Graduate Student Fellowships

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Types of Graduate Funding

- **Research Assistantships**
  - Funded by faculty’s research funding
  - Typically funded through proposal process

- **Teaching Assistantships**
  - Funded by department
  - Teaching-related responsibilities, separate from research

- **Graduate Fellowships**
What is a fellowship?

- Per IRS definition, it is an amount paid or allowed to, or for the benefit of, an individual to aid him/her in the pursuit of study or research
  - No services in return for the funding
  - To be used for study or research
  - No need to pay back
  - Often portable
  - Typically based on merit, not need
Why apply for a Fellowship?

- It’s a guaranteed source of funding—for a period of time
- Allows you to focus on your own studies/research
- Stipends are often higher than those of Research or Teaching Assistants
- Fellowships are often portable
  - more autonomy in selecting advisor, research project
- Fellowship can be path to a job (e.g., National Lab)
Two Types of Fellowships

- Awards directly to Students
  - Students compete directly for award
  - Award typically moves with the student if the student moves to a different university
  - May still have to be submitted by the institution on behalf of the student—OSP helps

- Awards to the Institution
  - Institution (faculty department, school) pick fellows/trainees
  - Can be need-based
Institutional Awards/Training Programs

- Awarded to departments, programs, etc.
- Students selected by department, program or faculty
- Funding may be tied to financial need of the student
- Examples:
  - Graduate Assistantships in Areas of National Need (GAANN)
  - NSF Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT)
  - NSF Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate
  - NIH NRSA Institutional Pre-doctoral Training Grant
Graduate Fellowship—Purpose/Timing

- General graduate work
- Early graduate career fellowships
- Dissertation Grants
- Travel/Field Work Grants
Graduate Fellowships—Examples

- **Dissertation Grants**
  - Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowships (humanities and social sciences; no citizenship requirement—up to $38k)
  - Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
    - Support for final year of dissertation at $25,000
    - Citizens and permanent residents only
    - Diversity component; minority status is one of the criteria for selection

- **After coursework completed**
  - Example: American Heart Association Fellowship (no citizenship requirement)

- **General graduate work**
  - Example: NSF GRFP (citizenship requirement)
Finding Potential Fellowships

- Fellowship programs often targeted based on
  - discipline
  - demographic group
    - Women,
    - minorities,
    - international students

- Excellent web resources available
  - Cornell: http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/?p=132
  - Agency/foundation websites
  - Pivot— http://pivot.cos.com/funding_main

- Talk to faculty and students in your department
Federal Fellowships

- Many federal agencies have fellowship programs
- Most (if not all) have citizenship or residency requirements
- Some of them submitted individually by the student
- Some of them are submitted by the institution
- They usually pay stipend, tuition and health insurance
- Most of them have to be submitted through some electronic, often agency-specific, system
- Websites; webinars explain the process
- OSP can help!
Federal Fellowships—Examples

- **National Science Foundation**
  - Three years at $32,000/year
  - Student applies directly

- **National Institutes of Health Fellowship Program (F31)**
  - Mentored research training
  - Apply through the institution

- **NASA EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE FELLOWSHIP (NESSF) PROGRAM**
  - Up to three years; $24,000 stipend/year
  - Institution applies on behalf of the student
  - More clearly defined subject area focus

- **EPA Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Fellowships for Graduate Environmental Study**

- **Department of Energy Computational Science Graduate Fellowship**
  - Up to 4 years with a stipend of $36,000/year

- **National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship**
  - About 200 new 3-year graduate fellowships awarded annually
  - Pursuing doctoral degree in, or closely related to a science or engineering discipline
Foundation Fellowships--Examples

- **American Heart Association (Founders Affiliate)**
  - Must have completed coursework
  - Students on a student visa are eligible to apply
  - Awards are for one or two years (total max. amount $46,000)
  - Have to be submitted by the institution—OSP!

- **Hertz Foundation Graduate Fellowship**
  - For applied physical, biological, and engineering sciences
  - Up to 5 years; $32,000/year
  - Citizens or residents
  - Portable, but school must be or become participating school

- **Microsoft Research Ph.D. Fellowships**
  - 2 years funding
  - Must be nominated by their university
  - computer science, electrical engineering, math
  - Payment to university; not portable
Dissertation Travel/Study Abroad Fellowships

- NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant
  - no citizenship requirement
  - partial support of doctoral dissertation research; participate in meeting; travel to field settings;
  - Up to $13,000 for up to 24 months; no salaries/stipends
  - Submitted by advisor through OSP

- Fulbright U.S. Student Program
  - All over the world
  - E.g., support for 10 months to study at Max Planck in Germany
  - U.S. Citizens only

- DAAD Research Grants
  - For study in Germany
  - For doctoral candidates
  - Don’t necessarily need to know German
  - 7 to 10 months
Funding for International Students

- American Association of University Women - International Fellowships.
  - $18,000-$30,000 awards to women graduate students studying in the United States who are not U.S. citizens.

- American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship

- HHMI International Student Research Fellowship
  - Supports years 3 to 5 of a Ph.D. program
  - Can only be nominated by institutions that have an HHMI investigator

- Fulbright International Science and Technology Award
  - Funding for 3 years; students must apply through their home countries

- Country of Origin-Specific Fellowships
  - Vietnam Education Foundation Fellowship Program
  - China Scholarship Council Graduate Fellowship Program
  - Iraqi Scholarship Initiative
Fellowships for Minorities

- Ford Foundation/National Academies
  - Three years at $21,000/year

- American Sociological Association - Minority Fellowship Program.
  - An annual stipend of $14,688 for up to three years
  - early stages of sociology graduate programs with emphasis on mental health

  - Up to $43,500 stipend for up to 24 months plus $10,000 in research support
  - to assist African-American graduate students in biological, chemical engineering fields
Fellowships for Women

- **American Association of University Women**
  - International Fellowships.
  - $18,000-$30,000 awards to women graduate students studying in the United States who are not U.S. citizens.

- **American Association of University Women**
  - Selected Professions Fellowships.
  - Approximately $5,000-12,000 awards for the final year of graduate study in historically under-represented professions, including Computer Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering.

- **Society of Women Engineers**
  - Small amounts; specific purpose, e.g., travel to conference
Typical Application Components

- Biographical information/Resume
- GRE scores
- Transcript
- Letters of Reference
- Essay/Proposal
  - Discussion of proposed research
  - May include discussion of one or more research experiences

- Follow guidelines to the letter!!!
Example: NSF Fellowship

- $32,000 per year plus $12,000 education allowance for 3 years
- Must be US Citizen or permanent resident
- May apply:
  - during undergrad senior year
  - prior to or during 1st year of grad school,
  - or at beginning of 2nd year of grad school
- Application by individual student
- Awarded to the institutions for the student
How to Apply for NSF Fellowship

- Read the guidelines and solicitation carefully
  - [https://www.nsforf.org/applicants](https://www.nsforf.org/applicants)

- Apply on-line using NSF’s FastLane system
  - [www.fastlane.nsf.gov](http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov)

- Parts of application
  - Graduate Research Plan Statement (2 pages)
  - Personal Relevant Background and Future Goals Statement (3 pages)
  - 3 Reference letters by reference deadline
  - Academic transcripts

- Pay attention to formatting guidelines—they are very important!!
  - “Failure to comply fully with these requirements will result in the application being returned without review. “
When applying, keep in mind!

– Read the solicitation/guidelines
– Analyze what the funder is looking for
  • Required components
  • Priority research areas
  • Broader impacts
– Follow the guidelines carefully
– Make a case for yourself and your project
– Have a peer or mentor read it
– Involve OSP early
  • If your proposal needs to be submitted by the institution
  • If you need help with a budget
  • If you need help accessing an electronic submission system
– Be aware of the deadline
Helpful Information

- OSP website: http://www.wpi.edu/offices/osp.html
- OSP contact information: http://www.wpi.edu/offices/osp/staff.html