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National Science Foundation
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Frequently Asked Questions: Graduate Research Fellowship Program - GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions for NSF GRFP Fellows

"Frequently Asked Questions" are not comprehensive. Individuals should refer to the original, policy documents - Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Program Solicitation (NSF 12-599) and Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials (NSF 13-085) - for official guidance and/or contact the GRFP Institution Coordinating Official (CO) or NSF Program Office (grfp@nsf.gov) to fully address specific questions.

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65. I am in a doctoral degree program and wish to pursue a master's degree now; may I change my degree program?

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133. I am completing a Master's/Doctoral Degree and have not used all of my Tenure eligibility; may I continue to be paid while I finish research, publications, presentations, etc.?

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HELP

1. Where do I find assistance with GRFP Fellowship questions and answers?
    - The GRFP Institution CO is the first point of contact for all Fellowship questions.
    - Fellowship offers are made to individuals, and financial awards are made to institutions.
        - GRFP Fellowship Terms and Conditions are governed by the GRFP Fellowship Offer Letter, Program Solicitation and Administrative Guide for Fellows and Coordinating Officials.
        - GRFP Institutional Award Terms and Conditions are governed by the GRFP Award Letter, which incorporates all relevant policy documents.
    - The GRFP FastLane Module is used for all transactions and has extensive "how to" help.
    - The NSF GRFP website has the Fellowship training materials and other opportunities of interest.
    - The GRFP Office can be reached at grfp@nsf.gov.

GENERAL

2. How do I update my contact information?

   Edit your profile in the GRFP FastLane Module.

3. How do I update my degree information?

This information can be updated in the Annual Activities Report.

4. What if I miss deadlines?

   Failure to meet the established GRFP Deadlines will result in Termination (loss) of the Fellowship. When in doubt, you are strongly encouraged to contact your CO.

5. May I defer my Fellowship?

   No. There is no general Fellowship deferral - only approved Military or Medical Deferrals. Deferrals are different from Reserve years. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected. Reserve years are counted in the 5-year period allowed for the Fellowship.

6. What is a GRFP month?

   A GRFP month is 14 or more days in a calendar month.

7. May I go on Reserve and take a leave of absence from my graduate program?

   No, there is no leave-of-absence status. Only approved Military or Medical Deferrals are allowed.

8. May I change my Fellowship Start (i.e., Summer to Fall and vice versa) after the Fellowship Year has begun?

   No retroactive changes are permitted. Fellowship starting date may only be changed at the time of Tenure declaration when going from Tenure to Reserve status, or vice versa.

FELLOW AND INSTITUTION ELIGIBILITY

9. I am not a US citizen, national or permanent resident alien and was offered a Fellowship. May I accept it?

   No. Applicants certify that they were eligible with respect to citizenship by the application deadline. Non US citizens are not eligible for the GRFP Fellowship Program, and GRFP Institutions may not use the GRFP Award to fund ineligible individuals. NSF refers such cases to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation.

10. I am currently enrolled in, will enroll in, or will transfer into a graduate program that is listed in the Program Solicitation as ineligible and was offered a Fellowship. May I accept it?

    No. GRFP Institutions may not use the GRFP Award to fund individuals in ineligible programs or fields of study. Eligibility criteria are detailed in the Program Solicitation and reiterated in the Guide.

11. I am currently enrolled in, will enroll in, or will transfer into a field of study that is listed in the Program Solicitation as ineligible and was offered a Fellowship, may I accept it?

    No. GRFP Institutions may not use the GRFP Award to fund individuals in ineligible programs or fields of study. Eligibility criteria are detailed in the Program Solicitation and reiterated in the Guide.

12. I am currently enrolled in, will enroll in, or will transfer into a graduate program that is not accredited and was offered a Fellowship. May I accept it?

GRFP Awards may only be made to accredited, US universities, colleges, or non-profit academic institutions of higher education offering advanced degrees in science and engineering. Because institutional accreditation questions are complex, please contact the GRFP Office via grfp@nsf.gov for guidance.

FELLOWSHIP OFFERS AND ACCEPTANCE / DECLINATION

13. May I delay a year and defer my Fellowship Offer?

In general there are to be no delays in the start of your graduate program, beyond NSF-approved Military and Medical Deferrals.

14. Must I be enrolled as a graduate student at all times?

If an unusual research or educational opportunity arises that would necessitate the Fellow being unenrolled for part or all of a year of graduate study, the Fellow should consult with the CO, who must confirm that the opportunity furthers the Graduate Fellow's educational and degree progress. For Fellows who are pursuing activities where institutional enrollment is not required or permitted, the non-enrollment period is subject to the approval of the CO. By retaining the Fellow on their Grants Roster , the GRFP institution approves the specific arrangement of non-enrollment status. A non-enrolled Fellow can be on Tenure or Reserve Status. In all cases, the expectation is that the Fellow is engaged full-time, working toward completion of an eligible graduate degree.

15. I have decided to take a year off to work, travel, etc.; may I defer my Fellowship offer?

No. To accept the Fellowship offer, you must be accepted to and planning to enroll full time in an eligible graduate program no later than the fall immediately following the Fellowship offer. There are to be no delays in the start of your graduate program, beyond documented and NSF-approved Military and Medical deferrals. Reserve status is not a deferral option.

16. What do I do if I have not been accepted into a graduate program at the time of the Fellowship Offer?

Unless you are accepted to a graduate program before the May 1 acceptance deadline and intending to enroll full-time in the Fall immediately following the Fellowship offer, you may not accept the Fellowship. If you decline the Fellowship by the May 1 deadline, you may reapply for the Fellowship in subsequent competitions, providing you continue to meet the eligibility criteria detailed in the Program Solicitation. If you do not respond by the deadline, you are ineligible to re-apply to future GRFP Competitions.

17. What happens if I missed the Fellowship acceptance deadline?

The Fellowship Offers not acted on by the deadline (May 1) are revoked and will not be reinstated. In addition, you are ineligible to re-apply to future GRFP Competitions.

FELLOWSHIP START DATES

18. I am entering graduate school this fall and will first enroll in the fall; may I receive Summer Stipend payments prior to enrollment?

No. Stipend payments require Fellows be enrolled full-time and fully engaged in their graduate program. In this situation, Fellows are only eligible for a "Fall" Start.

19. How could I be eligible for a"Summer" Start?

To be eligible to receive Stipend Payments during the summer, Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate program through coursework or research under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor, with summer enrollment status as required by the GRFP Institution.

20. My courses start in mid-August, which start date is appropriate?

    Fall. Upon accepting the Fellowship, the Fellow selects Summer/June 1 or Fall/September 1 to coincide with the approximate graduate program enrollment (e.g., Fall for Fellows starting graduate school in August/September/October).

21. When may I start the Fellowship?

    The exact starting date of graduate study is mutually determined by the Fellow and the CO, in accordance with the Fellowship policies.

GRFP INSTITUTION

22. May I enroll in a graduate program at a non-US institution?

    Yes, but you must be affiliated with a degree program at a US Institution. The Fellows Abroad option allowing a Fellow to be affiliated solely with a non-US institution was discontinued after the 2010 Competition, in favor of offering more substantive international research experiences for Fellows (e.g. GROW). Fellows are, however, encouraged to take part in NSF-provided opportunities and other study abroad programs approved by their institutions. See nsfgrfp.org for other funding opportunities.
    In cases where a Fellow studies abroad during part or all of the academic year, the Fellow may choose to be on Tenure or Reserve if the CO approves the study abroad period as furthering the Graduate Fellow's educational and degree progress. These study abroad periods may include field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the GRFP institution. While Fellows must be affiliated with a US-based institution, NSF encourages graduate students to establish collaborative relationships with international researchers.

23. What is a GRFP Institution?

    The term "GRFP Institution" refers to those US higher education institutions that currently have GRFP Fellows. Generally, any accredited, US university, college, or non-profit academic institution of higher education offering advanced degrees in science and engineering may be approved by NSF as a GRFP Institution.

24. May I attend any US institution?

    GRFP Awards may only be made to accredited, US universities, colleges, or non-profit academic institutions of higher education offering advanced degrees in science and engineering. Because institution accreditation questions are complex, please contact the GRFP Office via grfp@nsf.gov for guidance.

FELLOWSHIP YEAR

25. How long is the Fellowship Year?

    Each Fellowship Year is comprised of twelve months.

26. May a Fellowship Year be broken up into smaller units, such as semesters, quarters, months, etc.?

    No. Each Fellowship Year is comprised of twelve months.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

27. How is academic progress defined?

Satisfactory Academic Progress refers to academic degree progress and is defined by the Fellow's GRFP Institution.

28. How does academic progress affect the Fellowship?

Fellows certified by the CO to be making unsatisfactory academic progress will have their Fellowships terminated by NSF.

29. Where do I report my satisfactory academic progress?

Fellows are required to submit an Annual Activities report that documents their activities, accomplishments, progress and productivity for each fellowship year. The Annual Activities Report must be reviewed and approved by the Academic/Research Advisor by signing the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation form. The Fellows complete the Annual Activities Report and upload the signed confirmation form in FASTLANE. The Satisfactory Academic Progress is certified in FASTLANE by the Coordinating Official (CO), which is generally the graduate dean or similar university administrator.

30. What if I am placed on academic probation?

Satisfactory Academic progress is defined and certified by the GRFP Institution. In these circumstances, Fellows should speak with their CO and/or the GRFP Award PI.

31. What do I do if I do not have a research advisor at the time my Annual Activities Report needs to be verified by my advisor?

If you don't have an Advisor the Report may be verified by the department/program director of graduate studies or similar, appropriate departmental/program administrator.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR)

32. Do I have to participate in RCR training, if I am on Reserve, just taking classes, or received a Fellowship prior to the 2010 Competition?

Regardless of status, all Fellows supported by NSF to conduct research are required to receive appropriate training and oversight in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (effective with the 2010 Competition). Fellows whose Fellowship Offers were prior to the 2010 Competition are strongly encouraged to participate in such training, and their GRFP Institutions may require this training. Fellows should check with the CO about the RCR training requirements at their institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF NSF SUPPORT

33. When should I acknowledge NSF support?

All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP support.

34. How do I acknowledge NSF support?

The Fellow is responsible for assuring that an acknowledgement of NSF support is made:

- in any publication (including Web pages) of any material based on or developed during the

fellowship in the following terms:

- "This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. (NSF grant number)." (Fellows should obtain the NSF grant number from their CO.)
- NSF support also must be orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

35. Where do I find the NSF Grant Number?

    Fellows should obtain the NSF grant number from their CO. It will be the"base award number" on the five-year, GRFP grant.

USE OF NSF LOGO

36. Can I use the NSF Logo when acknowledging support?

    The NSF's logo can be used by recipients of NSF support for the sole pupose of acknowledging that support. The NSF logo can be used to link to an NSF website to acknowledge NSF assistance or affiliation.

37. Who cannot use the NSF Logo?

    NSF's logo cannot be used in a manner that falsely implies employment by or affiliation with NSF. NSF's logo cannot be used to imply or endorse a product or service.

38. Where can I find Logo usage and standard information?

    The NSF logo usage guidelines can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/policies/logos.jsp

SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

39. What does NSF expect of me in terms of service?

    NSF requires no formal service of Fellows, beyond the expectation that Fellows meet Fellowship requirements and are actively engaged in their graduate programs, research, and broader impact activities throughout the Fellowship at the GRFP Institution, irrespective of their Tenure Status. Fellows also agree to cooperate in GRFP Evaluations conducted by the NSF and/or contracted evaluators.

40. I am on Tenure; may I participate in paid/unpaid activities?

    Fellows are expected to devote full time to advanced scientific study or work during tenure. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable part of the education and training of many graduate students, a Fellow may choose to undertake a reasonable amount of such teaching or similar activity, without NSF approval. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and the gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not service to the institution as such, will govern such activities.

    Compensation for such activities is determined by the GRFP institution and is based on the institution's general employment policies. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP institution about specific policies pertaining to GRFP fellowship and paid activities.

41. I am on Tenure; may I work an outside job?

    Outside employment is not governed by the NSF. Fellows should check with their CO about

specific institution policies.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

42. What types of Reports must I file?

    Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration. As part of the Annual Activities Report, an Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form that confirms satisfactory academic progress toward the degree must be signed by the advisor and uploaded by the Fellow.

43. How do I submit reports?

    All reports are submitted via the GRFP FastLane Module.

44. I am on a Medical Deferral; am I required to submit an Activities Report?

    Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit an Annual/Final Activities Report by May 1 each year. For full-year deferrals, the text box field in the Activities Report in the GRFP FastLane Module need only contain"no activities to report due to medical deferral," if appropriate.

45. I am a first-year graduate student and have not joined a research group or started a research project; what do I report on my Activities Report?

    Fellows should report on their degree progress (e.g., coursework, lab rotations, etc.).

46. I am on a Military Deferral; am I required to submit an Activities Report?

    Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit an Annual/Final Activities Report by May 1 each year. For full-year deferrals, the text box field in the Activities Report in the GRFP FastLane Module need only contain"no activities to report due to military deferral," if appropriate.

47. I am graduating; am I required to submit an Annual Activities Report?

    Yes. Fellows graduating (Completing) their Fellowship during the year are required to submit a Final Activities report within 30 days of Completion/Termination as part of the Fellowship Terms and Conditions.

48. I am graduating in December; am I required to submit an Annual Activities Report?

    Yes. Fellows graduating (Completing) their Fellowship during the year are required to submit a Final Activities report within 30 days of Completion/Termination as part of the Fellowship Terms and Conditions. The Activities Reports module is available throughout the year.

49. I am leaving my graduate program; am I required to submit an Annual Activities Report?

    Yes. Fellows discontinuing (Terminating) their Fellowship are required to submit a Final Activities report within 30 days of Completion/Termination. The Activities Reports are available throughout the year.

50. I am not on Tenure; am I required to submit reports?

Yes. Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration.

51. Why do I need to include my academic/research advisor information?

The Academic/Research Advisors review Fellow Annual Activities Reports and sign the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form, which verifies Fellow satisfactory academic progress. Academic advisors may be the department/program director of graduate studies or similar, appropriate departmental/program administrator.

52. What do I do if I do not have a research advisor at the time my Annual Activities Report needs to be verified by my advisor?

The Academic or Research Advisors review Fellow Annual Activities Reports and verify Fellow satisfactory academic progress. Academic advisors may be the department/program director of graduate studies or similar, appropriate departmental/program administrator.

TENURE DECLARATION

53. What is"Tenure Declaration"?

For each Fellowship year, Fellows must inform the GRFP Office of their intent to use the Fellowship financial resources (Stipend and COE) by "declaring tenure" in the GRFP FastLane Module. Funds are disbursed to the GRFP Institutions based on the information provided. Failure to Declare Tenure by the deadline will result in Termination of the Fellowship. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated.

CHANGES IN FIELD OF STUDY (FOS), DEGREE PLAN, OR RESEARCH PLAN

54. What is a major versus minor field of study (FOS)?

For GRFP purposes, the major FOS are Chemistry; Computer And Information Science And Engineering; Engineering; Geosciences; Life Sciences; Mathematical Sciences; Materials Research, Physics And Astronomy; Psychology; Social Sciences; and STEM Education and Learning Research. The minor FOS are the listings under each heading. Generally in policy documents, major FOS are the bolded and capitalized headings and minor FOS are listings under each heading.

55. What are eligible FOS or degree programs?

The GRFP supports graduate students pursuing research-based graduate degrees in graduate programs that are within the scope of the Agency's mission. With some specifically noted exceptions, practice-oriented professional degrees, joint professional degree-science, medical, dental, law, public health, clinical, counseling, business administration/management, social work, education or history programs are not eligible. The Program Solicitation and Guide specifically address the degree programs and research thrusts that are outside of the Foundation's mission. Please see these policy documents or contact the NSF Program Office for additional guidance.

56. May I pursue an ineligible FOS or degree program while on Reserve status?

No. Reserve status requires that Fellows actively engage in an NSF-eligible FOS and graduate degree program.

57. I am a new Fellow, and in my application I indicated I would be pursuing a degree in physics (major FOS); may I now change to a degree program in environmental economics (major FOS)?

No. Acceptance of the Fellowship is an explicit agreement that the Fellow will be affiliated with an NSF-approved graduate degree program in the FOS indicated in the application. Given that applications are reviewed in the context of disciplinary norms, major FOS changes are not permitted.

58. I am a new Fellow, and in my application I indicated I would be pursuing a degree in particle physics (minor FOS); may I now change to a degree program in nuclear physics (minor FOS)?

    This is a minor FOS change and is subject to the approval of the CO, using the GRFP FastLane Module.

59. I am a new Fellow, and in my application I proposed a specific research project; do I now have to do that specific project?

    No, not as long as your degree program and research project both remain in the same major FOS proposed in your application and there is no minor FOS change. If there is a minor FOS change in either the degree program or research project, it is subject to the approval of the CO, using the GRFP FastLane Module.

60. I am a Continuing Fellow; may I switch degree programs from electrical engineering (minor FOS) to systems engineering (minor FOS)?

    This is a minor FOS change and is subject to the approval of the CO, using the GRFP FastLane Module.

61. I am a Continuing Fellow; may I change degree programs from computer engineering (major FOS) to computational biology (major FOS)?

    This is a major change in FOS and constitutes a "change in scope" - one that alters the program to the extent that it is significantly different from that originally submitted with the Fellowship Application. Such changes require the prior written approval of the CO and NSF. Using the GRFP FastLane Module for submission, a change-in-scope request requires significant and compelling justifications for approval.

62. I am a Continuing Fellow and my research is not working out; may I change projects?

    Approval is required if the project change involves minor or major changes in FOS. Minor FOS changes in research projects are subject to the approval of the CO, using the GRFP FastLane Module. If the research project change is significant and a major change in FOS, this constitutes a "change in scope" - one that alters the project to the extent that it is significantly different. Such changes require the prior written approval of the CO and NSF. Using the GRFP FastLane Module for submission, changes-in-scope requests require significant and compelling justifications for approval.

63. I am a new Fellow; may I change the degree I proposed in my application?

    Fellows do not need to request approval to change between a master's and a doctoral degree when there is no FOS change. Fellows should update their GRFP FastLane profile to reflect the appropriate degree.

64. I am in a master's degree program and wish to pursue a doctoral degree now; may I change my degree program?

Fellows do not need to request NSF approval to change between a master's and a doctoral degree when there is no field of study or institutional change. Fellows should update their GRFP FastLane profile to reflect the appropriate degree.

65. I am in a doctoral degree program and wish to pursue a master's degree now; may I change my degree program?

    Fellows do not need to request approval to change between a master's and a doctoral degree when there is no field of study or institutional change. Fellows should update their GRFP FastLane profile to reflect the appropriate degree.

GRFP INSTITUTION AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

66. I am a new Fellow; how will the CO at my proposed graduate institution know about me?

    It is particularly important for new Fellows to confirm that their GRFP Record properly reflects their graduate GRFP Institution. If your institution is listed correctly when you Accept and Declare Tenure, your name will populate the correct GRFP FastLane institutional Grants Roster that is reviewed by the CO.

67. Does the GRFP Institution of record really matter?

    Yes. Because Fellowship funding is made through an Award to the GRFP Institution on record, Fellows with incorrect institutional affiliations risk delay or forfeiture of Stipend payments.

68. I am a new Fellow; may I change my proposed graduate institution?

    Yes. Please note that the new proposed institution must be approved by NSF and is subject to the aforementioned institutional eligibility requirements (e.g., US, accredited, etc.). A Change Request is submitted by the Fellow and approved by the CO at the new GRFP Institution, and by NSF. It is the Fellow's responsibility to arrange for admission to the institution in a manner that allows the Fellow to meet relevant NSF deadlines.

69. I am a new Fellow; may I change my proposed graduate institution in the GRFP Database that populates the public listing of GRFP Fellows and Honorable Mentions?

    No. This is automatically populated based on the application records, and historical records are not changed.

70. I am a Continuing Fellow; may I transfer graduate institutions?

    Yes. Please note that the new proposed institution must be approved by NSF and is subject to the aforementioned institutional eligibility requirements (e.g., US, accredited, etc.). A Change Request is submitted by the Fellow and is approved by the COs at the current and at the new GRFP Institution, and by NSF. It is the Fellow's responsibility to arrange for admission to the institution in a manner that allows the Fellow to meet relevant NSF deadlines. Any additional changes to FOS, degree program, etc. may also require additional approvals.

71. I am planning to change institutions; may I have a break in enrollment?

    When transitioning from one GRFP Institution to another, Fellows should not plan to have a significant break in enrollment. Full-time engagement in a graduate research program is expected; therefore, any break exceeding one month requires prior NSF approval. Enrollment breaks between graduate programs or GRFP Institutions exceeding three or more months are generally

not approved, and if approved, may require forfeiture of Stipend payments.

72. At what point in time during the year may I transfer between institutions?

    There is no specific time designated for this action. However, such transfers should be judiciously planned to ensure all approvals are obtained in a timely manner and Fellowship policies are followed. Fellows should keep in mind that a significant break in enrollment may not be approved; Stipend payments may be forfeited; etc. The Fellow must submit a Tenure Change Request to NSF.

FELLOWSHIP DETAILS

73. How many years of support do I have?

    The Fellowship Period is five years maximum, unless there is a Military or Medical Deferral. The Fellowship provides up to three years of financial support (Tenure: Stipend and institutional Cost-of-Education Allowance) and up to two additional years (Reserve) with no financial support and continued access to other aspects of GRFP (Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide, professional development pilot programs, XSEDE, etc.).

FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS

74. What are my Fellowship Status options?

    During the Fellowship Period, Fellows must be in one of the following Fellowship Statuses: Tenure, Reserve, Forfeit, Medical Deferral, or Military Deferral.

75. What is the time frame for the different statuses?

    During the Fellowship Period (five-year maximum), the Fellowship provides up to three Tenure years of financial support (Stipend and institutional Cost-of-Education Allowance) and two Reserve Years. Tenure and Reserve Statuses are only assigned on an annual basis (12-month increments).

76. How and when can I change statuses?

    A Fellow may change between statuses from one year to the next, but may only change the Fellowship Year start (Summer or Fall) when switching between Statuses (e.g., Reserve to Tenure). The Tenure Declaration deadline is May 1.

77. How do I choose between statuses from year to year?

    With the assistance of an Academic/Research Advisor, Fellows should plan for the judicious use of Fellowship resources (annual Statuses) at the beginning of their Fellowship.

78. It is past the May 1 deadline for Tenure Declaration; may I change my status?

    Retroactive changes are not permitted after the May 1 deadline. This applies regardless of whether the Fellowship year has begun. If an extraordinary opportunity arises, the Fellow should have the GRFP Institution and CO contact the NSF Program Office for guidance.

79. I have used my three years of Tenure Status; why should I continue being a Fellow?

    A Fellow may choose to go on Reserve to continue to participate in Fellowship opportunities, such as new pilot professional development programs, international research experiences, use of

XSEDE Resources, etc.

TENURE STATUS

80. What is Tenure Status?

Fellowship Tenure Status is the period of time during which Fellows actively utilize Fellowship Support - receiving a Stipend and/or institutional COE. Tenure Status ensures that Fellows have the resources (time and financial support) to devote full-time effort to their graduate programs of study. Tenure includes periods of full-time research and/or coursework under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor at the GRFP Institution, whether or not the GRFP Institution is in session, as well as any normal, short vacation periods.

81. Do I have to be enrolled while on Tenure?

Fellows on Tenure are normally enrolled full-time in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. For Fellows who are pursuing activities where institutional enrollment is not required or permitted, the CO and GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster and to approve the specific arrangement of non-enrollment status. A non-enrolled Fellow can be on Tenure or Reserve Status. In all cases, the expectation is that the Fellow is engaged full-time, working toward completion of an eligible graduate degree.

82. Do I get paid vacation?

Tenure includes periods of full-time research and/or coursework, as well as any normal, short vacation periods.

83. May I take the Summer off and still get paid?

No. Summer is not considered a "short vacation period."

84. Do I have to be enrolled in the Summer while on Tenure?

To be eligible to receive Stipend Payments during the summer, Fellows are expected to be actively engaged in their graduate program through coursework or research under the direction of an Academic/Research Advisor, with summer enrollment status as required by the GRFP Institution.

85. May I use my Tenure by semester, quarter, etc.?

No. Fellowship Tenure Status is granted in 12-month increments corresponding to a Fellowship Year (Summer or Fall Start) and may not be broken into smaller units spread across more than one year, except in cases of NSF-approved Medical or Military Deferral. Portions of a Tenure year cannot be deferred for later use.

86. I am on Tenure; may I participate in paid/unpaid activities?

Fellows are expected to devote full time to advanced scientific study or work during tenure. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable part of the education and training of many graduate students, a Fellow may choose to undertake a reasonable amount of such teaching or similar activity. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and the gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not

service to the institution as such, will govern such activities. Compensation for such activities is determined by the GRFP institution and is based on the institution's general employment policies. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP institution about specific policies pertaining to GRFP fellowship and paid activities.

87. I am on Tenure; may I work an outside job?

Outside employment is not governed by the NSF. Fellows should check with their CO about specific institution policies.

RESERVE STATUS

88. What is Reserve Status?

Reserve Status ensures that Fellows have the flexibility of incorporating professional development opportunities (e.g., research assistantships, teaching assistantships, internships, etc.) into their graduate programs. Fellows may use Reserve Status to postpone Fellowship Support for up to two years, in 12-month increments, during the five-year Fellowship Period. Fellows on Reserve Status must remain actively engaged in full-time research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible graduate degree in an NSF-supported field.

89. May I use my Reserve Status by semester, quarter, etc.?

No. Fellowship Reverse Status is granted in 12-month increments corresponding to a Fellowship Year (Summer or Fall Start) and may not be broken into smaller units spread across more than one year, except in cases of NSF-approved Medical or Military Deferral. Portions of an unused Reserve year cannot be held for later use.

90. May I participate or enroll in ineligible activities or degree programs while on Reserve?

No. Fellows on Reserve must remain actively engaged in full-time research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible graduate degree in an NSF-supported field.

91. Do I have to be enrolled while on Reserve?

Fellows on Reserve are normally enrolled full-time in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the Fellow may be on Reserve status only if the CO approves the non-enrollment period as part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution and conforming to the terms of the Guide.

92. Do I have to submit Activities Reports while on Reserve?

Yes. Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration.

93. May I take the summer off while on Reserve?

No. Summer is not considered a "short vacation period. Fellows on Reserve must remain actively engaged in full-time research, coursework, or professional development opportunities (e.g., research assistantships, teaching assistantships, internships, etc.), leading to an eligible graduate degree in an NSF-supported field.

94. I am on Reserve; may I take a leave of absence from my graduate program?

No. Fellows on Reserve are enrolled full-time in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Full-time status is established by each GRFP Institution and may include reduced course load requirements, such as following admission to candidacy or equivalent status. In cases where a Fellow has a period of non-enrollment during the academic year, the Fellow may be on Reserve status only if the CO approves the non-enrollment period as part of the Fellow's graduate education program and normal degree progress. These non-enrollment periods may include field courses, extended workshops, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the CO and the Fellow's institution and conforming to the terms of the Guide.

95. Once I have used my two years of Reserve Status; what are my Status options?

Fellows not on NSF-approved Military or Medical Deferrals who have used two years of Reserve Status must choose Tenure or Forfeit Status for subsequent years.

96. Once I have used my three years of Tenure Status; what are my Status options?

If the Fellow is in the final year of Tenure (completing 36 months of financial support) with Reserve left, he/she may choose to go on Reserve, to continue to participate in Fellowship opportunities, or Terminate the Fellowship (i.e., surrender the two remaining years of Fellowship eligibility on Reserve). Terminated Fellowships will not be reinstated.

FORFEIT STATUS

97. What is Forfeit Status?

Any months of funding not utilized during a year of Tenure are Forfeit (lost). Fellows on Forfeit Status must remain full-time students and be actively engaged in research and/or coursework, leading to an eligible graduate degree in an NSF-supported field. Annual Activities Reports are required during Forfeit Status.

98. Does Forfeit affect the Cost-of-Education (COE) allowance?

Yes. The institutional COE allowance is calculated by the number of months that a Fellow is on Tenure.

99. Can Forfeit Status be used in monthly increments?

Yes. Because Forfeit Status is the forfeiture or loss of Stipend Payments, a portion of a Tenure Year can be Forfeited in monthly increments.

100. Do I have to be engaged in my graduate program while on Forfeit?

Yes. Fellows with Forfeit Status remain actively engaged in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution; they are just not receiving Stipend Payments. For Fellows who are pursuing activities where institutional enrollment is not required or permitted, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster and to approve the specific arrangement of non-enrollment status. This is a rare occurrence and is not a general deferral option - NSF must approve any non-enrollment Forfeit statuses for Fellows.

101. Do I have to submit Activities Reports while on Forfeit?

Yes. Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration.

102. May I take the summer off and Forfeit?

Fellows with Forfeit Status must be actively engaged in a graduate degree program at their GRFP Institution. Summer is not considered a "short vacation period." NSF must approve any non-enrollment Forfeit statuses for Fellows.

103. Once I have used my two years of Reserve Status; what are my Status options?

Fellows not on NSF-approved Military or Medical Deferrals who have used two years of Reserve Status must choose Tenure or Forfeit Status for subsequent years.

MILITARY DEFERRAL STATUS

104. What is Military Deferral Status?

Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for Active Duty. Fellows must request Military Deferrals, via the GRFP FastLane module, and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the GRFP Institution. The GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

105. How long may I remain in Military Deferral Status?

Military Deferral must be renewed each year, and a new copy of duty orders must be submitted to the CO at the GRFP Institution. Failure to renew Military Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship. The GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected.

106. Do I need to be on Military Deferral to participate in required military training?

No. Within a given Fellowship Year, duly authorized military service or training is permitted without penalty to the Fellow with the approval of the CO and NSF, if the service does not compromise the Fellow's enrollment status and degree progress.

107. Do I have to submit Activities Reports while on Military Deferral?

Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration. Because of the unique nature of Military Deferrals and potential difficulty in filing reports, Fellows are advised to discuss reporting requirements with their CO prior to Deferral. For full-year deferrals, the text box field in the Activities Report in the GRFP FastLane Module need only contain "no activities to report due to military deferral," if appropriate.

108. Can Military Deferral Status be used in monthly increments?

Yes. Military Deferrals can be granted for all or part of a Fellowship Year, in monthly increments.

109. Does Military Deferral Status affect the Stipend and COE allowance?

Yes. Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for Active Duty. Therefore, no Stipend or COE allowance is utilized.

110. What happens to the "deferred" months from a Military Deferral?

The unused, deferred months are available for use at a later date, and current Fellowship Terms

apply.

111. Do I have to be enrolled while on Military Deferral?

In cases of an NSF-approved Military Deferral, active enrollment is not required; however, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

112. How do I request a Military Deferral?

Fellows must request Military Deferrals, via the GRFP FastLane module, and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the GRFP Institution.

113. Do I need to renew my Military Deferral?

Yes. Military Deferral must be renewed each year, and a new copy of duty orders must be submitted to the CO at the GRFP Institution. Failure to renew Military Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship.

MEDICAL DEFERRAL STATUS

114. What is Medical Deferral Status?

Medical Deferrals may be requested when an extended absence (more than one month) is necessary due to serious illness or other medical condition (mental or physical health) or when dependent-care (family leave) situations prevent full-time Fellowship Activity for an extended period. The GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster. While on deferral, a Fellow's clock stops, i.e., the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected.

115. When can a Medical Deferral take place?

Fellows may be granted a Medical Deferral for all or part of a Tenure or Reserve Year.

116. Is there Family Leave available?

Yes. Medical Deferrals may be requested when an extended absence (more than one month) is necessary due to medical (mental or physical health) or dependent-care (family leave) situations. NSF considers dependent care to include child care, adoption, maternity/paternity leave, elder care, and extended family illness.

117. What is the definition of family?

Family refers to immediate family members - spouse/partner, child, dependent, sibling, or parent.

118. Can Medical Deferral Status be used in monthly increments?

Yes. Medical Deferrals can be granted for all or part of a Fellowship Year,in monthly increments.

119. Is there a paid Medical Deferral option?

For Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, there is a limited paid leave option: (1) If the GRFP Institution's graduate student leave policies allow for paid leave, those leave policies apply; or (2) In the absence of paid graduate student leave policies at the GRFP Institution, Fellows may continue to receive stipend payments for a period not to exceed three months total during the three Tenure Years. The three months may be broken up into shorter, monthly time frames across multiple Tenure Years (e.g., use of two months of Stipend under Medical Deferral in

Tenure Year 1 and one month in Tenure Year 3).

Fellows may include a request for 1, 2 or 3 months paid Leave with the medical deferral request submitted through the GRFP Fastlane Module.

120. Is there a limit on the paid Medical Deferral?

Yes. For Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, the limits are set by the formal GRFP Institution Policies, or in the absence of such policies, the limit is three months. The three months may be broken up into shorter, monthly time frames across multiple Tenure Years.

121. Are Medical Deferrals available in weekly increments?

No. Medical Deferrals may be requested when an extended absence (more than one month) is necessary due to serious illness or other medical condition (mental or physical health) or when dependent-care (family leave) situations prevent full-time Fellowship Activity for an extended period. Medical Deferrals are taken in monthly increments.

122. Do I have to be on Tenure, to receive a paid Medical Deferral?

Yes. Fellows on Tenure with an NSF-approved Medical Deferral may continue to receive stipend payments as detailed in the Guide.

123. Is there a limit on the number of times that a Medical Deferral can be requested?

No. Fellows can request Medical Deferrals as needed Approval is based on the documentation provided to the CO supporting the purpose of a Medical Deferral.

124. What happens to the"deferred" months from a Medical Deferral?

The unused, deferred months are available for use at a later date, and current Fellowship Terms and Conditions apply.

125. Do I have to submit Activities Reports while on Medical Deferral?

Irrespective of Status, all Continuing Fellows are required to submit two reports by May 1 each year: an Annual/Final Activities Report and Fellowship Year Tenure Declaration. Because of the unique nature of Medical Deferrals, Fellows are advised to discuss reporting requirements with their CO prior to Deferral. For full-year deferrals, the text box field in the Activities Report in the GRFP FastLane Module need only contain "no activities to report due to medical deferral," if appropriate.

126. Do I have to be enrolled while on Medical Deferral?

In cases of an NSF-approved Medical Deferral, active enrollment is not required; however, the GRFP Institution must agree to keep the Fellow on their Grants Roster.

127. Does a Medical Deferral affect the Cost-of-Education (COE) allowance?

Yes. The institutional COE allowance is calculated by the number of months that a Fellow is on Tenure.

128. How do I request a Medical Deferral?

To request Medical Deferrals, Fellows should first contact their CO and secure an institutionally

approved medical or family leave based on the GRFP Institution's graduate student leave policies. Using the GRFP FastLane Module, Fellows must formally submit a Request for a Medical Deferral. The Request should provide an estimate of the length of time (in whole months) needed for the approved Deferral, which will establish the time period to be recorded for the Deferral. The nature of the medical or family situation need not be disclosed to NSF in the documentation provided. The Deferral Request is approved by the CO and forwarded to NSF for final review and approval. The GRFP Institution retains relevant documentation indicating that the condition merits a Medical Deferral.

Fellows may include a request for 1, 2 or 3 months paid Leave with the medical deferral request submitted through the GRFP Fastlane Module.

129. Do I need to renew my Medical Deferral?

Yes. A Medical Deferral must be renewed if the Medical Deferral extends into a new Fellowship Year. Failure to renew a Medical Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship.

TENURE BEYOND DEGREE COMPLETION

130. If I have eligibility left in my five year Fellowship, may I remain a GRFP Fellow after graduation?

Only Fellows who have not completed their five-year Fellowship Period and are completing a Master's degree have the option of continuing their original Fellowship by enrolling in an NSF-approved doctoral degree program.

131. I am completing a Master's/Doctoral Degree and have not used all of my Tenure eligibility; may I continue to be paid?

No. There is no continued Fellowship support upon degree completion and under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF. No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as detailed in the Guide where a Master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program.

132. I am completing a Master's/Doctoral Degree and have not used all of my Reserve eligibility; may I continue to participate in GRFP activities?

No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as detailed in the Guide where a Master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program. There is no continued Fellowship support upon degree completion and under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF.

133. I am completing a Master's/Doctoral Degree and have not used all of my Tenure eligibility; may I continue to be paid while I finish research, publications, presentations, etc.?

No. There is no continued Fellowship support upon degree completion and under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF. No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as detailed in the Guide where a Master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program.

134. I am completing a Master's and continuing on for a doctoral degree in an NSF-

approved degree program. I have not used all of my Fellowship; may I continue as a Fellow on Tenure/Reserve?

GRFP Fellows who have not completed their five-year Fellowship Period and are completing a Master's degree have the option of continuing their original Fellowship by enrolling in an NSF-approved doctoral degree program. To remain a Fellow, the Fellow must be accepted into a doctoral program upon completion of the Master's degree; the transition period between degree programs generally may not exceed three months; and the Fellow must request NSF approval and complete any required actions. During the transition period, Tenure (on Tenure Fellows) or Reserve (on Reserve Fellows) months are forfeited. Requests with supporting documentation should be sent to grfp@nsf.gov.

135. I am completing a Master's and continuing on for a doctoral/professional degree in an ineligible degree program. I have not used all of my Fellowship; may I continue as a Fellow on Tenure/Reserve?

No. GRFP Fellows who have not completed their five-year Fellowship Period and are completing a Master's degree have the option of continuing their original Fellowship by enrolling in an NSF-approved doctoral degree program.

FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION

136. Do Fellowships expire?

Yes. The Fellowship expires upon completion of 36 months of Stipend Payments, three years Tenure Status, or five years after Fellowship start, whichever comes first. The default is to complete the Fellowship after 36 months of financial support; Fellows wanting to be placed on Reserve for the following year must request this status by emailing grfp@nsf.gov by May 1. Completed Fellows (i.e., used 36 months of Stipend Payments prior to the five-year Fellowship Period) with one or two years of Reserve status unused may continue to take part in future Fellowship opportunities, such as Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide (GROW). To do so, Fellows must Declare Tenure or contact the Program Office grfp@nsf.gov by the subsequent Tenure Declaration Deadline. Reserve status will be granted if the Fellow has not utilized two years of Reserve status and is still within the 5-year period of the Fellowship.

137. I have used my three years of Tenure; may I continue participating in GRFP activities?

Yes. Completed Fellows (i.e., used 36 months of Stipend Payments prior to the five-year Fellowship Period) wishing to remain on Reserve Status (must have unused Reserve Years) to continue to take part in future Fellowship opportunities, such as the Nordic Research Opportunity, must Declare Tenure or contact the GRFP Program Office grfp@nsf.gov by the subsequent Tenure Declaration Deadline. The GRFP FastLane Module default is to convert Fellows to Completed after 36 months of Support. Requests after the deadline are not approved.

138. I have completed my doctoral degree and still have Tenure eligibility; may I be considered an NSF postdoc?

No. Under no circumstance is the GRFP Fellowship considered a Postdoctoral Fellowship or employment by NSF. No Fellowship will be extended past the final academic term of graduate study leading to a graduate degree, except as indicated above where a Master's degree leads to enrollment in a doctoral degree program. There is no continued Fellowship support upon degree completion.

FELLOWSHIP TERMINATION

139. Who can Terminate a Fellowship?

The Fellow, GRFP Institution, or NSF can Terminate a Fellowship.

140. Under what circumstances does the GRFP Institution or NSF Terminate a Fellowship?

In cases where a Fellow fails to comply with Fellowship Terms and Conditions, to make satisfactory progress towards an eligible graduate degree, to submit the Annual Activities Report or Declare Tenure Status by the posted deadlines, the GRFP Institution and/or NSF will Terminate the Fellowship. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated.

141. What are the most common causes of Fellowship Termination?

The most common causes of Fellowship Termination are failure to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions and failure to meet deadlines.

142. I need to discontinue my Fellowship; what do I do?

Should a Fellow find it necessary to Terminate their Fellowship before completion of the 36 months of support, the Fellow is required to notify their CO and the Program Office and to submit a request to Terminate the Fellowship, via the GRFP FastLane Module. Terminated Fellowships may not be reinstated. Fellows discontinuing (Terminating) their Fellowship are also required to submit a Final Activities report within 30 days of Completion/Termination. The Activities Reports are available throughout the year.

143. If I Terminate my Fellowship during a Tenure Year, how much do I get paid?

If a Fellow Terminates affiliation with the GRFP Institution prior to the completion of a Tenure Period, the Fellow is entitled to Stipend Payments only for those months on Tenure at the GRFP Institution, provided the Fellowship Terms and Conditions were met. For Stipend Payment purposes, the last month of Tenure is defined as that month which contained 14 or more days in a calendar month on Tenure at the GRFP Institution.

OTHER SUPPORT

144. What is the difference between a Fellowship, assistantship and traineeship?

Fellowships are generally made to individuals (GRFP), and assistantships (research or teaching) and traineeships (IGERT, NIH, GK12, etc.) generally fund individuals from a grant or award made to the institution (i.e., the institution selects the recipients versus the agency making the selection).

145. What is a Federal Fellowship?

Federal Fellowships are defined as awards that are made to individuals from the US Government (e.g., Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institutes of Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Agriculture, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.)

146. What is Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide (GROW)?

GROW is a new NSF effort to expand opportunities for US graduate students to engage in international research collaborations. GROW is currently open only to active Fellows of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program. Through GROW NSF Graduate Fellows may apply for support to engage in research collaborations with investigators in partner countries located outside the United States.

147. Where can I find more information GROW?

Detailed information about GROW is available at www.nsf.gov/grow.

148. I received a GRFP Fellowship Offer and currently have a Federal Fellowship (DOE, EPA, etc.); may I accept the GRFP Fellowship?

No. Starting with the 2011 Fellows forward, GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with another US Government Federal Fellowship, irrespective of the Fellow's Status.

149. I received a GRFP Fellowship Offer and currently have a Federal Fellowship (DOE, EPA, etc.); what are my options?

Starting with the 2011 Fellows forward, GRFP Fellowships cannot be concurrently accepted or combined with another US Government Federal Fellowship, irrespective of the Fellow's Status. You must decline the GRFP Fellowship Offer or terminate your current Federal Fellowship prior to accepting the GRFP Fellowship.

150. Where can I find funding for my Reserve Years?

Many programs and departments have research and teaching assistantships and fellowships available for GRFP Fellows. In addition, the www.nsfgrfp.org website has a listing of other funding opportunities. See the Guide for rules regarding multiple funding sources.

151. May I be supported by a Traineeship (e.g., NIH, IGERT, etc.) while on Reserve?

Yes. Traineeships are appropriate for Fellows on Reserve.

152. May I accept or be paid from a private Foundation Fellowship?

Supplementation to a Fellowship while on Tenure is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution. Fellows should check with their CO.

STIPEND

153. How much is the Fellowship Stipend?

The annual, 12-month GRFP Stipend amount is specified in each year's Program Solicitation and Fellowship Offer Letter. The amount is $30,000 for the 2013-2014 Fellowship Year.

154. I am graduating in May (nine months of Tenure); how much will I be paid?

The Stipend is pro-rated in monthly increments (e.g., graduation after nine months of Tenure results in nine-twelfths of the annual Stipend).

155. When will I be paid?

Fellowship Stipends are managed by the GRFP Institution. For disbursement procedures and schedules, Fellows should check with the CO. Regardless of the exact Stipend Payment Schedule, NSF requires that the Stipends be reported in no less than 1-month increments.

156. Will withholdings (taxes, insurance, Social Security, FICA, etc.) be taken out of my Stipend checks?

Fellowship Stipends are managed by the GRFP Institution. GRFP institutional policies regarding the withholding of taxes from Stipend Payments vary. Stipend Payments may not be reduced by

items that the GRFP Institution would normally consider indirect costs or fringe benefits. For questions regarding withholdings, Fellows should check with the CO.

157. No taxes were withheld from my Stipend payments; am I still responsible for taxes?

Stipends may be considered taxable income. Fellows bear the responsibility of filing and paying any taxes due.

158. My GRFP Institution pays me 6 months at a time, and I am graduating in May (nine months into this Fellowship Year); am I entitled to the full Stipend amount?

No. The Stipend is pro-rated in monthly increments (e.g., graduation after nine months of Tenure results in nine-twelfths of the annual Stipend). Contact your CO about the repayment of funds.

159. Under what circumstances are Stipend payments withheld?

Only Fellows on Tenure in good standing are eligible to receive Stipend Payments. If a Fellow does not conform to the Standards of Conduct of the GRFP Institution and/or the NSF, NSF reserves the right to withhold a Fellow's Stipend Payments or Terminate a Fellowship. In addition, Fellows who miss deadlines may Forfeit Stipend payments or be Terminated.

160. Are Stipends taxable?

Stipends may be considered taxable income. Fellows may find it helpful to consult the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Topic 421: Scholarship and Fellowship Grants and Publication 970: Tax Benefits for Education. These are available at http://www.irs.gov. Specific questions regarding the taxation of Fellowship funding and personal tax liability should be referred to the IRS. As such, NSF will not respond to questions regarding tax issues.

161. Will NSF provide tax advice?

No. Specific questions regarding the taxation of Fellowship funding and personal tax liability should be referred to the IRS. NSF will not respond to questions regarding tax issues.

162. Are Fellows employees of the NSF?

Fellows are not, in any sense, considered employees of the NSF.

163. Given that I am paid by the Federal Government, do I still have a tax liability on my Stipend?

Stipends may be considered taxable income. NSF will not deduct funds from the Stipend or pay any additional amounts, such as Social Security Taxes. Fellows bear the responsibility of filing and paying any taxes due.

164. Will NSF issue W-2 or 1099 forms?

No, NSF does not issue W-2 or 1099 forms for Fellows. Consult your institution's payroll office for information.

165. May I also be paid (supplement my Stipend) from a university or private Fellowship?

Supplementation to a Fellowship while on Tenure is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution.

Fellows should check with their CO. See additional guidance on Stipend Supplementation in the Guide.

166. May I be paid (supplement my Stipend) as a teaching or research assistant on top of my Stipend?

Fellows are expected to devote full time to advanced scientific study or work during tenure. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable part of the education and training of many graduate students, a Fellow may choose to undertake a reasonable amount of such activities without NSF approval. It is expected that furtherance of the Fellow's educational objectives and the gain of substantive teaching or other experience, not service to the institution as such, will govern such activities Compensation for such activities is determined by the GRFP institution and is based on the institution's general employment policies. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP institution about specific policies pertaining to GRFP fellowship and paid activities.

167. May I have an outside job?

Outside employment is not governed by the NSF. Fellows should check with their CO about specific institution policies.

168. Does the NSF GRFP Fellowship provide funds for my research project?

No research or travel allowances are provided with the fellowship. Please see GROW for the opportunity to apply for funding an international research collaboration.

169. May I accept funding for my research project?

Yes. Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept, from NSF or other federal and private sources, support for research expenses, such as laboratory supplies, instrumentation usage fees, field-station usage fees, travel expenses, conference/registration fees, workshop expenses, or subscription fees. For Fellows on Tenure, support for living expenses associated with off-site research activities will require approval by the CO.

170. I have responsibility for another individual (e.g., spouse, child, or parent); is there an "add-on" to my Stipend?

No dependent allowances are provided.

171. Does the Fellowship cover living expenses?

No. All living expenses are the responsibility of the Fellow.

COST-OF-EDUCATION (COE) ALLOWANCE

172. What is the COE allowance?

The Fellowship provides a fixed cost-of-education (COE) Allowance to the GRFP Institution for Fellows on Tenure. The COE Allowance is without regard to the actual amount of tuition and fees involved. The amount is for the 2013-2014 Fellowship Year is $12,000.00

173. How much is the COE allowance?

For Fellows in good standing on Tenure for six months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive the full COE Allowance. For Fellows in good standing on Tenure for one to five months, the GRFP Institution is entitled to receive one half of the COE Allowance. The COE allowance is reported in

three amounts based on tenure: Zero months on tenure $0, 1-5 months on tenure $6,000 and 6-12 months on tenure $12,000 in any given fellowship year. If a Fellow transfers institutions mid-year (at 6 months), each institution will receive one-half of the COE Allowance.

174. What expenses may be charged by the GRFP Institution?

The actual use of the COE Allowance is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution.

175. Is the COE allowance mine to spend?

No. The Fellowship provides a fixed COE Allowance to the GRFP Institution, not to the Fellow.

176. May my health insurance be charged to the COE allowance?

The actual use of the COE Allowance is at the discretion of the GRFP Institution.

177. May the COE be used for application fees, last semester's tuition, etc.?

The COE may not be applied retroactively and does not cover application fees or the like. The summer immediately following the Fellowship Offer is the earliest the COE may be utilized.

TUITION AND FEES

178. I am on Tenure; do I pay tuition and fees?

While on Tenure, Fellows are exempt from paying required tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing. Fellows may be required to pay any fees or deposits that are refundable in whole or in part, that are optional (e.g., non-required coursework or tuition at other institutions not considered part of the Fellow's principal program of study), or that were incurred prior to the actual start of Fellowship (e.g., an admission application fee).

179. I am on Tenure; is my GRFP Institution permitted to charge me the difference between the COE and the required tuition and fees?

No. While on Tenure, Fellows are exempt from paying required tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing. Fellows are required to check with their GRFP institution about specific policies concerning their fellowship.

180. I am on Tenure; do I pay student fees?

While on Tenure, Fellows may be required to pay any fees or deposits that are refundable in whole or in part, that are optional (e.g., non-required coursework or tuition at other institutions not considered part of the Fellow's principal program of study), or that were incurred prior to the actual start of Fellowship (e.g., an admission application fee). Fellows are exempt from paying required tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing.

181. I am on Reserve; do I pay tuition and fees?

Fellows on Reserve may be required to pay required and/or optional tuition and fees normally charged to graduate students of similar academic standing. Fellows should check with their CO.

182. I am a veteran; may I also accept educational benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs?

Yes. Under Section 178(a) of Title 38, US Code, educational benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs may be received concurrently with Fellowship Support. The receipt of educational

benefits from the Veterans Administration is allowed by NSF as payment supplementary to Fellowship support.

FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES

183. How do I access the cyberinfrastructure resources through XSEDE?

Access to XSEDE resources is not automatic and requests must be for cyberinfrastructure resources in support of research undertaken toward completion of the graduate program of study. See https://www.xsede.org/ and Appendix II in the Guide.

184. My disability requires special assistance or equipment; is there funding available?

Fellows who have disabilities may apply for funding for special assistance or equipment through the Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASED) program. See http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/nsf04_23/2.jsp and Appendix VI in the Guide.

ACADEMIC/RESEARCH ADVISORS RESPONSIBILITIES

185. What are my advisor's responsibilities?

In coordination with the PI and CO, Fellows' Academic/Research Advisors have specific GRFP responsibilities: monitoring Fellows' degree progress; reviewing Fellows' Annual Activities Reports and verifying Fellows' satisfactory academic progress and continued eligibility by signing the Academic/Research Advisor Confirmation Form by May 1 each year; and recommending or approving, as appropriate, Fellows' participation in activities that require the Advisors' support.