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Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and Supporting Activities

Program Solicitation

NSF 00-139

DIRECTORATE FOR BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
DIVISION OF BIOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE
DIRECTORATE FOR SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL AND COGNITIVE SCIENCES
DIVISION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES

DEADLINES :

The deadline for FastLane submission of new postdoctoral fellowships is 5 PM local time on the first Monday in December each year, *i.e.*,

December 4, 2000
December 3, 2001
December 2, 2002
December 1, 2003
December 6, 2004
etc.

Graduate Student Travel award requests must be received no later than 3 months prior to the proposed travel.

Fellows may submit Research Starter Grant proposals at any time.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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- **TDD (for the hearing-impaired)** (703) 292-5090 or (800) 281-8749
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SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Program Title: Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and Supporting Activities

Synopsis of Program: The Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) and the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) offer Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and related supporting activities in an effort to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in selected areas of science in the U.S. These fellowships support training and research at the postdoctoral level in a host institution in the areas of biology and social, behavioral, and economic sciences supported by NSF. Supporting activities are travel grants to graduate students to visit prospective sponsors, starter research grants for Fellows, and an annual meeting of Fellows and their mentors.

Cognizant Program Officers:
Ms. Carter Kimsey (BIO), Program Officer, DBI, rm. 615, telephone: 703 292-8470, e-mail:ckimsey@nsf.gov.
Dr. John Perhonis (SBE), Program Officer, SES, rm. 995, telephone: 703 292-8763, e-mail:jperhoni@nsf.gov.

Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:
47.074 --- Biological Sciences
47.075 --- Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- **Organization Limit**: NSF postdoctoral fellowships and graduate student travel awards are awards to individuals, and applications are submitted directly by the applicant to the NSF. Fellows must affiliate with institutions (e.g., colleges and universities, government and national laboratories and facilities, and privately-sponsored nonprofit institutes and museums, and, under special conditions, for-profit organizations). Organizations may apply for research starter grants.
- **PI Eligibility Limit**: Applicants must be U.S. citizens, nationals, or legally admitted permanent resident aliens of the United States; have earned the doctoral degree in an appropriate scientific field no more than four years before the deadline date of the application or plan to earn this degree no more than one year after the deadline date; have completed no more than two years of postdoctoral support prior to the deadline for this fellowship application; and propose a research and training plan that falls within the program areas of BIO or SBE and explains how the fellowship award will broaden the participation of underrepresented minorities at the postdoctoral level in the US. The Fellowships are designed to permit Fellows to choose the research and training environment most beneficial to their scientific development. This requires a change from the doctoral institution or a justification if this change is not proposed.
- **Limit on Number of Proposals**: Applicants may submit only one fellowship application per year. There is no limit on the number of applicants that an institution may host. Travel awards and starter research grants are one-time awards.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Anticipated Type of Award**: Fellowships, travel awards, and starter grants.
- **Estimated Number of Awards**: 12 fellowships, 7 travel awards, and 6 Research Starter grants per year.
- **Anticipated Funding Amount**: Approximately $1,800,000 in each fiscal year through 2005, contingent upon the quality of applications and availability of funds.

APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- **Application Preparation Instructions**: Applicants must use FastLane for new fellowships, fellowship extensions, travel awards, and research starter grants. Specific instructions are found in the program announcement and differ from the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full program announcement for further information.

BUDGETARY INFORMATION

- **Cost Sharing Requirements**: Cost Sharing is required only for research starter grants.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations**: Fellowships have an institutional allowance in lieu of indirect costs. Graduate Student Travel Awards and Research Starter grants allow no indirect costs.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations**: The fellowship award amount is $50,000 per year for two or three years. Travel awards are for up to $4,000. For research starter grants, NSF provides up to $50,000 depending on the amount of start-up funds provided by the institution to the former Fellow.

DEADLINE DATES

- **Complete Application Due Dates:** The deadline for FastLane submission of new postdoctoral fellowships is 5 PM local time on the first Monday in December each year. Graduate Student Travel Awards must be received no later than 3 months prior to the proposed travel. Research starter grant proposals may be submitted at any time.

FASTLANE REQUIREMENTS

- Complete FastLane submission is required.
  For FastLane user support, call 1-800-673-6188 or contact Joanne Rodewald, Head, IAR, 695, telephone: 703 292-8406, email: biofl@nsf.gov.

PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full program announcement for further information.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- **Award Conditions and Reporting Requirements:** Additional award conditions and reporting requirements apply as detailed in the program announcement.

Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and Supporting Activities

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Science Foundation offers postdoctoral research fellowships in selected areas to provide opportunities for recent doctoral scientists to obtain additional training, to gain research experience under the sponsorship of established scientists, and to broaden their scientific horizons beyond their research experiences during their undergraduate or graduate training. Postdoctoral fellowships are further designed to assist new scientists to direct their research efforts across traditional disciplinary lines and to avail themselves of unique research resources, sites, and facilities, including foreign locations.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Directorates for Biological Sciences (BIO) and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) jointly sponsor this program of Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and related supporting activities. The term "minority" as used in this announcement refers to those ethnic groups that are significantly underrepresented at advanced levels of science and engineering in the U.S., i.e., Native Americans (including American Indians and Alaskan Natives), African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Pacific Islanders. This program is an effort by the NSF to increase the number of research scientists from underrepresented minority groups, thereby contributing to the future vitality of the Nation's scientific enterprise. Approximately 12 fellowships are awarded each year. The deadline for submission of fellowship applications is the first Monday in December annually. Graduate Student Travel Award applications may be submitted up to 3 months before the proposed travel. Directions for Research Starter Grants are given to Fellows with the offer of a fellowship and there are no deadlines for research starter grants. The goal of the program is to prepare minority scientists for positions of scientific leadership in academia and industry. To attain this goal, the program provides opportunities for postdoctoral training of the highest quality to recent minority doctoral recipients. The program has other special features to address the needs of these young scientists:

- Travel awards for graduate students to meet prospective sponsoring scientists prior to submitting a postdoctoral fellowship application. Travel awards are available to graduate students as they begin planning to apply for a postdoctoral fellowship and allow visits to two or three laboratories to meet prospective mentors, present seminars, discuss mutual research interests, and initiate a working relationship.

- Meeting for Sponsoring Scientists and Fellows. NSF hosts an annual workshop for mentors and Fellows to provide a forum for discussing ways to foster the most productive and supportive training environment during the postdoctoral period and early stages of the scientific career.

- Research starter grant. At the end of the postdoctoral period, the Fellow is eligible to apply for a one-year starter grant to initiate an independent research program.

All applicants must propose a research and training plan that falls within the purview of one of the two sponsoring organizations as described below. Applicants proposing research and training in biomedical areas are encouraged to discuss their application with the appropriate fellowship program officer prior to submission to ensure its suitability for the NSF.

DESCRIPTIONS OF RESEARCH IN THE DIRECTORATE FOR BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) promotes and advances scientific progress in biology by supporting research to understand the underlying principles and mechanisms governing life. Research ranges from the study of the structure and dynamics of biological molecules, such as proteins and nucleic acids, to cells, organs, and organisms, to studies of populations and ecosystems. It encompasses processes that are internal to the organism as well as those that are external, and includes temporal frameworks ranging from measurements in real time through individual life spans, to the full scope of evolutionary time. Short descriptions of BIO's research by organizational division follow; more information is available at http://www.nsf.gov/home/bio/htm.

Within BIO, the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI) supports new approaches to the management of biological knowledge that render the collection, maintenance, dissemination, and query of the data and information therein of greater utility to the scientific community, development of new instrumentation for biological research, development of bioinformatic tools, and an understanding of the structure, organization, and function of plant genomes important to agriculture, the environment, energy, and health.

The Division of Environmental Biology (DEB) supports fundamental research on the origins, functions, relationships, interactions, and evolutionary history of populations, species, communities, and ecosystems, including research on the patterns and causes of diversity within and among populations and species involving any group of organisms (including terrestrial, freshwater, and marine taxa, and range in subject from microbes to multicellular plants, animals, and fungi) and research on natural and managed ecological systems, primarily in terrestrial, wetland, and freshwater habitats (including experimental, theoretical, and modeling studies on the structure and function of complex biotic/abiotic associations and the coupling of small-scale systems to each other and to large-scale systems).

The Division of Integrative Biology and Neuroscience (IBN) supports research aimed at understanding the living organism - plant, animal, microbe - as a unit of biological organization. Such research encompasses the mechanisms by which plants and animals develop, grow, reproduce, regulate their physiological activity, and respond to their environment; the integration of molecular, subcellular, cellular, and functional genomics approaches to understand the development, functioning, and behavior of organisms in both laboratory and natural settings; all aspects of the nervous system, including its structure, function, development, and integration with the physiological and

behavioral systems affected by it; factors influencing the behavior of animals in the laboratory and field; whole-organism approaches to physiological ecology; and the form and function of organisms in view of their evolution and environmental interactions.

The Division of Molecular & Cellular Biosciences (MCB) supports research aimed at understanding the structure and function of biological macromolecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, polysaccharides, and lipid assemblies and research that contributes to a fundamental understanding of life processes at the molecular, subcellular, and cellular levels, including the molecular mechanisms by which genetic and metabolic processes occur in plant, animal, and microbial organisms and the structure, function, and regulation of plant, animal, and microbial cells.

DESCRIPTIONS OF RESEARCH IN THE DIRECTORATE FOR SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES

The Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences supports research in a broad range of disciplines and in interdisciplinary areas. Research is supported primarily through two divisions, namely, the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS), and the Division of Social and Economic Sciences(SES). The goals respectively of each these two divisions are to advance fundamental scientific knowledge about (1) cognitive and psychological processes in human beings; (2) cultural, social, political, spatial, environmental, and biological factors related to human behavior; (3) human behavior, interaction, and decision making; (4) social, political, legal, economic systems, organizations, and institutions; and (5) the intellectual, value, process, and impact factors related to the development and use of science and technology. Additional detail on specific programs within the two divisions is found on the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate home page http://www.nsf.gov/home/sbe/start.htm.

Also in SBE, the Division of International Programs (INT) has the special function of expanding and facilitating the international aspects of NSF's mission by promoting new partnerships between U.S. scientists and engineers and foreign colleagues. INT assigns high priority to activities designed to provide international experience to the next generation of U.S. scientists, including postdoctoral fellows. INT's own Postdoctoral and Junior Faculty Fellowships provide support at foreign institutions for 6 to 24 months. More detail is provided in http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/int/oppost.htm.

A. Location of Work

Research and training supported by Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships may be conducted at any appropriate U.S. or foreign host institution. Appropriate institutions include colleges and universities, government (except the National Institutes of Health) and national laboratories and facilities, and privately-sponsored nonprofit institutes and museums. Private and public for-profit organizations may be suitable if they provide an institutional contribution to cover the institutional and special allowances (see below). This fellowship is one of the mechanisms through which BIO and SBE offer support for

Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI), NSF 98-142. The GOALI announcement is at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1998/nsf98142/nsf98142.htm.

B. Sponsoring Scientist(s)

The Fellow must affiliate with a host institution during the entire tenure of the fellowship. The applicant is responsible for making prior arrangements with the host institution and Sponsoring Scientist(s). Regardless of the number of sponsors or locations, the fellowship application requires a single Sponsoring Scientist statement. If more than one sponsor is proposed, one must be named lead sponsor and information from all must be integrated into a single Sponsoring Scientist statement. Likewise, if more than one site is proposed, the Sponsoring Scientist statement must integrate all sponsors and locations in a single statement. Because of the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of all fields of science, it is expected that dual sponsorship will be common. An important basis for judging the suitability of the host institution is the degree to which the Sponsoring Scientist statement describes and offers a research environment and mentoring opportunity that could be difficult to achieve without fellowship support.

If a fellowship is offered, the applicant may be requested to provide documentation from the host institution that the terms and conditions of the fellowship are acceptable and that the Fellow will be provided adequate space, basic services, and supplies.

Any changes in location or sponsorship after an award is made must be approved in advance in writing by the appropriate Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officer.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

You are eligible to apply for a NSF Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowship if you meet all the following criteria.

(1) You are a citizen, national, or lawfully admitted permanent resident alien of the United States.

(2) You have earned the doctoral degree in an appropriate scientific field no more than four years before the deadline date of your application or you will earn this degree no more than one year after the deadline date.

(3) You have completed no more than two years of postdoctoral support prior to the deadline for this fellowship application.

(4) Your proposed research must fall within the program areas of BIO or SBE (see descriptions above or the most recent NSF *Guide to Programs*) **and** your research and training plan must explain how the fellowship award would broaden the participation at the postdoctoral level of underrepresented minorities in U.S. science. ***Please note*** that research with disease-related goals, including work on the etiology, diagnosis, or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals is not supported. Animal models of such conditions or the development or testing

of drugs or other procedures for their treatment also are not eligible for support. Applications proposing research deemed by NSF to be inappropriate to NSF will be returned without review.

(5) You are proposing a sponsoring institution that is different from your doctoral institution or will provide a specific justification for not proposing this change in your application.

You are eligible to apply for a Minority Graduate Student Travel Award if you meet criteria (1) and (4) above and are within 18 months of earning the doctoral degree.

You are eligible to apply for a Research Starter Grant if you are an NSF Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellow, you have accepted a tenure-track position at an institution eligible to receive NSF funds, and your research area falls within the purview of BIO and SBE.

IV. AWARD INFORMATION

The NSF expects to make approximately 12 Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships per year, from a budget of approximately $1.8 million per year, depending on the quality of submissions and the availability of funds. The anticipated date of awards is July through September in the year following the application deadline. Approximately 7 travel awards and 6 research starter awards are made each year.

A. Duration and Tenure

The fellowship is normally for 24 continuous months. A third year extension may be requested no later than January 1 prior to the expiration of the fellowship. A three-year tenure may be granted when the fellowship is awarded is the Fellow spends more than a year abroad. Tenure begins on the first of the month only and may commence at the Fellow's request between July of the initial award year and January of the following year. Interruptions in tenure or extensions without additional cost to NSF are permitted only for extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the Fellow. Fellowships cannot be renewed or supplemented. Travel awards and research starter grants are for a maximum of 12 months.

B. Stipend and Allowances for Fellowships

The total fellowship amount is $50,000 per year and consists of three separate types of payments. A monthly stipend of $3,000 is paid directly to the Fellow as an electronic funds transfer into a personal account at a financial institution. A research allowance of $9,000 per year is paid as a lump sum to the Fellow in the same manner for expenses directly related to the conduct of the research, such as materials and supplies, subscription fees and recovery costs for databases, travel, and publication expenses. An institutional allowance of $5,000 per year is paid to the host institution for fringe benefits, including health insurance payments for the Fellow, and for expenses incurred in support

of the Fellow, such as space, equipment, and general-purpose supplies. There are no allowances for dependents or travel allowances separate from the special allowance

C. Budgetary Information

Cost Sharing is not required in fellowship or travel grant applications submitted under this Program Announcement; 2:1 matching funds are required for research starter grants.

Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations: Fellowships have an institutional allowance in lieu of indirect costs. Research Starter Awards and Graduate Student Travel awards allow no indirect costs.

Other Budgetary Limitations: The fellowship award amount is $100,000 for two years. Travel awards are for up to $4,000. For research starter grants, NSF provides up to $50,000 depending on the amount of start-up funds provided by the institution to the former Fellow.

D. Deadline Dates

The deadline for FastLane submission of new postdoctoral fellowships is 5 PM local time on the first Monday in December each year, i.e., etc.

December 4, 2000
December 3, 2001
December 2, 2002
December 1, 2003
December 6, 2004

Graduate Student Travel Awards must be received no later than 3 months prior to the proposed travel. Research Starter Grant proposals may be submitted at any time.

V. APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All page limits include pictures, figures, tables, etc. Applicants are urged to take special care to strictly adhere to page limitations (they include all figures, tables, pictures, graphics, etc.), font size (no smaller than Courier New 10), and margins (minimum of 2.5 cm). Proposals that do not conform to the requirements are returned without review.

A. Fellowships

Fellowship applications must be submitted electronically via the NSF FastLane system. Only one application is permitted per person. The fellowship application consists of many parts, requiring input from Sponsoring Scientist(s) and references. Applicants are advised to begin the application procedures well in advance of the deadline and to submit the application as early as possible. FastLane procedures allow applicants to work on parts of the application and save them for future completion.

Applicants are advised that FastLane does not permit the submission of incomplete or late applications. Only complete and timely applications will be accepted. A complete submission requires coordination between the applicant, the applicant's sponsoring scientist(s), and the references and includes all of the following items.

1. From the applicant, a complete FastLane postdoctoral fellowship application consisting of:

- The application form;
- Curriculum Vitae (limited to two pages);
- an abstract of the applicant's thesis research;
- an abstract of the proposed research and training; and
- the research and training plan (see requirements detailed below) including a bibliography of cited references.

2. Sponsoring Scientist Statement. A single statement must be provided using FastLane regardless of the number of sponsors and research sites.

3. Two reference reports (one from the doctoral advisor and another from a scientist who knows the applicant well). FastLane submission of the reference reports is required.

The references should include the doctoral advisor but not the proposed sponsoring scientist. The referees should be provided a copy of the research and training plan so they can comment specifically on the proposed fellowship activities in addition to their personal knowledge of the applicant. *NOTE: An assigned access code is used to provide secure access to programs for preparing and submitting the reference reports and the Sponsoring Scientist statement. It limits access to only those to whom the applicant gives the access code and links the reference reports and statement to the application.*

Additional Instructions for Research and Training Plan

The research and training plan addresses what the applicant hopes to accomplish during the fellowship period and how it relates to her/his career goals and should be developed in collaboration with the sponsoring scientist. The proposed project should be the independent work of the applicant and not part of ongoing work by the sponsor. The plan must not exceed five pages. A list of cited literature should be included and is not counted as part of the 5-page limit.

The research and training plan consists of: 1) an introduction or background section; 2) a statement of research objectives, methods, and significance; 3) training objectives and a personal statement of career goals; 4) an explanation of how the fellowship activities will enhance the applicant's career development; and 5) a justification of the choice of Sponsoring Scientist(s) and host institution(s). Explicit experimental details need not be given, but rather a clear statement of objectives and approaches to accomplish them, and hypotheses and how to test them. In presenting the training plan, the applicant should set clear training goals and explain how the proposed research and training will help achieve these goals. This can be done by explaining the primary factors in selecting the proposed

fellowship institution and sponsoring scientist, and what role the chosen research, sponsoring senior scientist and host institution will play in enhancing the applicant's conceptual approaches and technical skills. NSF encourages Fellows who choose U.S. institutions as hosts to include research experience of 6 months or longer in a foreign laboratory or site. If a foreign activity is proposed, the plan should include details of the visit (where, when, how long), the unique opportunities, the expected outcome, and a letter of endorsement from the host institution. Tenure of 36 months may be requested if at least 12 months will be spent at a foreign institution. If the research is to be conducted at an institution with which the applicant is or has been associated, a justification must be given for not selecting a new institution. Applicants not changing institution are encouraged to develop training goals and short term visits elsewhere to provide new research environments.

Applicants whose research involves human subjects and /or vertebrate animals must indicate in the plan their awareness of regulations and guidelines pertaining to these types of research. Successful applicants must provide NSF with statements that the research has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate institutional committees, giving assurance of compliance with all Federal policies on research using humans and the care and use of animals. These requirements are relevant to both laboratory and field projects.

Special certifications and permits must be provided when projects involve collecting in foreign countries, endangered species, or hazardous materials. Some applications may require other documentation before the final decision can be made, e.g., government permits, letters of collaboration, and commitments from private sources. The research and training plan should provide general information on these matters and address the availability of these documents. Applicants must submit the information when requested by the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officer.

Color copies: At this time, FastLane cannot accommodate the printing of color images. If you feel that reviewers must receive a color copy of your images, you may send 6 copies of the application page(s) containing color images directly to the fellowship contact persons postmarked no later than the deadline date.

FastLane Instructions for Fellowship Applicants

To access FastLane, go to the NSF Web site at http://www.nsf.gov/ then select "FastLane," or go directly to the FastLane home page at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/.

Once you are in FastLane:
1) Click on Postdoctoral Fellowships
2) Click on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships Application Package
3) Click on Prepare New Application Package
4) Select Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships
5) Click on Continue button
Follow the directions on the screen.

FastLane Instructions for Sponsoring Scientists

The applicant must provide his/her assigned Access Code to the Sponsoring Scientist before the Statement can be completed on FastLane at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov.

To access the Statement, click on Postdoctoral Fellowships.
Click on Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Sponsoring Scientist Statement.
Enter the applicant's Access Code (located on the Application Forms Menu) and choose a PIN, then provide a brief statement addressing the 5 items listed below and an abbreviated (2-page maximum) *CV* listing no more than 5 publications most closely related to the applicant's research and training plan, no more than 5 other publications, and the graduate students and postdoctorals who have trained with you. The 5 items for the statement are

1. A brief description of your ongoing research projects.
2. Your current and pending research support, both public and private. Have you submitted the work proposed by the applicant elsewhere? If so, please explain the degree of overlap with this proposal.
3. An explanation of how the research and training plan of the applicant would fit into your program and what role you would play.
4. How you plan to foster the development of the applicant's future independent research career.
5. Personnel with whom the Fellow would work.

FastLane Instructions for Authors of Reference Reports

To prepare and submit the reference reports, authors must have the applicant's assigned Access Code.

Access FastLane (https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov).
Click on Postdoctoral Fellowships.
Click on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships Reference Reports. Enter the applicant's Access Code (located on the Application Forms Menu) and choose a PIN, then provide the requested Reference Report.

More detailed information is available at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/d11/D11PrepSub.htm.
Questions may also be directed by e-mail to biofl@nsf.gov.

B. Graduate Student Travel Awards

Graduate students who are within 18 months of earning their doctoral degrees and who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for a Fellowship may apply for a travel award. Travel awards are made directly to the individual, not the institution. The purpose of the travel award is to assist the candidate in the selection of a postdoctoral mentor and in the development of an application for an NSF Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. The award may be used to cover airfare and per diem expenses while visiting the host scientist's institution. Graduate students can apply for travel funds to cover a maximum of

three such visits; the total amount of the travel award shall not exceed $4,000 per student. Payment is made directly to the student. Indirect costs are not allowed.

Graduate students should discuss the selection of potential postdoctoral mentors with their thesis advisors and obtain a letter of recommendation from the advisor including a statement of their concurrence with the selections. A letter from each host scientist is required also.

Travel awards and fellowships are independent in that the granting of a travel award provides no assurance of a fellowship. If a postdoctoral mentor already has been chosen, a graduate student may apply directly for the Fellowship without applying for a travel award. To be eligible for consideration for a travel award, an application must be complete. Incomplete applications will be returned.

In order to submit a travel award request, the applicant must register with FastLane as an organization. To do this, go to www.fastlane.nsf.gov and click on registration information. Select "new organization registration information" and "new individual registration." Fill in the form to register using only your own personal information. Submit the information and follow the directions to print out and fax the form to NSF. Your signature is needed to complete the registration. NSF will confirm your registration, and now you are ready to submit the application.

Return to www.fastlane.nsf.gov; scroll down the page and select proposal preparation. Log in and select "prepare proposal." Then select "create a blank proposal." You will need to complete the following forms.

(1) Cover page (remember you are the organization and the principal investigator)
(2) Supplementary doc(ument)s. Cut and paste or scan Form T (shown below) into the supplementary documents form.
(3) Biographical sketch (your CV).
(4) Project summary. This is a brief abstract of your request.
(5) Project description: Include in one document your personal statement (not to exceed one single-spaced page) describing your career goals and the rationale for selecting the proposed host institutions, your travel plan that describes the purpose of each trip, your itinerary including dates, and a proposed budget;
(6) References cited: use this space to scan or transfer statements from the sponsoring scientists at the proposed host institution(s) indicating agreement with the travel plan;
(7) Current and pending support: use this space to scan or transfer a letter of recommendation and a statement from the thesis advisor in support of the travel plans.

If you are unable to submit the information in items 6 and 7 using FastLane, you may mail these separately upon request when the Program Officer acknowledges receipt of your application.

Applications for travel awards may be submitted at any time but no later than 3 months prior to the planned travel.

TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

National Science Foundation
Graduate Student Travel Awards

T

Applications may be submitted at any time but must be received no later than 3 months before the travel.

YOUR NAME

_____
Surname Given Names Other Names Used

SOCIAL SECURITY NO. _____--_____--_____

MAILING ADDRESS for correspondence. Please keep NSF informed of a current mailing address.

_____

_____

TELEPHONE AND FAX:

_____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

CURRENT POSITION

Department _____

Institution _____

Expected date of doctoral degree _____

PROPOSED FELLOWSHIP INSTITUTION(S) including department, **TO BE VISITED**

_____

_____

_____

PROPOSED SPONSORING SCIENTIST(S), including title, **PHONE NUMBERS, AND EMAIL**

_____

_____

_____

BRIEF TITLE of your proposed postdoctoral research

_____

C. Research Starter Grants

Fellows who elect to pursue an academic career and accept a tenure-track position at a U.S. institution eligible to receive NSF funding immediately following their fellowships may apply for a special one-year, nonrenewable starter grant to assist in establishing an independent research program. Starter grants are not fellowships but research grants made to the employing institution. Proposals for starter grants must be submitted through FastLane and are then assigned to the appropriate research programs for scientific review and decision by the cognizant NSF Program Officer. The starter grant cannot be extended or supplemented. It is for a maximum of $50,000 total costs and requires matching on a 2:1 (institution to NSF) basis. Funds provided by neither NSF nor the matching funds can be used for PI salary, renovations of laboratory or office space, or indirect costs. The funds are to be used for expenses directly related to the conduct of research that falls under the purview of the Directorates for Biological Sciences or Social, Behavior, and Economic Sciences at NSF.

To request a starter grant, you must request a FastLane password from the sponsored research office of your employing institution. Begin the application at www.fastlane.nsf.gov by selecting "proposal processing" (you'll have to scroll down the page). Then select prepare a proposal. It's important to update your personal information, with special attention to your institution. Continue with proposal preparation by selecting "create blank proposal." You'll need to complete the following sections of the proposal:

1. Cover page. Be sure to select program announcement NSF 00-139 from the list and don't select a closing date. Select "renewal" and give the award number of your fellowship in the space provided. For title, use Research Starter Grant. The award amount depends on the matching funds from your institution and the duration is 12 months. Check all appropriate boxes on the cover sheet, e.g., human subjects, animal welfare. When you click on "OK," the cover sheet will be saved.
2. Project summary. Give an abstract of your proposed project using the text box.
3. Supplementary documents. Give a progress report of your fellowship activities, not to exceed three pages.
4. Project description (no more than three pages plus the bibliography).
5. Biographical sketch.
6. Current and pending support.
7. Budget. Select use, create, and edit. Prepare only year 1. Put the amount of the start up funds from your institution on line M. If needed, give additional information in the budget justification section. Be sure to save the budget.

Now, your sponsored research office can submit the application to NSF.

D. FastLane Requirements

All applications must be submitted through Fastlane. For FastLane user support, call 1-800-673-6188. If you need information on software requirements for using FastLane to

prepare and submit the application, please see https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. NSF Proposal Review Process

Reviews of applications for fellowships submitted to NSF are solicited from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed fellowship project. Fellowship Program Officers select these reviewers and panelists. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts with applicants and sponsoring scientists. Special efforts are made to recruit reviewers from non-academic institutions, minority-serving institutions, or adjacent disciplines to that principally addressed in the application. Applications for Graduate Student Research awards and Research Starter Grants are not subject to peer review but are reviewed by NSF program officers only.

Proposals will be reviewed against the following general review criteria established by the National Science Board. Following each criterion are potential considerations that the reviewer may employ in the evaluation. These are suggestions and not all will apply to any given application. Each reviewer will be asked to address only those relevant to the application and for which he/she is qualified to make judgements.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Applicants and sponsoring scientists should address the following elements in their submissions to provide reviewers with the information needed to respond fully to both of the above-described NSF merit review criteria. NSF staff will give these elements careful consideration in making funding decisions.

Integration of Research and Education

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens - women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities - is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

Additional Factors in Evaluation and Selection of Fellows

Because one of the objectives of the program is to broaden the perspectives and experiences of the Fellows, careful consideration should be given to the selection of the Sponsoring Scientists and host institutions. The NSF encourages Fellows to gain international experience by selecting foreign hosts for at least part of the tenure of the fellowship.

Applicants are evaluated on their ability, accomplishments, and potential as evidenced by the Curriculum Vitae and reference reports. The research and training plan is evaluated on its scientific merit, its feasibility, its significance in generating new knowledge, and its impact on the career development of the applicant. Other important evaluative factors are the suitability and availability of the Sponsoring Scientist(s) and host institution(s), including colleagues and facilities.

Fellowship applications to SBE are reviewed by at least three mail reviewers.

Fellowship applications to BIO are reviewed by an advisory panel convened to review only fellowship applications. The advisory panel members are representative of a wide-range of biological subfields. In some cases, mail reviews are used to supplement the expertise of the advisory panel. Each application is reviewed by three panelists then discussed by the full panel. The panelists are asked to assign an overall rating to the application (excellent, very good, or good) and to recommend whether or not NSF should fund the application.

The Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officers manage the selection process and will consider the advice of reviewers in formulating a program recommendation. The NSF will select the Fellows on the basis of the panel's recommendations, staff review, program priorities, a consideration of the effect of the selections on the infrastructure of science in

the U.S., and the NSF's education and human resource goals. Priority will be given to applicants who are graduate students at the time they apply, to those who choose foreign locations, and those moving to new institutions and research environments with which they have had no prior affiliation.

Offers for fellowships will be made by letter or e-mail to successful applicants by the Program Officer in April following the deadline date. Letters will be sent to unsuccessful applicants by June 1. All applicants will receive an explanation of the review process and copies of the verbatim but anonymous reviews of their application. Reviews are treated as confidential documents and are sent only to the applicant. Those applicants receiving offers will receive copies of the reviews with the official award letter.

B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard

As explained above, all fellowship applications submitted in response to this announcement will be reviewed by mail and/or panel review. The Fellowship Program Officers will be able to tell applicants if their applications will be declined or recommended for funding within six months of the deadline for 95 percent of applicants.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the applications recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant. Applicants are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with any NSF Program Officer.

VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Notification of the Award

A Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements notifies the applicant of the fellowship award by letter. Forms needed to start fellowship payments are sent with the letter.

B. Grant Award Conditions

An NSF fellowship consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the grant and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the application; (3) the applicable grant conditions, see below; (4) this NSF program announcement incorporated by reference in the award letter; (5) and an information booklet sent to successful applicants with the offer.

NSF claims no rights to any inventions or writings that may result from its fellowship awards. However, Fellows should be aware that NSF, other Federal agencies, or private parties may acquire such rights through other grant support. Applicants are encouraged to

discuss institutional policies on intellectual property rights with the host institution before submitting an application. Applicants should also discuss the policies of the Sponsoring Scientist regarding which materials and projects must remain with the host institution, and which can be released to the Fellow at the end of the fellowship. Before commencing work, Fellows at foreign institutions should be aware that specific provisions regarding allocations of intellectual property rights apply to particular countries.

Fellows are obligated to include an acknowledgment of NSF support and a disclaimer in any publication arising from the fellowship-supported research. Fellows are expected to agree to complete, timely, and open sharing of data and material. By submitting an application, all participants agree to NSF guidelines on sharing of findings, data, and other research products.

C. Reporting Requirements

For all fellowships, the Fellow must submit an annual project report to the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officer within 90 days following the anniversary of the start date. Within 90 days after termination of the fellowship, the Fellow is required to submit a final project report and a termination certificate (this form will be provided with the grant letter). Fellows are requested to report in their annual and final reports on their educational activities during the fellowship tenure, including mentoring and guiding students at all educational levels.

Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of subsequent pending proposals for the Fellow.

Fellows are expected to maintain contact with the Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officer after completing fellowship activities to permit evaluation of the success of the program in advancing scientific careers.

Graduate Student Travel Awards require a certificate of completed travel and a brief narrative report within 90 days of completing the travel.

Research starter grants require a final project report submitted through FastLane. This system permits electronic submission and updating of project reports, including information on: project participants (individual and organizational); activities and findings; publications; and other specific products and contributions.

D. Workshop for Postdoctoral Fellows and Mentors

All current Fellows and mentors will be invited to a workshop annually. The purpose of the workshop is to promote the development and growth of Fellows. The workshop will include scientific presentations by Fellows and mentors in the program. The workshop will allow program participants to meet each other, share experiences, and get to know NSF Program Officers. Participation in the workshop is considered an important part of the Fellowship program.

VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General inquiries should be made to the Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program:

Ms. Carter Kimsey (BIO), Program Officer, DBI, room 615, telephone: 703 292-8470, e-mail: ckimsey@nsf.gov.
Dr. John Perhonis (SBE), Program Officer, SES, room 995, telephone: 703 292-8763, e-mail: jperhoni@nsf.gov.

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

FastLane user support at 1-800-673-6188.
Joanne Rodewald, Biology, Head, IAR, room 695, telephone: 703 292-8406, e-mail: jrodewald@nsf.gov.

IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

The NSF Guide to Programs is a compilation of funding for research and education in science, mathematics, and engineering. It is available electronically at http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpg. General descriptions of NSF programs, research areas, and eligibility information for proposal submission are provided in each chapter.

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate NSF program offices listed in the Guide to Programs or Appendix A of the Grant Proposal Guide. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the Guide to Programs will be announced in the NSF E-Bulletin, which is updated daily on the NSF web site at http://www.nsf.gov/home/ebulletin, and in individual program announcements and solicitations. Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's Custom News Service (http://www.nsf.gov/home/cns/start.htm) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Awardees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities to work on NSF-supported projects. Contact the Fellowship Program Officer prior to submitting an application if you are interested in a FASED supplement. The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090, FIRS at 1-800-877-8339.

The National Science Foundation is committed to making all of the information we publish easy to understand. If you have a suggestion about how to improve the clarity of this document or other NSF-published materials, please contact us at plainlanguage@nsf.gov.

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated

Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0023. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 12 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Division of Administrative Services, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230.

OMB control number: 3145-0023.