



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 20-083

Dear Colleague Letter: MPS AGEP-GRS

May 14, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) encourages Principal Investigators (PIs) of current MPS awards to support one (additional) Ph.D. student per award, through a partnership with the Division of Human Resource Development (HRD) in the Directorate of Education and Human Resources (EHR).

This opportunity is available to PIs with current MPS research awards whose institutions and/or academic units are either currently participating in the EHR-sponsored "Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate" (AGEP) program; or whose institutions and/or academic units have participated in the AGEP program in the past (AGEP Legacy institutions). Such PIs may apply to MPS for a supplement to defray the costs for: stipend, tuition, benefits and indirect costs for a graduate research student working on the MPS-funded research. For the purposes of this Dear Colleague Letter, this funding opportunity will be abbreviated to: AGEP - Graduate Research Supplements (AGEP-GRS).

A list of the eligible institutions may be found here:

https://www.nsf.gov/mps/broadening_participation/fy18_all_past_and_current_agep_institutions.pdf

Details of the AGEP Program may be found here:

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5474

In support of NSF's commitment to broadening participation among individuals, institutions, and geographic areas, these supplements are designed to promote increased participation in all fields of MPS research, with an emphasis placed on increasing the involvement in these fields by members of underrepresented groups -- a key goal of the AGEP Program.

Program Description: MPS has long promoted efforts to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups in all areas of the mathematical and physical sciences. AGEP-GRS is a mechanism by which a **current MPS research** awardee is able to support one

(additional) Ph.D. student in an ongoing MPS-funded research project. The goal is to create an opportunity to engage additional students in research, to develop a positive learning environment for students, and to improve diversity and retention at the doctoral level within the mathematical and physical sciences.

Anticipated Type of Award: One-year (twelve-month) supplements to currently active MPS awards for a single Ph.D. student; renewable for a total support period of up to three years, contingent upon the duration of the active MPS research award and satisfactory progress of the student towards completion of the Ph.D.

Eligibility: A request for AGEP-GRS supplemental funding may be made by the PI of a currently active MPS research award. The PI must be affiliated with, or have a collaboration with, a PI at an academic unit of an institution participating in an active AGEP project or a Legacy AGEP institution as defined above. Instrumentation acquisition awards, REU awards and large awards governed by cooperative agreements (e.g., facilities, institutes, and centers) are not eligible. **AGEP-GRS student candidates must be United States citizens, nationals, or permanent residents.**

The AGEP-GRS program will support up to one additional Ph.D. student per PI, regardless of the number of awards in MPS. Students being nominated for support must not have other government-funded (NSF, NIH, DoE) support (stipend and tuition), e.g., students currently being supported full-time by the PI on any NSF award as a doctoral student are not eligible for AGEP-GRS support, and students who received NSF-GRF support are not eligible for AGEP-GRS support. The graduate student's research project must be consistent with the research topic of the original MPS award. Such support is limited to one year, with the possibility of two further years of support through this program at the doctoral level subject to the conditions described above.

To be eligible for a renewal of an AGEP-GRS for a second or third year, a student must be in good academic standing. The GRS renewal request must include a report on the student's progress towards the Ph.D. GRS renewals are subject to availability of funds in the program and should be submitted approximately three months in advance of the renewal date for the previous supplement.

While the main focus of the AGEP-GRS program is support of graduate students in a doctoral program, the program will also consider support for a graduate student in a masters degree-only granting program, provided that the student is both a) doing a research - based masters project and b) planning on joining a doctoral program within 12 months. Such support is limited to the last year of the Master's student's work. The student may then be eligible for two years of further AGEP-GRS support at the doctoral level should their doctoral mentor have a currently active MPS research award at an eligible AGEP institution or collaborates with a PI at an AGEP institution.

Preparation of an AGEP-GRS Supplemental Funding Request:

Information about requesting supplemental support is contained in Chapter VI.E.4 of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) available online at https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pappg

An AGEP-GRS supplemental funding request to an existing MPS award should be submitted in FastLane (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/index.jsp>) in accordance with the guidelines found in the PAPPG and subject to the following instructions.

After logging into FastLane, choose "Award and Reporting functions," and then "Supplemental Funding Request." Next, choose the award to be supplemented. In the form entitled "**Summary of Proposed Work**," state that this is an AGEP-GRS request and provide a brief description, not to exceed one page, of the proposed AGEP-GRS activity, the impact of the AGEP-GRS support, and how the AGEP-GRS support would broaden participation.

In the form entitled "**Justification for Supplement**," describe the student's involvement in the research project, keeping in mind that the student should contribute to the intellectual core of the funded research effort. Include a description of the student's long-range career goals and provide an explanation of how the proposed doctoral candidate and project will serve to broaden participation. For a Master's student, also explain how this support will facilitate the student entering a PhD program, and the steps the PI has taken to ensure the student's success in that direction. The description is limited to 3 pages

In the **Supplementary Documents** section, provide the following:

- A brief resume, not to exceed 2 pages, for the Ph.D. or Master's student, including U.S. permanent residency or citizenship status. Please do not include other personally identifiable information such as social security number, date of birth, or place of birth.
- A mentoring plan to be modeled after the required NSF post-doctoral mentoring plan and include a plan to encourage and support completion of the Ph.D. (or entrance into a PhD program) after the supplement period, and a plan to foster further career advancement.
- Either:
 - A letter signed by the PI of the current AGEP (not the PI of the supplemental funding request) award confirming that the proposed MSc or Ph.D. student is or will be a beneficiary of the AGEP activities supported by the AGEP award; or
 - A letter from the coordinator of legacy AGEP activities (not the PI of the supplemental funding request) stating how the student is or will be a beneficiary of activities that fulfill the goal of the AGEP program: "AGEP is committed to the national goal of increasing the numbers of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (collectively underrepresented minorities (URMs)), including URMs with disabilities

entering and completing graduate education and postdoctoral training to levels representative of the available pool of URMs."

Prepare a budget, including a budget justification for the funds requested for student support and their proposed use. The only allowable expenses in the AGEP-GRS request are: student stipend and fringe benefits, consistent with academic institutional practices, tuition support, and any allowed institutional overhead on these costs. The annual amount (Line J) of a AGEP-GRS request is about \$60,000.

After you have prepared the request for supplemental funding, forward it to your organization's Sponsored Research Office, which will submit the request to NSF. The term of an AGEP-GRS award may not exceed that of the underlying research project.

For questions or information on submission of an AGEP-GRS, contact the Division AGEP-GRS representatives (below) or the cognizant managing Program Officer for your current MPS grant:

- https://www.nsf.gov/mps/broadening_participation/index.jsp
- AST: Matthew J. Benacquista, mabenacqu@nsf.gov
- CHE: Rebecca Peebles rpeebles@nsf.gov
- DMR: Guebre X. Tessema, gtessema@nsf.gov
- DMS: Stefaan De Winter, sgdewint@nsf.gov
- PHY: Kathleen V. McCloud, kmcccloud@nsf.gov

For questions related to the use of FastLane to submit the supplement request, contact the FastLane Help Desk: email fastlane@nsf.gov or telephone 1-800-673-6188.

Review Process: An award decision will be based on internal review by the managing program officer of the MPS award and on availability of funds.

Award Duration: The Principal Investigator may request AGEP-GRS support for twelve months, renewable annually through additional AGEP-GRS requests for the duration of the research grant. An individual student may receive AGEP-GRS support for a maximum period of three years.

Award Information: Anticipated annual funding for AGEP-GRS is \$2,000,000, subject to the availability of funds and the merit of supplement requests received. The estimated number of supplements to be awarded will be approximately 35.

Submission Deadline: There is no deadline for submissions; supplemental funding requests may be submitted at any time.

Special Reporting Requirements: The annual and final project reports must discuss the impact of the AGEP-GRS on increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in the

mathematical and physical sciences.

Sincerely,

Sean L. Jones

Acting Assistant Director

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HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF THAT REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF OUR NATION.**