

Utah State University Presidential Doctoral Research Fellows

Program Guidebook

Revision Date: August 28, 2013

Introduction.....	3
The Award	3
Stipend.....	3
Tuition Award	3
Subsidized Graduate Student Health Insurance.....	3
Student Fees.....	4
Yearly Agreement	4
Changes to Fellowship Status.....	4
Leave of Absence/Fellowship Hold	4
Leaving the Program	4
Forfeiture of the Award	4
Responsibilities.....	5
Responsibilities of the Fellow	5
Responsibilities of the Fellow’s Mentor.....	5
Responsibilities of the Fellow’s Home Department and/or College	5
Responsibilities of the Associate Vice President for Graduate and Undergraduate Research	6
Responsibilities of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.....	6
Allocation & Funding Model for the Program.....	6
Allocation of the Fellowships.....	6
College Allocation	7
RGS Allocation of the “At-Large” Fellowship	7
Recruitment.....	7
Graduate School Recruiting Toolkit.....	7
Graduate Student and PDRF Recruiting Grants.....	8
RGS Publicity Resources	8
Eligibility.....	9
Admissions	9
Step 1. Application to Utah State University Graduate School.....	9
Step 2. Notification of PDRF applicant.....	9
Step 3. Eligibility Review	9
Step 4. Department Review	9
Step 5. Notification of PDRF Award to Applicant.....	10
Step 6. Accept/Decline.....	10
Contacts.....	11
Program Coordinator	11
Publicity and Marketing.....	11

Introduction

The Presidential Doctoral Research Fellows program is administered by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and is designed to support exceptional graduate research and mentoring through recruitment, retention, and training of world-class doctoral students. Each awarded fellowship constitutes a commitment of resources and responsibilities from awarding (RGS, college/department) and receiving (PDRF) parties, and this document delineates those commitments.

The Award

The Presidential Doctoral Research Fellowship includes a stipend, a tuition award, and health insurance.

Stipend

Each PDRF receives a four-year fellowship with an annual financial stipend of at least \$20,000. A college, department, or program may augment the stipend, but no PDRF will receive less than \$20,000 each year.

Tuition Award

Guidelines for tuition awards are as follows:

- Domestic Students.
 - *Utah Resident*: Tuition awards covering 100% of university tuition costs associated with program of study during the four-year period of the fellowship will be provided.
 - *Nonresident*: In a student's first year, the PDRF tuition award will cover the non-resident portion of university tuition. However, domestic non-resident PDRF students are expected to become residents of Utah after their first 12 months on campus. Thus, the nonresident portion of university tuition will **not** be awarded to domestic students after their first year. Residency requirements are outlined in the [USU catalog](#).
- International Students: The PDRF program tuition award pays nonresident and resident university tuition costs for international students over the full length of the program (four years).
- Program of Study: Tuition awards may only be applied towards credits for courses listed on the student's program of study, including courses taken during the summer.
- Late Adds: Tuition awards will **not** be applied to credit for courses added after the 15th day of the term. (i.e., "Late adds" will not be covered by the tuition award component of the PDRF program.)
- Full-Time Status: To remain active, PDRFs must be full-time students, as defined by the [university catalog](#), during fall and spring semesters.

Subsidized Graduate Student Health Insurance

USU has instituted a policy to provide insurance to graduate students with a graduate fellowship or scholarship of \$10,000 or more. A PDRF is therefore

required to carry the insurance unless the fellow provides proof of coverage through another insurance policy that is comparable or better than the plan offered through Utah State University. The cost for this insurance is the responsibility of the student's college, department, or program. Please see <http://rgs.usu.edu/spo/htm/proposal-preparation/graduate-student-insurance/> for more details on the graduate insurance plan or how to request a waiver.

Student Fees

Student fees are the responsibility of the student. Fees are listed on the [tuition and fee schedule](#).

Yearly Agreement

Each fall, a yearly agreement will be generated by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and will require the signature of the fellow, the fellow's advisor and department head, and the PDRF program coordinator. The PDRF yearly agreement will include:

- A validation of good standing in the program.
- The precise financial award amount, any work requirements, and payment schedule.
- The source(s) and conditions of the portion of the financial award that is not coming from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
- The remaining available credits of the tuition award.
- The number of years remaining for the fellowship.

Changes to Fellowship Status

Leave of Absence/Fellowship Hold

The Presidential Doctoral Research Fellowship may be put on hold with a written request by the awardee. The department, faculty mentor, and Presidential Doctoral Research Fellows program coordinator must approve the request for a leave from the fellowship.

Leaving the Program

A PDRF can withdraw from the program by written request to the program coordinator.

If a fellow leaves the program prior to completing his or her PhD, the RGS portion of the fellowship financial award and the tuition award cease. Any unused portion of the RGS award may not be transferred by the college, department, or program to another student.

Forfeiture of the Award

Fellows may forfeit their fellowships by failing to meet expectations at the department or university level. In this case, the remainder of the RGS portion of the fellowship stipend and tuition award will return to the RGS Office.

Responsibilities

As the top graduate fellowship at USU, the PDRF includes several responsibilities for the fellow, as well as mentors and administrators, to best ensure the fellows' academic success.

Responsibilities of the Fellow

- Provide the program coordinator information about any change of status that might affect his or her eligibility for the Fellowship.
- Support graduate and undergraduate research by being engaged in research-related department, college, and university events.
- Make satisfactory progress towards his/her degree, documented in a written report each semester detailing research progress. Report should be submitted to the faculty mentor, with a copy submitted to the program coordinator.
- Complete the graduate student [grant-writing workshop](#) within the first year of study.
- Apply for external support (e.g., NSF, NIH grants), if available, within the first two years of study. (NSF Graduate Research Fellows, for example, are required by NSF to apply within the first year of study.)
- Complete USU's [Research Scholars Certification Program](#).
- Participate annually in the [Graduate Student Research Symposium](#) (e.g., poster or oral presentation in a special PDRF session), which is held during Research Week.
- Obtain at least one semester of teaching experience during his/her degree program at Utah State University.
- Gain experience in mentoring undergraduate researchers.
- Serve as an ambassador for the program by, for example, meeting with prospective graduate students or with invited speakers, as requested.

Responsibilities of the Fellow's Mentor

- With his/her fellow, meet at least once per academic year with the Associate Vice President for Graduate and Undergraduate Research to discuss program experiences, needs, and challenges.
- Advise fellows.
- Monitor PDRF progress toward his or her degree.
- Provide an annual written evaluation of the progress of the PDRF to the program coordinator.

Responsibilities of the Fellow's Home Department and/or College

- Provide feedback to the program coordinator.
- Support overarching PDRF program goals.
- Fund subsidized graduate student health insurance.
- Provide matching funds for the stipend at the level described in the "Allocation & Funding Model" section of this guidebook.

Responsibilities of the Associate Vice President for Graduate and Undergraduate Research

- Identify and communicate opportunities for PDRFs (e.g., funding mechanisms, training workshops, presentation opportunities, etc.).
- Connect university resources inside and outside of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies to promote success among the PDRFs.
- Oversee the PDRF selection process and communication on awards.
- Organize a Fall Semester general meeting of all Fellows.
- Coordinate financial award.
- Coordinate with colleges, departments, and PDRF mentors.

Responsibilities of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies

- Distribute and collect the signed yearly agreement to each PDRF, the PDRF's advisor, and the PDRF's department chair.
- Provide programming opportunities through its various divisions.
 - Research Scholar Certification Program
 - IRB/IACUC (human and animal research subjects) training
 - Grant-writing workshop
- Support marketing and publicity of PDRF accomplishments.

Allocation & Funding Model for the Program

Allocation of the Fellowships

Ten Presidential Doctoral Research Fellowships will be awarded each year. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies will award one fellowship, and the other nine will be allocated to six colleges based on the number of doctoral students in those colleges. The allocation model, shown below, is based on doctoral student enrollment and will be re-evaluated every other year.

For FY2012 and FY2013, the annual allocation is:

	Total Doctoral Students (%)	PDRF Allocation
College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences	10.1	1
Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services	38.0	2
College of Engineering	22.6	2
College of Humanities and Social Sciences	2.7	1
S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources	8.5	1
College of Science	18.1	2
Office of Research and Graduate Studies (at-large)	N/A	1

The PDRF Program was established in FY2013 with a stipend funding that allowed RGS to bolster funding by sharing the costs for each new fellowship with

colleges/departments/programs. Over time, the RGS portion funds diminish, while funding from colleges/departments/programs increases, until the costs are shared equally. This is illustrated in the following table:

Year	RGS Portion	Match ¹
FY2013	\$18,000	\$2,000
FY2014	\$16,000	\$4,000
FY2015	\$14,000	\$6,000
FY2016	\$12,000	\$8,000
FY2017	\$10,000	\$10,000

Minimum match requirement. A college, department, or program may augment the stipend, but no PDRF will receive less than \$20,000 each year. These matching funds can come from college, department, program, or individual PI. This funding may include assistantships.

College Allocation

The dean of each college will decide which department, program, or faculty in the college will be allowed to use a fellowship to recruit a new doctoral student. Information about the allocation of fellowships within each college should be provided to the program coordinator by the last Friday in August.

RGS Allocation of the “At-Large” Fellowship

The 10th PDRF will be allocated to an individual department selected by the RGS executive team. Once allocated, the department will be empowered to deploy the fellowship as it sees fit (e.g., to a program, individual faculty member, etc.).

Any department that offers a PhD program may apply for the “at-large” fellowship. Application procedures will be distributed to department heads each August.

Recruitment

Presidential Doctoral Research Fellowships should be viewed as a “hunting license” for finding the best and brightest students to attract to our graduate programs. Therefore, success in recruiting high quality candidates for the fellowship is absolutely critical. The timing of the allocation (i.e., early in fall semester) is designed to encourage colleges, departments, and individual faculty members to recruit—and secure a commitment—early, by leveraging the fellowship to identify, recruit, and enroll world-class doctoral students.

Given the importance of recruiting, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies has put in place three key resources.

- [The Graduate School Recruiting Toolkit](#)
- Graduate student, as well as PDRF-specific, recruiting grants
- RGS Publicity Resources

Graduate School Recruiting Toolkit

[The Graduate School Recruitment Toolkit](#) is a resource designed to help departments increase the quality, quantity, or diversity of graduate students in their

programs. Recruiting is best done by faculty, alumni, and current graduate students because they are able to provide the most detailed description of a program's curriculum, participant experiences, and career choices, and answer other questions prospects may have. The toolkit is divided into two parts: a summary of best practices compiled from other research universities to help departments design an effective recruitment strategy for their programs, and a section that provides details on specific USU resources to help them implement a strategy.

Graduate Student and PDRF Recruiting Grants

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies offers graduate student recruiting grants of up to \$1,500 to support program activities that “directly contribute to the recruitment of high quality graduate students.”

An additional pool of recruitment funds has been set aside for PDRF recruiting. Each PDRF slot will have access to \$500 of funds (requiring a 1:1 match) for identifying and/or recruiting outstanding candidates for the program.

A wide range of activities is eligible for support. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Travel for faculty or current graduate students who will give recruiting talks at out-of-state recruitment fairs, professional conferences, or “feeder” institutions.
- Bringing prospective students to the USU campus.
- Development or distribution of recruiting materials (e.g., conference program ads, video podcasts of current student research for a program’s website or program brochure development, posters for distribution at conferences or by mail, etc.).

Application instructions for a Graduate Student Recruitment grant are available [online](#).

To apply for PDRF-specific recruiting funds, departments should provide:

1. A brief (no more than 1 page) statement that describes the planned recruiting activities and the anticipated outcomes.
2. A budget that details:
 - All expenditures involved.
 - Source of matching funds.

Please email your requests to Scott Bates (Scott.Bates@usu.edu) and Jeff Broadbent (jeff.broadbent@usu.edu). RGS staff will review applications and provide a response as quickly as possible (usually within one week).

There is no deadline for these recruiting grants funds; they can be accessed on demand.

RGS Publicity Resources

The RGS Communications team can assist with all aspects of the creation of recruiting materials (brochures, flyers, web resources), from writing, to graphic

design and print management. Requests for materials should be made well in advance to facilitate an effective production process. The Communications team can also consult on other marketing channels for recruiting, including placed ads, graduate fairs, and social media.

Eligibility

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies determines fellowship eligibility criteria in consultation with the deans of the doctoral granting colleges and the Graduate Council. Those requirements are:

- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- Admissions examination (typically, GRE) scores at the 70th percentile or higher. Additional notes regarding admissions examination scores follow:
 - If the admissions examination has been taken multiple times, the highest percentile in each subtest can be considered.
 - For the GRE, scores at the 70th percentile in two of the three subtests are deemed eligible.
 - For the GRE, the average of two of the three subtests must meet or exceed the 70th percentile. If the admissions examination has been taken multiple times, the highest percentile in each subtest can be considered.

Admissions

The admission process will be handled slightly differently than the standard process.

Step 1. Application to Utah State University Graduate School

Prospects who are interested in formalizing their offers of the fellowship must [apply](#) to the graduate program of their choice.

Step 2. Notification of PDRF applicant

Departments must notify the PDRF program coordinator in the Office of Research and Graduate Studies when an applicant to its program is their nominee for the fellowship.

Step 3. Eligibility Review

Once the prospect completes his or her application (step 1), and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies is notified of their application to the PDRF program (step 2), eligibility criteria will be confirmed by the School of Graduate Studies. Then, the college, department head, and faculty mentor will be notified of the outcome by the PDRF program coordinator.

Step 4. Department Review

The department will review the candidate for admission and will then notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies of its decision.

Step 5. Notification of PDRF Award to Applicant

The Associate Vice President of Graduate and Undergraduate Research will send an email to recipients of the fellowship that outlines the award and its expectations, and provides instructions for setting up payment, establishing residency, etc. Departments and faculty mentors will be included in official communications between the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and the applicant.

Step 6. Accept/Decline

Each PDRF applicant will be asked to accept or decline the offer of the fellowship.

If the student accepts the fellowship, then additional materials will be sent to the applicant. If the applicant declines the fellowship or declines admission to Utah State University, the fellowship reverts to control of the college, department, or faculty member that was identified in the allocation processes outlined above, and a new prospect can be identified and an offer made.

Contacts

Program Coordinator

Scott Bates, Ph.D., Associate Dean and Associate Vice President, Office of Research and Graduate Studies, (435) 797-2975, Scott.Bates@usu.edu, Old Main 164d.

Publicity and Marketing

Anna McEntire, Director of Communications, Office of Research and Graduate Studies, (435) 797-7680, Anna.McEntire@usu.edu, ECC108a.