interaction between the Fellow and the proposed Nordic partners, including justification for the length of the proposed time period for the international research visit, and the expected mutual scientific/engineering benefits to be derived from the project.

The Project Description must include: the research objectives and methodology of the proposed project, the rationale for selection of the host scientist and institution in the host country, and details of the proposed collaboration. The description must address the expected impact on the research career of the Fellow. The proposed start date and duration of the visit must be included and supported by the proposed plan for research and the description of the role of the Nordic institution/country in the graduate student's thesis and career objectives. A plan for dissemination of the results is also required, as is a description of the Broader Impacts of the proposed work.

4. **Budget and Budget Justification.** The budget should consist of a \$5,000 request placed in the "Other" category under "Other Direct Costs." No reimbursement of indirect costs is allowed. The Budget Justification should include a reference to airfare (estimated) and other relocation and project costs (the remainder of the amount requested) for the project.

5. **Supplementary documents:**

- The biographical sketch of the Graduate Fellow applicant. Limit: 2 pages.
- A letter of endorsement from the U. S. faculty research advisor of the student, describing the anticipated research benefits of the visit for the Fellow's graduate program and the anticipated impact on the Fellow's career. Limit: 2 pages.
- A letter of collaboration from the Nordic host scientist, describing the research opportunities and networking activities to be provided at the host institution. The letter must include a tentative plan for the research stay including research activities, seminars, courses for doctoral training (if any), and other relevant activities. Limit: 2 pages.
- The Biographical Sketch of the proposed Nordic host scientist. Limit: 2 pages.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Supplemental funding requests for this Nordic Research Opportunity will be reviewed using the National Science Board approved merit review criteria of [Intellectual Merit](#) and [Broader Impacts](#). In addition, the following criteria will be used in evaluating proposals:

- The potential for true intellectual collaboration with the Nordic research partner, engaging the expertise and specialized skills, facilities, and/or resources of the Nordic collaborator;
- The potential opportunities for effective research and career development for the Graduate Research Fellow applicant.

Final selection of awardees will depend on agreement between NSF and the Research Council of Norway, NSF and the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation or the Academy of Finland, NSF and the Danish National Research Foundation, or NSF and the Swedish Research Council.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Within six months after completion of the visit to Norway, Finland, Denmark, or Sweden, Graduate Fellows are expected to submit a report to the Graduate Research Fellowship Program Director (see contact at the National Science Foundation) that details the experience and accomplishments of the trip. This reporting requirement is in addition to any established by the Research Council of Norway, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, the Academy of Finland, the Danish National Research Foundation, or the Swedish Research Council.

Contact at the National Science Foundation:

Gisèle Muller-Parker, phone 703 292-7468, e-mail: gtmuller@nsf.gov

Contacts at the Research Council of Norway (RCN):

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Merethe Moe, phone: +47 22 03 71 59, email: mm@rcn.no

Contacts at the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES):

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Contact at the Danish National Research Foundation (DNRF):

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