



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
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NSF 23-112

Dear Colleague Letter: Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) Opportunity for Graduate Students Supplemental Funding to Link Geosciences and Human Health (GeoHealth INTERN)

May 22, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

The Earth environment and human health are inextricably linked. Many earth materials, fluids, soil microbes and changes in natural environmental conditions can trigger negative health responses in the human body. We are in an unprecedented era of rapid environmental change due to global warming, anthropogenically driven environmental change, and the need for increased extraction of natural resources to quickly move to the New Green Economy. To better understand and combat the negative impacts of environmental change on human health, the NSF Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) proposes an opportunity for graduate students, supported by NSF awards, to participate in a paid, non-academic, internship. This opportunity provides funding for a graduate student to work on-site with public health or medical professionals for up to 6 months on a project of mutual interest that involves combining knowledge of, and work on, processes in and materials of the natural environment and how they impact human health.

This opportunity is aligned with and conforms with the NSF INTERN opportunity described in the Dear Colleague Letter: Non-Academic Research Internships for Graduate Students (INTERN) Supplemental Funding Opportunity

(https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf21013). In addition, institutions submitting an INTERN supplemental funding request are required to have a policy or code of conduct that addresses sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault. For more information, see the NSF policies at <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oecr/harassment.jsp> and the "Promising Practices" at https://www.nsf.gov/od/oecr/promising_practices/index.jsp.

BACKGROUND

Responding to calls for increasing the interaction between geoscientists and public

health/medical professionals and aligned with recent reports on this issue by the websites of the [American Geophysical Union \(AGU\)](#), [American Meteorological Society \(AMS\)](#), and [Geological Society of America \(GSA\)](#), GEO encourages INTERN supplemental funding requests for GEO grantees and their students to apply their knowledge and skills to advance research in medicine and public health. The GeoHealth INTERN opportunity is meant to foster collaboration focused on addressing high-priority challenges in human health caused by our changing natural environment. Challenges include, but are not limited to, air quality; wildfire aerosols and particulates; nano/microplastics; forever chemicals; extreme temperatures; fluvial and groundwater quality; heavy metal transport in natural waters; harmful algal blooms, ocean-borne disease, and downstream impacts from mining and other natural resource extractive industries.

All core programs within the NSF Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) participate in this opportunity.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

NSF will consider supplemental funding requests for up to \$55k for up to six months of graduate student support on active NSF awards with the following goals:

1. To provide graduate students with the opportunity to augment their research assistantships or NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) fellowships with research internship activities and training opportunities at a public health or medical facility that will complement their academic research training.
2. To allow graduate students to pursue activities aimed at use-inspired research in the combined arena of geoscience and human health, acquiring professional development and workplace experience that will enhance their preparation for multiple career pathways after graduation.
3. To include the participation of the full spectrum of diverse talents in STEM.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, a graduate student must have completed at least one academic year in their graduate program (master's or doctoral) and be making satisfactory progress towards the completion of their degrees.

This opportunity is open to PIs (and co-PIs) who are supporting graduate students on active NSF awards. A PI for an active GRFP fellowship (not the GRFP fellow) should contact the GRFP representative at their university regarding specific GRFP requirements before submitting a supplemental funding request on behalf of a GRFP fellow.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING REQUEST PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Each supplemental funding request must contain a Summary of Proposed Work section that:

- Briefly summarizes the goals of the active NSF award;
- Describes how the internship links to the active NSF award; and
- Ties the geoscience work to a specific human health issue.

Each supplemental funding request must also comply with the NSF DCL INTERN requirements (https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf21013) and include the character string **GeoHealth INTERN** in the title of the Summary of Proposed Work section of the supplement request.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING AMOUNT

The total amount of funding requested must not exceed \$55,000 per student per six-month period. GEO plans to fund up to approximately 20 supplements in each fiscal year starting with FY 2023, depending on the availability of funds. Please refer to the INTERN DCL (see link above) for guidance on allowable costs.

DUE DATES

Supplemental funding requests may be submitted at any time.

SUBMISSION & REVIEW

Requests for supplemental funding must be submitted electronically via Research.gov. A PI on an NSF award whose student wishes to access this opportunity must contact their cognizant program director about their intention to submit prior to submitting a supplement request. GRFP INTERN supplement requests are submitted by the GRFP PI at the student's institution, not by the GRFP fellow or the fellow's research advisor. Requests for supplemental funding submitted in response to this DCL will be reviewed internally by NSF Program Officers. All supplements are subject to (a) the availability of funds, and (b) merit review of the supplemental funding request.

For further information on this DCL, please contact:

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Sincerely,

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