



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 16-015

Dear Colleague Letter: NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) - Graduate Research Internship Program (GRIP)

October 21, 2015

Dear Colleague:

The Division of Graduate Education announces the continuation of the Graduate Research Internship Program (GRIP). GRIP provides professional development to NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Fellows (referred to as "Fellows") through internships developed in partnership with federal agencies (see <http://www.nsf.gov/grip> for a current list of partner agencies). Through GRIP, Fellows participate in mission-related, collaborative research under the guidance of host research mentors at federal facilities and national laboratories. GRIP enhances the Fellows' professional skills, professional networks, and preparation for a wide array of career options. The sponsor agencies benefit by engaging Fellows in applied projects, helping to develop a highly skilled U.S. workforce in areas of national need.

Through GRIP, Fellows benefit from partnerships developed by NSF and other federal agencies to provide internship opportunities. Internship details for each partner agency differ and are available through links to agency websites. As additional agencies develop internship partnerships with NSF, updates will be made to the GRIP website (<http://www.nsf.gov/grip>).

ELIGIBILITY

GRIP is open to active Fellows (both "on tenure" and "on reserve")¹ who have completed at least one year of their graduate program at the time of application and will retain their active status for at least 12 months following the application submission deadline. They must be certified by the GRFP Institution to be making satisfactory progress towards their degrees, and have fulfilled all GRFP reporting requirements. For some agencies, Fellows must be U.S. citizens.

Fellows are encouraged to consult the GRFP Administrative Guide and FAQs for questions related to their fellowship. These are accessed through the following links:

https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grfp

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf13084

GRIP internship allowances are awarded to Fellows based on a twice-yearly competition. The maximum number of Fellows to be supported by GRIP in fiscal year 2016 is 75. All GRIP awards are subject to the availability of funds, merit review, and acceptance by both the National Science Foundation and NSF's partner agencies.

A Fellow may submit one (1) application per partner agency and may apply to a maximum of two (2)

partner agencies for each submission deadline. A Fellow may receive only one (1) GRIP internship per fellowship year. Previous GRIP recipients may reapply to conduct internships with the same partner agency as their original award, or propose a new internship project, as long as they meet the general eligibility requirements.

All internship applications are subject to: 1) confirmation by the Fellow's advisor that the Fellow is making satisfactory progress in her or his graduate degree program and that participation in GRIP will enhance the Fellow's graduate education; 2) the availability of funds from NSF and appropriate resources from partner agencies; and 3) review of the applications and acceptance by the National Science Foundation and the partner agency. In some cases, Fellows will be required to pass a background and/or security clearance check before they may begin an internship position. Background and/or security clearance checks will be conducted by the individual agencies. Interested Fellows should check with the partner agency to see if they meet the clearance criteria for the agency to which they are applying.

Fellows will not be employees and will not conduct inherently governmental functions. Fellows must not act in a manner that would lead anyone to believe s/he is an employee of, or a representative of, the partner agencies. Please see the [Guiding Principles](#) for Fellows and partner agencies.

GRIP INTERNSHIP FUNDING AND ALLOWABLE COSTS

Fellows will receive an internship allowance of \$5,000 through their GRFP institution to cover travel and research costs associated with the GRIP internship project (see the Budget and Budget Justification section below for restrictions on use of NSF funds). Additional support to cover expenses while conducting the GRIP internship differs among partner agencies. Further information, including links to the partner agencies' GRIP websites, is available on the NSF GRIP website (<http://www.nsf.gov/grip>). The internship allowance provided by NSF may be used to fund multiple trips to the partner agency within the award period, subject to the approval of the partner agency and the Fellow's research advisor and GRFP institution.

Fellows "on tenure" selected for GRIP will receive a GRIP internship allowance in addition to their NSF GRFP stipend through their GRFP institution. The NSF GRFP stipend remains subject to U.S. tax laws. Fellows "on reserve" for any or all of the GRIP research experience period will not receive the NSF GRFP stipend during the period they are on "on reserve" but will receive the GRIP internship allowance and associated support from the partner agency.

GRIP funding is an internship allowance to the Fellow for the current fellowship year or subsequent fellowship year. Fellows must complete their GRIP internship and associated travel before the end of August of the subsequent fellowship year or by the end of the Fellow's GRFP Fellowship Period², whichever occurs first. GRIP funds may not be transferred to another Fellow and may not be used to support travel for spouses or dependents.

The NSF internship allowance is for use by the Fellow during the internship experience identified in the application. The institution will disburse the \$5,000 internship allowance to the Fellow. Proposed internship projects must be a minimum of 2 months, and may be up to 12 months. Extensions are subject to the approval of the Fellow's GRFP institution, NSF, and the partner agency.

GRIP APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Please note that the information presented is current at the time of publishing. See the [GRIP website](#) for any program updates.

- GRIP is announced to Fellows and GRFP Institutions. Fellows review available GRIP opportunities on agency websites and may contact possible host researchers to develop their

applications. **GRIP applications are due December 4 and May 6.**

- Fellows submit GRIP applications through the GRFP FastLane module, adhering to the NSF submission guidelines specified in this Dear Colleague Letter. A signed Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) Certification form must be submitted as part of the application. The GRFP Coordinating Official of the Fellow's GRFP institution must approve each Fellow's request in the GRFP FastLane module by **5 p.m. local time on the application due dates**; the GRFP Coordinating Official must approve the submission before NSF receives the application. Applicants are encouraged to check with their GRFP Coordinating Official regarding institutional policies and deadlines for submitting GRIP requests. **GRIP applications that are incomplete or do not comply with the submission guidelines will be returned without review.**
- Review of GRIP applications. GRIP applications are reviewed internally by NSF using the National Science Board approved Merit Review Criteria and additional criteria described below (GRIP Application Review). Meritorious GRIP applications are forwarded to the GRIP contact person at each partner agency for review and approval by the partner agency.
- Fellows and their Coordinating Officials are notified via email and NSF's Fastlane system of the outcome of the selection and review process. GRIP internship allowances are provided to the GRFP institutions as part of the summer or fall funding increment. The GRFP PI (Graduate Dean) and Financial Official provide administrative and financial oversight of the GRIP internship allowance(s) of Fellows selected for GRIP as part of the GRFP award to the institution.
- GRIP internships must be initiated in the fellowship year following announcement of the award. GRIP Fellows must complete their internship and associated travel before the end of their GRFP Fellowship Period.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING GRIP APPLICATIONS

1. Applications for GRIP are submitted by Fellows through the "GRFP Additional Funding Opportunities" link in the [GRFP FastLane module](#). Applications must adhere to the NSF submission guidelines specified in this Dear Colleague Letter and must comply with the NSF standard proposal preparation instructions (e.g., font, spacing and margin requirements; see http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf15001/gpg_2.jsp) and **all materials must be uploaded as a single PDF file.**

GRIP applications must be certified by the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) at the GRFP Institution through the use of a signed AOR Certification form (available at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2014/nsf14084/GRIP_AOR_Certification.pdf), which is submitted with the application as part of the PDF file. GRIP applicants should contact their GRFP Coordinating Official to identify their institution's AOR for GRIP submissions. The GRFP Coordinating Official approves the GRIP application in the GRFP FastLane module and through this action submits the application to the NSF.

2. GRIP applications must include all of the following elements (**in the order they appear below**), **submitted as a single PDF file.**
 - a. **Coversheet** with the name of the Fellow, Fellow ID, Project Title, Start Date of Graduate Program, Proposed Partner Agency, Host/Sponsoring Researcher(s), Proposed Dates and Duration of Internship. The host researcher(s) and partner agency must be identified.
 - b. **Project summary.** (Limit: 1 page). A summary consisting of an overview of the internship project and collaboration and separate statements of the Intellectual Merit and Broader

Impacts of the proposed internship activities. Each section must be formatted with separate headings (i.e., Overview, Intellectual Merit, and Broader Impacts. The Professional Development plan should be summarized in the Broader Impacts section. The Project Summary should be written in the third person, informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.

- c. **Project Description and Professional Development Plan.** (Limit: 2 pages; single spaced, references are not included in the page limit). Each section must be formatted with separate headings (i.e., Project Description and Professional Development Plan). A concise, substantive description of the proposed plan for the internship research and general interaction between the Fellow and the proposed host research partner(s), including a justification for the duration of the proposed internship visit(s), project timeline, and the expected mutual scientific/engineering benefits and outcomes of the project.

The Project Description must describe how the Fellow will:

- Integrate the proposed internship activities into the Fellow's graduate degree program and future career goals.
- Benefit from mentoring and specialized expertise, equipment, facilities, field sites, data, and/or other resources.

The Professional Development Plan must describe how the Fellow will:

- Build professional skills and collaborations that will enhance and contribute to the Fellow's professional development, professional network, and future career goals.

Applications submitted by previous GRIP awardees must include a section labeled "**Results of Prior GRIP Support.**" The section must include a summary of the outcomes and accomplishments of the GRIP internship and, if the application is for renewed support with the same internship partner(s), a description of the relation of the completed work to the proposed work.

- d. **References Cited:** (Limit: 1 page). Each reference must include the names of all authors, the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.
- e. **Budget and Budget Justification:** (Limit: 2 pages). The budget should consist of a \$5,000 internship allowance request for the Fellow's costs incurred as a result of the internship project. Anticipated expenses should be itemized and reported in tabular format. Allowable expenses include, but are not limited to, travel to host site and agency, visa applications (if applicable), field permits, research supplies, excess luggage, travel and health insurance, per diem, and other travel-related costs. Support for Fellow stipends, major pieces of equipment, large amounts for materials and supplies, and spouse and dependent travel are not allowed. Travel to specific conferences and workshops may be included, but relevance to the internship project must be justified. Applications may not consist primarily of conference or workshop travel; internship host researcher engagement is required. The Budget Justification should include a reference to airfare (estimated) and other travel, relocation, and project costs (the remainder of the amount requested) for the project.

Fellows are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, as well as for obtaining health insurance, travel insurance, passports, visas, and any other required travel documents, if applicable. Under the terms of the Fly America Act, international air travel must adhere to requirements to use U.S. flag air carriers [see NSF Award and Administration Guide, Chapter VI, Subsection G, 1 (b-c);

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf15001/aag_6.jsp#VIF1]. Travel that fails to comply with the Fly America Act cannot be reimbursed with federal funds.

- f. **Biographical sketch of the NSF Graduate Fellow:** (Limit: 2 pages). A biographical sketch is required and must be submitted using the NSF guidelines for senior personnel [see NSF Grant Proposal Guide, Chapter II, Subsection C, 2 (f); http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf15001/gpg_2.jsp#IIC2f]. Do not include personal information, such as home address, telephone, fax, date of birth, and drivers' license number.
- g. **Letter of Endorsement from the Fellow's Research Advisor:** (Limit: 2 pages). The letter should be written on organization/institution letterhead and should describe the anticipated research benefits of the internship project for the Fellow's graduate program and the anticipated impact on her/his career. The letter must also indicate that the Fellow is making satisfactory progress in her or his graduate degree program.
- h. **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) Certification Form** signed by a representative of the GRFP Institution who is authorized to sign on behalf of the University. It should not be signed by the Fellow, the host scientist(s), or a representative of the partner agency. GRIP applicants should contact their GRFP Coordinating Official to identify their institution's AOR for GRIP applications.

GRIP APPLICATION REVIEW

GRIP applications will be reviewed by NSF 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 the applications:

- The potential opportunities for effective research collaboration;
- The potential for effective professional development for the Fellow;
- The potential for effective career development/opportunities;
- Any agency-specific criteria (see proposed host agency website).

NSF and agency partner program officers will review internship applications. Approval by the NSF and the sponsoring partner agency is required before GRIP internships are announced. NSF will notify Fellows and the Coordinating Officials via email and NSF's GRFP FastLane Module regarding the status of GRIP applications, within 3 months of the application deadlines.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Fellows who receive GRIP internship allowances are expected to submit a report by May 1 of the following year through the GRFP FastLane Module that details the experience and accomplishments of the GRIP internship activities. The report should highlight publications, presentations, and other products or achievements that are outcomes of the GRIP activities. The report should also highlight any professional development achievements such as gaining proficiency in professional skills (e.g., communication, technical writing, project management, etc.) and expanding professional networks.
- All reporting must be approved for "Public Release" by the partner agency. In some cases, Fellows may have to submit an internal report to the partner agency and a separate "cleared" report to NSF that does report on the general accomplishments and professional development of the Fellow through the internship opportunity.

- The GRFP Institution disburses the \$5,000 internship allowance to the Fellow and is responsible for reporting the expended GRIP allowance (\$5,000) for each Fellow on the GRFP Program Expense Report covering the time period of the internship.

¹ Fellowship Tenure status is the period of time during which active Fellows receive GRFP financial support. Fellowship Reserve status is the period of time during which active Fellows do not receive GRFP financial support. An active Fellow is within the five-year Fellowship Period; not Completed or Terminated.

² Fellowship Tenure status is the period of time during which active Fellows receive GRFP financial support. Fellowship Reserve status is the period of time during which active Fellows do not receive GRFP financial support. An active Fellow is within the five-year Fellowship Period; not Completed or Terminated.