2024/2025 Academic Year

Guidelines for Fellowship and Award Programs for Graduate Education
in the College of Agricultural Sciences (CAS)

To support the recruitment of outstanding graduate students for the 2024/25 academic year, we will utilize the Graduate Awards Tracking System (GRATS) created by the Graduate School to include both CAS and Graduate School Awards. Each of the funding opportunities are designed to enhance the **recruitment** of exceptionally talented graduate students by strengthening program capacity to make competitive offers.

Awarding of the fellowships and awards will be based on academic excellence as well as research potential and thus, the nominee's academic records will be reviewed as criteria for selection. This may include (as applicable) applications, transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation, and the student's career or goal statement as provided to the Graduate Admission Decisions System (GRADS).

All awards, to include both CAS and Graduate School funding, will be managed through GRATS. The nominees must be advised by CAS faculty. Programs will be responsible for entering their nominations in GRATS (instructions below) as appropriate and must upload a one-page Letter of Nomination, written by the Head of the Graduate Program, as a pdf via the GRATS Nomination Screen. This letter should include:
1) a bulleted list of two to five reasons to support the nomination - rationale should be related to the scholarly record and/or research potential;
2) any new, novel supplemental information to support and justify the nomination, do not repeat information available through the GRADs system; and
3) guarantee of second year support, assuming the student is making satisfactory academic progress.

The Graduate School is working diligently to incorporate all the Intercollege Graduate Degree Programs (IGDP) into GRATS for the college's consideration; however, at this time, *only* nominations from CAS Graduate Programs and ECLGY can be entered. Huck IGDP students advised by CAS faculty are *strongly* encouraged to have their nomination submitted through their respective program as funding is provided directly by the Graduate School. If consideration for an IGDP student is desired, please reach out to graded@psu.edu to discuss the situation on a case-by-case basis.

Nominations should be completed and entered into the GRATS no later than **Monday, January 29, 2024**. Submissions that are received by the deadline will be given first consideration; late submissions will be accepted and maintained but will only be considered if funding remains. A team of four faculty members will review all nominations, providing three reviews per submission. Reviews will be conducted by Monday, February 12 and decisions will be entered into the GRATS the *week of February 19*.

Program	Eligibility	Award
University Graduate Fellowship[1]	Available to outstanding new full-time PhD students If funding is available, the top ranked UGF nominee will be recommended for a Distinguished Graduate Fellowship.	Provides a total of $31,500 for fellowship and tuition for Fall and Spring. These recipients will also receive $5,000 for the following academic year to maintain the funding threshold.
Black Endowed Graduate Fellowship[1]	Available to outstanding new full-time MS student.	Provides a total of $27,500 for fellowship and tuition for Fall and Spring.
Bunton-Waller Graduate Award	Available to outstanding underrepresented new full-time MS and PhD students; *preference to students from SROP and/or McNair programs*. Nominees must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents who will enhance the diversity of the grad student body. *Year 1 support for both PhD and MS provided by the Graduate School. Year 2 support for both PhD and MS provided by the Program with top-up from the College. For PhD, years 3-5 provided by the Program with additional scholarship top-up from the Graduate School.	MS award provides two semesters grade 14 (minimal), half-time stipend and two semesters tuition.* PhD award provides two semesters grade 18 (minimal) half-time stipend and two semesters full tuition for first year.*

Program	Eligibility	Award
T. Donaldson Endowed Award for Excellence *****NEW for FA24/SP25*****	Available to outstanding new full-time MS and PhD students exhibiting academic excellence and research potential.	Provides a total of $5000 for Fall and Spring as a scholarship.
FEGR Stipend Supplement	Available to all qualifying or eligible new MS and PhD students. Stipend Supplements can be used to enable more competitive funding offers for incoming students.	MS award provides stipend top-up to grade 14, half time assistantship for two semesters. PhD award provides stipend top-up to grade 18, half time assistantship for two semesters.
Graham Endowed Award	Available to outstanding new full-time MS and PhD students.	Provides a total of $4,000 for Fall and Spring as a scholarship.
Watershed Stewardship Award (McKenna and Scarlett)	Available to outstanding full time MS and PhD students whose area of study relates to environmental stewardship, water, or watershed conservation.	Provides a total of $4,000 for Fall and Spring as a scholarship.
Raphael Educational Equity Graduate Award	Available to Full-time MS and PhD students exhibiting academic excellence. *Restricted to students contributing to the diversity of the student body.*	Provides a total of $4,500 for Fall and Spring as a scholarship.

[1] Recipients of fellowships (i.e., DGF, UGF, Black) cannot receive any form of stipend supplements (i.e., FEGR)

NOTE: The Penn State Extension Graduate Assistantship Program is paused and is NOT available for the FA24/SP25 academic year.

Graduate Student Recruiting: Funds have been received to offset program expenses for graduate student recruiting. The Head of the Graduate Program should submit recruitment fund requests to the Office for Research and Graduate Education (graded@psu.edu) providing the name of the visiting student, program of interest, and anticipated travel dates. **The Office for Research and Graduate Education will provide up to $300 for each student.** Fund requests will be accepted on an ongoing basis until funding is expended.

In addition, requests for recruitment packages (folders containing college-specific information) or 'swag' items should be sent to graded@psu.edu and will be available on a first-come basis while supplies last. In addition to the number, please provide a list of the student names, their anticipated program, and the date(s) of their visit.

Entering Nominations into GRADS and GRATS:
- Log into GRADS (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/app/grads/)
- Select the student you would like to nominate
- Select the Rating/Ranking & Funding tab near the top of the screen
- Click the Nominate Applicant box
- Upload the supporting Letter of Nominations
- Click on the "Submit Nomination" button near the bottom right-hand side of the screen
- Enter GRATS, by clicking on the GRATS link near the top right-hand side of the screen
- Select the pencil icon beside the name of the desired student and enter the awards you wish to nominate the student for consideration. Please note that you may offer more than one award. Some awards will require more than one entry (i.e., covering FA24, SP25, etc.).