

When Is the Deadline for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program? Your Complete Guide

July 22, 2022



[NSF GRFP details are subject to change, so be sure to consult NSF's official program solicitation for current information.](#)

Every year since 1952, the National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) has offered fellowships to US citizens, nationals, and permanent residents in the early stages of their scientific training—individuals who are enrolled in, or about to enter, a research-based Master's or PhD program in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM). APS encourages eligible psychological science students to apply for this significant and prestigious early career honor.

Here, we provide a complete overview of the award and how you can apply.

When is the NSF GRFP application deadline?

Deadlines for applications are in October of the year before the GRFP is awarded and depend on the

field of study. They are due by 5:00 PM in the timezone of the applicant's mailing address on the following days:

Fields of study	Deadline
Life Sciences	October 17, 2022 (Monday)
Psychology , Computer and Information Science and Engineering, Materials Research, Social Sciences, STEM Education and Learning Engineering	October 18, 2022 (Tuesday)
Chemistry, Geosciences, Mathematical Sciences, Physics and Astronomy	October 20, 2020 (Thursday)
	October 21, 2022 (Friday)

Applicants to any field of study must solicit three reference letters, which are due at 5:00 PM ET by the letter submission deadline date.

[NSF notes that dates are subject to change, so please visit the current program solicitation for the most up-to-date information.](#)

When are NSF GRFP decisions announced?

Applicants receive notification by e-mail in early April.

What does the NSF GRFP support?

The GRFP provides three years of funding in a full-time research-based Master's or doctoral degree program within an active fellowship period of up to five years. The yearly stipend is currently set at \$37,000 with a cost of education allowance of \$12,000, for a total anticipated funding amount of \$147,000. Active fellows can participate in professional development opportunities through the [Graduate Research Internship Program](#) (GRIP, working alongside scientists in federal agencies) or through NSF INTERN supplements (which can include internships in agencies, industry, nonprofits, think tanks, and national labs). This year, the GRFP will increase the number of awards to approximately 2,750 new awards across all STEM fields, along with somewhat fewer Honorable Mentions (a significant national honor that comes without funding).

The fellowships are portable and do not incur any service obligation. Fellows enrolled in a Master's program can continue their unused fellowship years in a PhD program, but must be continuously enrolled in an eligible graduate program during the fellowship period.

Who can apply for the NSF GRFP?

According to NSF, to be eligible to apply, you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident

- Be enrolled in or intend to enroll in a full-time research-based graduate program in a STEM or STEM education field at an institution in the US (or its territories, possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico)
- Have never earned a doctoral or terminal degree in any field
- Have never earned a master's, professional, or bachelor's-master's dual degree in any field unless there was an interruption of study of at least 2 years and you are not currently enrolled
- Have never previously accepted the GRFP award, or if offered an award, declined before the deadline
- Not be a current NSF employee

Undergraduate seniors and bachelor's degree holders not yet enrolled in a degree-granting graduate program can apply, so long as they are ready to begin their graduate program in the fall after they are awarded the fellowship. Applicants must be accepted into a program by May 1st the year the award is offered. If they do not receive the award and choose to delay graduate school, they can reapply to the GRFP. If they are offered an award but their plans for graduate school change, they cannot defer the award but can decline before the acceptance deadline without any penalty.

Once individuals are enrolled in *any* degree-granting graduate program, they are limited to one application submitted in their first year of graduate school or at the beginning of their second year. Note that the GRFP no longer counts individual graduate credits previously taken as a nonmatriculated student toward determining the eligibility of a graduate student enrolled in a degree-granting graduate program.

NSF encourages women, people of underrepresented minority groups, persons with disabilities, veterans, and undergraduate seniors to apply.

What graduate programs are eligible for the NSF GRFP?

The GRFP supports students in full-time, research-based, degree-granting graduate programs in the STEM and STEM education fields. NSF does not accept applications regarding practice-oriented professional degrees such as medical, dental, law, and public health. Research that is focused on clinical practice, counseling, social work, patient-oriented research, epidemiological and medical behavioral studies, outcomes research, and health services research is not eligible.

Eligible fields within psychology include: cognitive neuroscience, cognitive psychology, comparative psychology, computational psychology, developmental psychology, industrial/organizational, neuropsychology, perception and psychophysics, personality and individual differences, physiological psychology, psycholinguistics, social/affective neuroscience, quantitative psychology, and social psychology.

Many applicants are college seniors or postbaccalaureate individuals not yet enrolled in graduate school, so they do not yet know what degree program they will be enrolled in. **Applicants should select the "field of study" that most closely matches their planned research.** Note that this field of study (planned research) need not match the name of the graduate degree program, many of which are interdisciplinary. This means that students enrolled in clinical psychology degree programs can be

eligible for GRFP awards if their basic research in psychological science is on a topic that is not described as ineligible by NSF. From the GRFP solicitation ([NSF 19-590, published 7/30/19](#)):

Individuals are not eligible to apply if they will be enrolled in graduate study focused on clinical practice, counseling, social work, patient-oriented research, epidemiological and medical behavioral studies, outcomes research, and health services research. Ineligible study includes investigations to provide evidence leading to a scientific basis for consideration of a change in health policy or standard of care, and includes pharmacologic, non-pharmacologic, and behavioral interventions for disease prevention, prophylaxis, diagnosis, or therapy. Individuals pursuing graduate study focused on community, public, or global health, or other population-based research including medical intervention trials are also ineligible. Individuals are not eligible to apply if they will conduct research for which the goals are directly health-related, such as etiology, diagnosis, or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in humans and other animals. Research activities using animal models of disease, for developing or testing of drugs or other procedures for treatment of disease, and statistical modeling for which the purpose is diagnosis or epidemiology also are not eligible for support.

[\(Read more about APS's role in advocating for psychological science as an eligible field for the NSF GRFP here.\)](#)

What is required for the NSF GRFP application?

The application includes questions about personal information, education, work and other experience, transcripts, the proposed field(s) of study, and proposed graduate study and graduate school information. Applicants also write a personal statement of relevant background and future goals (three pages) and a graduate-research-plan statement (two pages).

Applicants should also provide three reference letters from nonfamily members. Reference letters are limited to two pages each and should address the applicant's intellectual merit and potential broader impacts on society.

[For an overview of information on the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program, click here.](#)

Want to learn more?

- [For Frequently Asked Questions about the NSF GRFP, click here.](#)
- [For the full NSF GRFP program solicitation, click here.](#)
- [To visit the NSF GRFP website, click here.](#)