



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

**NSF 13-099**

## **Dear Colleague Letter: FY 2013 Career-Life Balance (CLB) - Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Supplemental Funding Requests**

Date: June 5, 2013

### **BACKGROUND**

Instituted in 2012, NSF's Career-Life Balance (CLB) Initiative is an ambitious, ten-year initiative that will build on the best of family-friendly practices among individual NSF programs to expand them to activities NSF-wide. This agency-level approach will help attract, retain, and advance graduate students, postdoctoral students, and early-career researchers in STEM fields. This effort is designed to help reduce the rate at which women depart from the STEM workforce. Further information on the [CLB initiative](#) may be found on the Foundation's website.

The primary emphasis of NSF's CLB initiative in FY 2012 was focused on opportunities such as dependent-care issues (child birth/adoption and elder care). These issues initially were addressed through NSF's Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) program, where career-life balance opportunities can help retain a significant fraction of early career STEM talent. In FY 2013, the Foundation intends to further integrate CLB opportunities through other programs such as the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) and postdoctoral fellowship programs, as well as expand opportunities such as dual career-hiring through the Increasing the Participation and Advancement of Women in Academic Science and Engineering Careers (ADVANCE) program. Each of these opportunities will be described and implemented separately.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this DCL is to announce a new opportunity for GRFP institutions to submit supplemental funding requests to sustain the research of active NSF Graduate Research Fellows who have been granted an NSF-approved medical deferral for dependent-care (family leave) situations (see [Guide](#) for fellowship status options). This gender neutral supplemental funding opportunity is in addition to the limited paid leave option for Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved medical deferral. GRFP institutions are invited to submit supplemental funding requests to provide additional personnel (e.g., research technicians or equivalent) to sustain the research of NSF Graduate Research Fellows on approved medical deferral due to dependent care (family leave) situations. The supplemental funding request may include funding for up to 3 months of salary support for the additional personnel, for a maximum of \$12,000 in salary compensation. The fringe benefits and associated indirect costs may be in addition to the salary payment and therefore, the total supplemental funding request per Fellow may exceed \$12,000. The supplemental request also must include a letter from the Fellow's faculty advisor supporting the CLB/GRFP Supplemental Funding Request.

Special instructions for use by GRFP institutions in preparation and submission of GRFP Career-Life Balance Supplemental Funding Requests are included as an attachment to this DCL. Additional

questions should be directed to the GRFP program by emailing [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov).

Sincerely,

Wanda E. Ward  
Office Head  
Office of International & Integrative Activities

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### **Special Instructions for use by PIs and Sponsored Projects Offices in preparation and submission of Career Life Balance (CLB) - Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Supplemental Funding Requests**

In [NSF 13-075](#), entitled [FY 2013 Career-Life Balance \(CLB\) - Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\) Supplemental Funding Requests](#), the Foundation announced that GRFP institutions are eligible to submit supplemental funding requests to support additional personnel (e.g., research technicians or equivalent) for up to 3 months of salary support, for a maximum of \$12,000 in salary compensation to sustain the research of NSF Graduate Research Fellows on NSF-approved medical deferrals for dependent-care (family leave) situations. The fringe benefits and associated indirect costs may be in addition to the salary payment and therefore, the total supplemental funding request may exceed \$12,000 per Fellow.

CLB supplemental funding requests to the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) are submitted via FastLane, as a request for a supplement to the graduate institution's current GRFP award. Each Fellow's application must be submitted as a separate supplement request.

The GRFP Supplemental Funding Request must:

1. Clearly specify that this is a CLB supplemental funding request;
2. Provide a description of how the technician (or equivalent) would be used to sustain the research effort while the NSF Graduate Research Fellow is on medical deferral for a family leave situation;
3. Include a letter from the Fellow's faculty advisor supporting the GRFP Supplemental Funding Request;
4. Provide a budget and budget justification in support of requested costs;
5. Identify the proposed period of performance for the technician; and
6. Include the following statement:

"The Authorized Organizational Representative hereby certifies that the request for a technician is because the NSF Graduate Research Fellow is, or will be, on family leave status (or equivalent) from the institution in accordance with the NSF's and the institution's policies."

**There should be no privacy related information provided in this request, i.e., the rationale for leave should not be disclosed to NSF.**

Questions regarding these instructions should be addressed to the GRF Program Office via email: [grfp@nsf.gov](mailto:grfp@nsf.gov) or by phone: 703-292-8694. For additional information on the CLB Initiative, see <http://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance/>.