



National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

NSF 12-008

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Graduate Research Diversity Supplements (GRDS) to Current ENG Awards to Broaden Participation

Date: October 28, 2011

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 20, 2012

Graduate Research Diversity Supplement requests must be submitted via FastLane by 5:00 p.m., proposer's local time, on or before January 20, 2012.

The following set of questions and answers refer to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about Graduate Research Diversity Supplements (GRDS) to Current ENG Awards to Broaden Participation.

Before preparing your GRDS request please read the GRDS Dear Colleague Letter at http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf12007, this FAQs document, and the information about requesting supplemental support contained in Part II of the NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) available at: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp.

Follow the procedures described in the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) solicitation under the sections for REU supplements for investigators holding an existing NSF research award. However, for GRDS your description of the proposed GRDS activity should have a title which starts with "GRDS:" and be placed in the "Summary of Proposed Work" (Project Summary) section of your request in the FastLane supplement module and NOT in the "Justification for Supplement" section, as is the case for the REU supplements. The REU solicitation can be found at: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5517.

Also, if you have questions concerning submitting your GRDS request in FastLane you may want to consult the following website that contains useful information on FastLane: https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/NSFHelp/flashhelp/fastlane/FastLaneHelp/fastlane_help.htm#fastlane_faqs_introduction.htm.

The following sections of this document can be directly accessed by selecting the appropriate heading

A. CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS

1. [Who should I contact if I have questions about my GRDS request](#)

B. GRDS ELIGIBILITY

2. [Is there a limit on the number of GRDSs I can request for my award?](#)
3. [I am currently the PI on an Engineering Research Center \(ERC\) or other center type of award. Can I request more than one GRDS this year?](#)
4. [The student on my award started last Fall \(2010\). Is the student an eligible candidate for the GRDS support?](#)
5. [The student I hope to support on my award is expecting her permanent residency in a few months. Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS?](#)
6. [The student I would like to support on my Engineering Directorate funded award is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in Physics \(or another Science discipline\). Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS?](#)
7. [My student just finished her M.S. degree in engineering. Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS supplement?](#)
8. [I am currently supporting a non-GRDS funded student on my award. Can I request funds to support this student for an additional year \(or two\) through the GRDS Program?](#)
9. [I am currently supporting a GRDS funded student on my award. Can I request GRDS funding to](#)

[continue supporting this student for an additional year?](#)

10. [I received my award from the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences and I would like to support a GRDS student pursuing a degree in an engineering discipline. Is my award eligible for a GRDS?](#)
11. [I heard from my Program Director that my proposal is being recommended for an award. Can I request a GRDS before the award is official?](#)
12. [My award is expiring in two months and I have requested a one-year no-cost extension to complete my proposed research work. Can I request a GRDS to my award?](#)
13. [My award is expiring in less than a year and I have NOT received a no-cost extension. Can I request a GRDS to my award?](#)

C. GRDS CONTENT, BUDGET PREPARATION, AND FASTLANE SUBMISSION

14. [I am completing my budget form. Where do I place the allowable GRDS support costs on the budget form?](#)
15. [Do I have to include a Mentoring Plan?](#)
16. [What submissions count towards fulfillment of the Mentoring Plan requirement?](#)
17. [Please provide examples of Broadening Participation activities for the GRDS program?](#)
18. [The GRDS Dear Colleague Letter instructs me to "enter a description of the proposed GRDS activity \(limited to three pages\) in support of broadening participation." Where does this description go in the FastLane supplement request?](#)
19. [Where does the student's biographical sketch go when I submit the supplement request through FastLane?](#)
20. [Can I submit a GRDS request for more than twelve months of support?](#)
21. [Can my university apply their current, negotiated indirect cost rate for my GRDS budget request?](#)
22. [I did not see a limit on the amount of funds I can request for a GRDS. Is there a limit?](#)

D. GRDS REVIEW AND DECISIONS

23. [How will my GRDS funding request be reviewed?](#)
24. [When will I be notified if my GRDS is being recommended for award](#)
25. [How many GRDS awards will be awarded?](#)

A. CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS

1. Who should I contact if I have questions about my GRDS request?

For questions or information on submission of a GRDS contact the cognizant Division GRDS Coordinator in the division which will fund the award supplement:

- Dr. Omnia El-Hakim, Program Director, Diversity and Outreach, Office of the Assistant Director for Engineering, uelhakim@nsf.gov, 703-292-2149
- Dr. Marshall Lih, Senior Advisor, Division of Chemical, Biomedical, Environmental and Transport Systems (CBET), mlih@nsf.gov, 703-292-4608
- Dr. Mary Toney, Program Director, Division of Civil, Mechanical and Manufacturing Innovation (CMMI), mtoney@nsf.gov, 703- 292-7008
- Dr. Lawrence Goldberg, Senior Engineering Advisor, Division of Electrical, Communications and Cyber Systems (ECCS), lgoldber@nsf.gov, 703-292-5373
- Dr. Deborah Jackson, Program Director, Division of Engineering Education and Centers (EEC), djackson@nsf.gov, 703-292-7499
- Dr. Juan Figueroa, Program Director, Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP), jfiguero@nsf.gov, 703-292-7054

For questions related to the use of FastLane to submit the supplement contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: fastlane@nsf.gov.

B. GRDS ELIGIBILITY

2. Is there a limit on the number of GRDSs I can request for my award?

Yes. Only one new Ph.D. candidate (with emphasis on women, underrepresented individuals, or individuals with a disability) may be supported under each ENG research grant per year per GRDS award. The exception is for ongoing ENG Center awards where the limit is two GRDS students per year, per award, as long as the students are located on different campuses funded by the Center.

3. I am currently the PI on an Engineering Research Center (ERC) or other center type of award. Can I request more than one GRDS this year?

Yes, since awards such as the Engineering Research Centers are multi-campus and usually multi-state awards, you can have more than one student associated with more than one PI in your GRDS request. The request should be submitted by the PI of the lead university and there is a limitation of **two** students per award. Each of the students must be located on different campuses funded by the Center. Sub award budget requests should be included for any student(s) not located on the campus of the lead university.

4. The student on my award started last Fall (2010). Is the student an eligible candidate for the GRDS support?

No. The student must be new---pursuing a Ph.D. as a newly enrolled student (starting the Spring 2012 semester) or planning to pursue a Ph.D. (starting the Fall 2012 semester).

5. The student I hope to support on my award is expecting her permanent residency in a few months. Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS?

No. GRDS candidates must be United States citizens, United States nationals, or permanent residents of the United States by the GRDS deadline.

6. The student I would like to support on my Engineering Directorate funded award is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in Physics (or another Science discipline). Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS?

No. GRDS candidates must be pursuing or planning to pursue a degree in an Engineering discipline.

7. My student just finished her M.S. degree in engineering. Is she an eligible candidate for a GRDS supplement?

Yes, she is an eligible candidate as long as she will be enrolling in a Ph.D. Program starting in the Spring or Fall of 2012.

8. I am currently supporting a non-GRDS funded student on my award. Can I request funds to support this student for an additional year (or two) through the GRDS Program?

No. The intent of the GRDS Program is to broaden participation in engineering by bringing new Ph.D. students into the engineering pipeline and to provide continuity up to three years for underrepresented students performing well and in good academic standing.

9. I am currently supporting a GRDS funded student on my award. Can I request GRDS funding to continue supporting this student for an additional year?

Yes, GRDS can be renewed annually for a maximum duration of three years for an individual student provided the award is active. In addition to the GRDS funding request description, renewal for a second or third year supplement requires a report on the progress of the student toward the Ph.D. degree. ***Please note that third year renewals will be granted in limited numbers. PIs are strongly encouraged to explore other funding sources before requesting third year funding support. All GRDS renewals are subject to availability of funds in the program.***

10. I received my award from the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences and I would like to support a GRDS student pursuing a degree in an engineering discipline. Is my award eligible for a GRDS?

No. GRDS awards are only for current awards supported by the Directorate for Engineering with an Engineering Directorate Program as the primary funding organization.

11. **I heard from my Program Director that my proposal is being recommended for an award. Can I request a GRDS before the award is official?**

No. GRDS awards can only be made to awards currently funded by the Directorate for Engineering. Therefore, you will have to wait until next year to request a GRDS.

12. **My award is expiring in two months and I have requested a one-year no-cost extension to complete my proposed research work. Can I request a GRDS to my award?**

Yes. However, the no-cost extension must be approved and in place before you request the supplement and before the GRDS deadline since the term of a GRDS cannot exceed the remaining time left on an award. Please note that no supplement will be granted after the research is completed.

13. **My award is expiring in less than a year and I have NOT received a no-cost extension. Can I request a GRDS to my award?**

No. GRDS supplements will not be granted for grants that have already expired or will expire within a year since the term of a GRDS supplement may not exceed that of the underlying research project.

C. GRDS CONTENT, BUDGET PREPARATION AND FASTLANE SUBMISSION

14. **I am completing my budget form. Where do I place the allowable GRDS support costs on the budget form?**

The GRDS request may only include graduate student stipend (line F1.) and cost of education support (line F4.) consistent with academic institutional practices. The cost of education may include tuition, travel (line F2.) for the student to present his/her research findings at professional meetings, and other associated costs. In addition to the participant support cost for the student, up to \$3000 may be requested for other cost categories and any associated indirect costs. Sponsored Research Offices should propose in accordance with their current disclosed accounting practices. The maximum annual amount including other cost and any associated indirect costs of a GRDS award is \$41,000.

15. **Do I have to include a Mentoring Plan?**

Yes. All proposals **must** include a comprehensive mentoring plan to be considered for review. Proposals without a Mentoring Plan will not be considered for funding.

16. **What submissions count towards fulfillment of the Mentoring Plan requirement?**

Each GRDS request **must include, in the Supplementary Document section, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for the proposed candidate.** Within two to four pages, the mentoring plan must describe the mentoring that will be provided to the graduate student researcher supported by this supplement, irrespective of whether the student resides at the submitting organization, any subawardee organization, or at any organization participating in a simultaneously submitted collaborative project. Mentoring activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Setting up a mutually agreed upon list of expectations and goals;
- Providing timely evaluations of progress towards expected goals;
- Providing professional development activities such as career counseling, workshop participation, networking and internships;
- Providing effective scientific writing and training in preparation of grant proposals, publications and presentations at national and international conferences;
- Providing opportunities for student interaction in seminars or symposiums at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), Minority Serving Institutions (MSI), and K-12;
- Providing guidance on ways to improve teaching, leadership, communication, and mentoring skills;
- Providing guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds and inter-disciplinary areas.

17. **Please provide examples of Broadening Participation activities for the GRDS program?**

The Broadening Participation Plan may include, but is not limited to, any of the following menu of activities as appropriate for your project and the circumstances of your institution(s):

- BEST PRACTICES - Sharing Best Practices and research as well as mentoring experiences with peers in various departments and possibly the entire university as well as with other diverse groups (such as women, underrepresented groups and persons with disabilities);
- RECRUITMENT/RETENTION - Recruiting future students from diverse groups and implementing strategies to retain them;
- EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMS - Enhancing/collaborating with existing diversity programs at the home institution and/or nearby institutions;
- COMMUNITY COLLEGES - Engaging faculty and/or student researchers at community colleges in the research project;
- MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS - Engaging faculty and/or student researchers at minority serving institutions and HSIs in the research project;
- RESEARCH EXPERIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS -Providing research opportunities for members of underrepresented groups at the high school level.

18. **The GRDS Dear Colleague Letter instructs me to "enter a description of the proposed GRDS activity (limited to three pages) in support of broadening participation." Where does this description go in the FastLane supplement request?**

The document should be placed in the "Summary of Proposed Work" section of the GRDS funding request. Be sure to follow the additional requirements for the content of the Summary of Proposed Work section as stated in the GRDS Dear Colleague Letter.

19. **Where does the student's biographical sketch go when I submit the supplement request through FastLane?**

You will upload the student's biographical sketch into the Supplementary Documents section of the GRDS funding request. Please be sure that the biographical sketch describes and incorporates the student's long-range career goals and commitment to diversity as a resource for enriching education in engineering disciplines.

20. **Can I submit a GRDS request for more than twelve months of support?**

No. You may request support for a GRDS for a period of twelve months. The GRDS can be renewed annually for a maximum duration of three years for an individual student as long as the award is active. Renewal for a second or third year supplement requires a report on the progress of the student toward the Ph.D. degree. ***In addition, third year renewals will be granted in limited numbers. PIs are strongly encouraged to explore other funding sources before requesting third year funding support. All GRDS renewals are subject to availability of funds in the program.***

21. **Can my university apply their current, negotiated indirect cost rate for my GRDS budget request?**

Up to \$3,000 may be requested for other cost categories and any associated indirect costs.

22. **I did not see a limit on the amount of funds I can request for a GRDS. Is there a limit?**

Yes. NSF GRDS awards are limited to a maximum amount of \$41,000 for twelve months of support (including up to \$3,000 for other cost categories and any associated indirect costs). The graduate student stipend and tuition support being requested ***must be consistent with your academic institutional practices and should be justified in the budget justification section of the funding request*** (along with justification for any "other" funds being requested).

D. GRDS REVIEW AND DECISIONS

23. **How will my GRDS funding request be reviewed?**

GRDS award decisions will be based on an internal review process and are subject to availability of funds.

24. **When will I be notified if my GRDS is being recommended for award?**

The GRDS PIs will hear whether their supplement is being recommended for award sometime in July 2012.

25. **How many GRDS awards will be awarded?**

There will be 56-58 GRDS awards in FY2012.