



Administrative Guide for the

2012 POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS IN BIOLOGY Program

June 2012

National Science Foundation
Directorate for Biological Sciences
Division of Biological Infrastructure

NSF 12-089

FOREWORD

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

The Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology (PRFB) Program awards Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology to recent recipients of the doctoral degree for research and training in selected areas supported by BIO and with special goals for human resource development in biology. Additional information on the program may be found at http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503622&org=DBI&from=home.

This Guide outlines the administrative policies and procedures for Fellows and PRFB Institutions and incorporates all policies found in the Fellowship Offer Letter and the annual PRFB Program Solicitation. This guide does not supersede the award letter terms and conditions. The current Guide applies to the 2012 Fellowship year forward, unless otherwise noted or superseded by an updated version. **Please note that the Fellowship Terms and Conditions are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the Fellow and the PRFB Host Institution to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Fellowship Program.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMON ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, TERMS, LINKS, AND CONTACTS	1
ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE	3
Deadlines	3
INTRODUCTION	4
FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES	4
Fellowship Acceptance and Degree Certification	4
Entrance upon Tenure	4
Responsible Conduct of Research	4
Use of Vertebrate Animals	5
Use of Human Subjects	5
Acknowledgement of NSF Support	6
Sharing of Findings, Data and Other Research Products	6
Reporting Requirements	6
Annual Activities Report	6
Final Project Report	7
Project Outcomes Report	7
Additional Reports	7
Change in Research Plan	7
Communication	7
HOST INSTITUTION	7
Sponsoring Scientist	8
Change of Host Institution	8
FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS	8
Tenure Status	8
Medical Deferral Status	9

Military Deferral Status	9
Paid Teaching	9
Vacations	9
FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION AND TERMINATION	10
FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS	10
Stipend	10
Fellowship Allowance	10
Income Tax	11
Travel	11
Stipend Supplementation	11
Health Insurance	12
Veteran's Benefits	12
Future Employment	12
Federal and/or Armed Forces Employees	12
Liability	12
Rights to Inventions or Writings	12
Referrals to the NSF Office of the Inspector General	13
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	13
Foreign Tenure	13
Foreign Travel	13
FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES	14
Additional Opportunities	14
AWARD MANAGEMENT APPENDICES	15
I. PRFB Program Solicitation Excerpts	15
II. Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities	17

COMMON ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, TERMS, LINKS, AND CONTACTS

Active	Fellow within the two or three-year Fellowship Period, not completed or terminated.
AAG	NSF Award and Administration Guide ; contains official NSF policies on awards.
Completed	Inactive Fellow with no Tenure years left
Continuing Fellow	Active Fellow in good standing with time left on the Fellowship
Deferral	Only approved for Military/Medical – there is no other deferral of the Fellowship
FASED	Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities
Fellow	Active NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology Fellow
Fellow ID	Fellow Identification Number assigned in Fastlane; e.g., 2010123456
Forfeit	Active Fellow on Tenure, or beyond the two-year Reserve limit, who is not eligible to receive PRFB financial support
GPG	NSF Grant Proposal Guide; contains official NSF policies on grants.
Host Institution	Research institution where Fellow is working
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
Month	14 or more days in a calendar month
NCE	No-cost extension; relevant only in cases of fellowship deferral
New Fellow	Accepted Fellowship Offer and starting the first Fellowship Year
NSF	National Science Foundation
OMB	White House Office of Management and Budget
PAPP-G	Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide
PI	Principal Investigator
Program Office	NSF unit responsible for PRFB program management and oversight
PO	Program Officer, the person who oversees your grant
PRFB	Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology
Stipend	Fellowship payment to Fellows on Tenure; prorated in whole-month increments
Tenure	Active Fellow in good standing
Terminated	Fellowship discontinued by NSF or Fellow

NSF Documents and Publications

Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide: [NSF 11-001](#)

PRFB Program Solicitation: [NSF 11-499](#)

Contacts

For Competitive Areas 1 and 2:

PRFB Program Office: bio-dbi-prfb@nsf.gov

DBI/BIO, Room 615

National Science Foundation

4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA 22230

Phone: 703 292 8470; Fax: 703 292 9063

For Competitive Area 3

NPGI PRF Program Office: dbipgr@nsf.gov

IOS/BIO, Room 685

National Science Foundation

4201 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA 22230

Phone: 703 292 4400; Fax: 703 292 9062

ANNUAL PROGRAM CYCLE

PRFP operates on an annual cycle. The following are critical dates for administrative actions:

- March/April Program Office makes new fellowship offers.
- May 1 New Fellow
- Accept/Decline Fellowship Offer
 - Verify contact information, host institution, start date in FastLane
 - Submit descriptive short title and abstract for fellowship work
 - Obtain IRB or IACUC certifications if appropriate
- Summer Program Office
- Official notification of award
- June 1-Jan 1 New Fellow Starting Fellowship
- Submit Postdoctoral Fellow Degree Certification form
 - Submit Faststart Direct Deposit Form (NSF [Form 1379](#))
 - Submit Fellowship Starting Certificate (NSF [Form 349](#)) when fellowship begins.
- Annually Continuing Fellow
- Submit Annual Report via FastLane
 - Verify Contact information in FastLane
 - Updated IACUC certification if needed
- Anytime All Fellows
- Submit change requests for tenure-status, or area of study by e-mail
 - Submit requests for foreign travel by e-mail
 - Submit starting certificates (NSF [Form 349](#)) for host institutions
- Program Office
- Review and approve/disapprove Fellow requests.
- Termination All Fellows
- Submit final report *via* FastLane
 - Submit Project Outcomes Report *via* Research.gov
 - Email signed termination certificate (NSF [Form 453](#)) for host institution
- Program Office
- Review and approve/disapprove the final report

This information outlines the terms and conditions of your National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology for FY 2012 and provides general information for use during your tenure. Read it carefully and refer to it whenever you have a question about your fellowship. NSF and your host institution will thus be able to serve you more quickly and efficiently, and unnecessary correspondence will be avoided.

As a recipient of NSF funds, you are responsible for fulfilling the academic and fiscal obligations of your award. Failure on your part to observe all the terms and conditions of this Fellowship award constitutes sufficient grounds for its revocation by and repayment to the Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

Your National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology has been awarded by the National Science Foundation in recognition of your accomplishments to date, and with the expectation that the experience you obtain during the tenure of your fellowship will increase your scientific competence and the scientific potential of the United States.

FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellowship Acceptance and Degree Certification

NSF expects that you will begin fellowship activities on the effective date of your fellowship shown in your notice of award but not later than January 1, 2013. If you are not able to begin tenure by this date, you must contact the program officer and you may decline the fellowship. This declination will not prejudice any future application.

Before you may begin your Postdoctoral Fellowship, NSF must have on record a certification of receipt of the doctoral degree and the date of receipt. If the degree is not received prior to the starting date of tenure, you must submit evidence that all requirements for the degree have been completed before beginning fellowship tenure.

Entrance upon Tenure

You start the fellowship by submitting a Fellowship Starting Certificate, [NSF Form 349](#) (06/2009). Fellowships may be started only on the first of the month. To expedite your stipend and allowance payments, you should either fax or email your signed starting certificate on the day you begin your fellowship (or the next day if the first of the month falls on a weekend or Federal holiday) to the program office. We do not consider your fellowship to have started until we receive your starting certificate and cannot authorize payments until it is received. If you affiliate with more than one institution over the course of the fellowship, a Starting Certificate is required for each portion of tenure.

Responsible Conduct of Research

It is the responsibility of the Fellow, in conjunction with the Host Institution, to ensure that all academic and research activities carried out in or outside the U.S. comply with the laws or regulations of the U.S. and/or of the foreign country in which the academic and/or research activities are conducted. These include appropriate human subject, animal welfare, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other regulations or laws, as appropriate. All academic

and research activities should be coordinated with the appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities, and necessary licenses, permits, or approvals must be obtained prior to undertaking the proposed activities.

A number of situations frequently encountered in the conduct of research require special information and supporting documentation before starting tenure. These include research involving:

1. an actual and/or potential impact on the environment;
2. a registered historic or cultural property;
3. the use of in vitro generated recombinant DNA molecules;
4. the use of human subjects, hazardous materials, vertebrate animals, or endangered species.

You must provide information on the status of any special permissions, clearances or provision related to the above items **before** an award notice can be issued. Assessment of environmental impact will be required when appropriate. Specific guidance on the need for such additional documentation may be obtained from your host institution's Research Administration Office or the NSF Award & Administration Guide.

Use of Vertebrate Animals

The Fellow is responsible for the humane care and treatment of any vertebrate animals used or intended for use in such activities as field or laboratory research, development, training, experiments, biological testing or for related purposes supported by NSF grants. The NSF [Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II.D.6](#) outlines the PI's responsibilities with regard to proposals involving vertebrate animals. In accordance with these requirements, fellowship projects involving use of any vertebrate animal for research or education must be approved by the submitting organization's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before an award can be made. For this approval to be accepted by NSF, the organization must have a current Public Health Service (PHS) Approved Assurance.

The fellow needs to provide this PHS number AND get an IACUC approval letter as an amendment which adds you, the project PI, onto the approval for your sponsoring scientist's lab. This letter must contain your name and the **exact title** of your project. These amendments are generally applicable for a year, so you may need to send in a new approval each year of your grant. If the host institution does not already have a PHS approval or you are working overseas, please contact your program officer for determining the next steps.

Use of Human Subjects

The Fellow must ensure that subjects are protected from research risks in conformance with the relevant federal policy known as the Common Rule (*Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects*, 45 CFR 690). The NSF [Grant Proposal Guide Chapter II.D.7](#) outlines the PI's responsibilities with regard to proposals involving human subjects. All projects involving human subjects must either (1) have approval from the organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before issuance of an NSF award or, (2) must affirm that the IRB has declared the research exempt from IRB review.

The fellow needs to provide the IRB approval or exemption letter with the name of the project PI. This letter must contain your name and the **exact title** of your project. If the project is to be performed outside of the U.S., evidence of IRB approval is required.

Acknowledgement of NSF Support

All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF PRFB Support:

"This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology under Grant No. (NSF grant number)."

NSF support should also be orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

You are also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including World Wide Web pages) based on or developed under this award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following disclaimer:

"Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation."

You also are responsible for assuring that your cognizant NSF Program Officer is provided access to, either electronically or in paper form, a copy of every publication of material based on or developed under this award, clearly labeled with the award number and other appropriate identifying information, promptly after publication.

Sharing of Findings, Data and Other Research Products

NSF expects significant findings from research and education activities it supports to be promptly submitted for publication, with authorship that accurately reflects the contributions of those involved. It expects Fellows to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the data, samples, physical collections and other supporting materials created or gathered in the course of the work. It also encourages Fellows to share software and inventions or otherwise act to make the innovations they embody widely useful and usable.

Adjustments and, where essential, exceptions may be allowed to safeguard the rights of individuals and subjects, the validity of results, or the integrity of collections or to accommodate legitimate interests of NSF-supported Fellows.

Reporting Requirements

Annual and final project reports in FastLane are required. Interim reports may be submitted at any time in FastLane.

Annual Activities Report

You are required to submit an annual project report electronically via the NSF FastLane system. Annual project reports are due at the end of each 12 month award period, except the final one. FastLane provides a format for annual reports that includes scientific progress,

educational and outreach activities, and broader impacts. Please also address progress on your training goals. You may attach other materials as you wish. The final annual report serves as the project's final report and must be submitted as described below.

Final Project Report

You must submit a Final Project Report within 90 days following the expiration date of the award. If you have other feedback not covered in the standardized format, please feel free to attach it to the final report or email it to the Program Officer.

Project Outcomes Report

You must submit a project outcomes report for the general public electronically via Research.gov within 90 days following expiration of the grant. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. Outcomes report requirement guidelines may be found in the [AAG Chapter II.E.3](#).

Additional Reports

NSF may periodically ask you to respond to questionnaires or other inquiries as a part of the follow-up activities of the program. Minimally, we would like to track each of our Fellows over a ten-year period with respect to positions, grants received, lists of publications, and research related honors and awards. Please update your contact information in FastLane after completion of the fellowship and keep NSF up-to-date on your continuing role in science.

Change in Research Plan

You must request prior approval from the Program Officer for any major change in your research and training plan proposed in your original or revised application. However, minor changes may be made at your discretion and with the concurrence of your sponsoring scientist. If you are considering major changes, you should outline and justify them in full in an email to the Program Officer who will determine if the revised research and training plan falls within the intent of the award prior to granting approval.

Communication

PRFB communications are conducted predominately by e-mail. Therefore, it is the Fellow's responsibility to keep their Contact Information, (especially e-mail addresses and phone numbers) up to date. Fellows completing their Fellowships should update their contact information to allow the Program Office to contact them in the future.

To contact the Program Office, Fellows should e-mail bio-dbi-prfb@nsf.gov (Competitive Areas 1 & 2) or dbipgr@nsf.gov (Competitive Area 3) and include his or her full name, Fellow ID, and details of the issue or request. Please ensure spam filters do not block the NSF PRFB email address. The Program will follow-up with Fellows, *via* e-mail or phone, depending on the nature of the request.

HOST INSTITUTION

By law, as a Fellow, you must affiliate with an appropriate research institution during the entire fellowship tenure. You are responsible for making all arrangements for such affiliation with the

host institution. A clear relationship should be established with the chosen institution before beginning tenure, to assure both you and the Foundation that it will be possible for you to carry out the program of research and training for which the fellowship was awarded. Therefore, you should share information about your fellowship (e.g., a copy of the award notice and this instruction booklet) with both your sponsoring scientist and administrative personnel at your host institution. They may have no experience with NSF fellowships and may not be familiar with the special conditions of fellowships versus research grants and cooperative agreements.

Sponsoring Scientist

Your application named a staff member(s) at the host institution(s) to serve as your sponsoring scientist(s). The sponsoring scientist will be the institutional representative responsible for your activities during the fellowship and must sign your starting and termination certificates in this role unless your host institution has other requirements for signatures or your sponsoring scientist is absent in which case an appropriate official of the host institution may sign. If you have arranged co-sponsorship, only one sponsoring scientist at each location needs to sign the certificates.

Any questions relating to your status at the host institution, which cannot be answered by your sponsoring scientist, should be referred for resolution to other appropriate officials within the host institution, such as a department chair, dean, or a designated institutional representative.

Change of Host Institution

If it becomes necessary or desirable to affiliate with an institution other than the one listed in the application and/or with a different sponsoring scientist, you must request permission in writing (email is fine) from your NSF Fellowship program officer prior to making the change. The request must state the reasons for the proposed change and explain the appropriateness of the new institution for the proposed plan of study. The request must contain a new sponsoring scientist's statement using the format from the FastLane fellowship instructions as in the original application, including the new sponsor's CV. This must be done before final arrangements with the new institution are completed. You may not begin tenure at the new institution until your program officer approves all changes.

If the change in institutions is because your sponsoring scientist is moving to a new institution, an email explaining the move will suffice as long as the new institution provides you the same or equivalent opportunities to conduct the research and receive your planned training.

FELLOWSHIP STATUS OPTIONS

Tenure Status

The Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology are awarded for a 24-month or 36-month continuous period. The maximum tenure of your fellowship is 36 months, barring any extension as outlined below. If the fellowship start is delayed beyond the effective date stated in the award notice, NSF may grant a no-cost extension to cover the delay and permit the full tenure. You (as an individual registered in FastLane) must request the extension through FastLane. The sponsored research office at your host institution cannot grant a no-cost extension to your fellowship.

During the tenure of the fellowship, you are expected to devote full time to the scientific research and training outlined in the application for which the award was granted. You may not engage in activities for compensation (except for brief military obligations) or receive another fellowship or research award without the prior approval of the Foundation. Such approval is granted only under exceptional circumstances.

Interruptions in tenure or extensions without additional cost to NSF are permitted only for extenuating circumstances, including parental leave for the birth or adoption of children. In this case, the Fellow may request parental leave, and up to two months of the fellow's stipend may be used for paid parental leave if the following conditions are met: 1) A written request, including appropriate documentation by the fellow, for paid parental leave must be approved by the cognizant NSF program officer; and 2) The two months of paid parental leave cannot be used to increase the level of fellow salary support beyond 24 or 36 full-time-equivalent months. A no-cost extension may be requested to extend the fellowship award in order to complete the research and broadening participation goals, but no supplemental funds will be provided for this purpose.

Military Deferral Status

Military Deferral is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their postdoctoral research for Active Duty. Fellows must request Military Deferrals from the program office. Military Deferral must be renewed each year, and a new copy of duty orders must be submitted to the PO. Failure to renew Military Deferral Status may result in Termination of the Fellowship.

Within a given Fellowship Year, duly authorized military service or training is permitted without penalty to the Fellow with the approval of the NSF, if the service does not compromise the Fellow's research progress. Requests for such interruptions of tenure should be directed to the Foundation in writing as soon as plans are final. Interruptions of less than four days do not require approval.

Paid Teaching

The fellow may opt to accept a teaching position paid by the host institution (i.e. not as part of the "teaching option" and paid through the fellowship). As a Fellow may not be paid concurrently for time on the fellowship and time teaching, the Fellow must defer the fellowship stipend during the teaching interval. The Fellow must work with their program officer to initiate the process for deferring the fellowship in advance of the start of the teaching assignment. The deferment should be in whole month increments, and should have the sponsor's concurrence. It is the Fellow's responsibility to apply for a No Cost Extension to extend the Fellowship period for the number of months deferred.

Vacations

NSF fellowships do not provide a vacation period, as such, during fellowship tenure. You are entitled to the short holiday periods observed by your host institution, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring holidays. These holiday periods cannot be accumulated for use at a later date as a vacation period. If your host institution should "close" for a period in excess of two weeks, you will be expected to have made prior arrangements for the use of necessary facilities to carry out the approved program. If it is not possible for you to make these arrangements at the host institution, other arrangements must be made, with prior Foundation

approval, to carry on the work; or suspension of the fellowship for that period of time should be requested from the Foundation.

FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION AND TERMINATION

At the end of the Fellowship tenure period, you must submit (by fax or email) the Fellowship Termination Certificate and Grant Fiscal Report, [NSF Form 453](#) (06/2009) to the Program Officer. This certificate must be signed by your sponsoring scientist or an appropriate official at your host Institution and should show the date you actually completed Fellowship activities. If you affiliate with more than one institution, a Termination Certificate is required from each Institution. Submission of this certificate is necessary to comply with governmental accounting procedures. In the event the certificate is not submitted, you may be requested to return to the Foundation all Fellowship funds that were received during Fellowship tenure.

FELLOWSHIP DETAILS AND CONDITIONS

Stipend

The stipend for fellowships awarded in FY 2012 will be paid at the rate of \$3,750 per month for the first 12 months; \$4,000 for months 13-24; and \$4,250 for months 25-36 of the fellowship. Fellowships are made for either 24 or 36 months. Unlike salary, stipend payments are made in advance. Stipend payments are processed by NSF around the 20th of the month for the following month and are paid by the U.S. Treasury into your account at a U.S. financial institution normally within 3 to 5 business days. If you have not received payment by the first of the month, please contact the Program Office. As stipends are paid in advance, you will not receive a stipend payment at the end of your last month.

Stipend payments are made directly to you via electronic funds transfer to a U.S. account. The fellowship is an award to you as an individual and payment cannot be deposited directly into the host institution's account. To receive payments from the Fellowship, you must complete the FastStart Direct Deposit Form, NSF Form 1379. The form must be signed and submitted to the NSF Division of Financial Management (DFM) as shown on the form. Please be sure to check the "Fellow" box and name your Program Officer as the NSF Contact at the top of the form. Your home address must be provided; your financial institution must be located in the United States; and you must sign the form to certify the accuracy of the information contained on the form and that you have read the Privacy Act Statement.

The first stipend will be paid as soon as possible after the completed forms are received by NSF, usually within 2 weeks but delays are possible. You are encouraged to make arrangements for your account prior to starting your fellowship. If you change accounts during your fellowship, you will need to file a revised FastStart Direct Deposit Form. Since stipend payments are processed around the 20th of each month, please submit a revised form in the preceding month to allow sufficient processing time and keep the old account open until a payment is received in the new account.

Fellowship Allowance

The fellowship allowance is paid at the rate of \$15,000 per year of the fellowship. It is paid as a lump sum with your first stipend payment. The fellowship allowance is spent at the Fellow's discretion, except foreign travel, which requires prior NSF approval. This allowance is intended to cover costs of the fellowship and fringe benefits. Allowable research costs include travel,

such as short-term visits to other institutions or laboratories, field work, and attendance at scientific meetings; training, special equipment, IT equipment and software, supplies, publication costs, access fees for databases and other research-related expenses. Allowable costs for fringe benefits include individual or family health insurance (any combination of medical, vision, and/or dental) whether purchased as a group or individual plan, disability insurance, retirement savings, dependent care, and moving expenses. All payments are made directly to the Fellow as an electronic funds transfer into a personal account at a financial institution.

If a fellowship is terminated early, a prorated portion (calculated as a fraction of the completed fellowship versus the planned duration) of the fellowship allowance must be returned to the National Science Foundation. No funds may be spent after the expiration date of your fellowship and funds cannot be converted to another use.

Income Tax

No income tax will be withheld from any stipend or allowance. Provision, therefore, must be made by you for payment of any tax, domestic or foreign, when due. Final authority as to the taxability of awards rests with the Internal Revenue Service and the courts. Specific questions should be referred to the Internal Revenue Service. IRS Publication 970 and Tax Topic 421 address tax issues on fellowships. Fellows going abroad may find it helpful to consult IRS Publication No. 54, Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad.

Fellows are not in any sense employees of the National Science Foundation. Therefore, no funds will be deducted from the stipends; no Social Security taxes will be paid by the Foundation; no W-2 forms will be issued; and provision must be made by you for the filing of any necessary estimate of taxes due and for payment of all income taxes which may become due. A statement of funds received (including the fellowship allowance) will be issued by the Division of Financial Management of the Foundation upon your written request.

The Foundation is unable to supply information concerning the income tax or other tax provisions of any foreign country. Inquiries should be directed to the authorities in the appropriate countries.

Travel

There is no separate allowance for travel and moving expenses to the fellowship institution. You can use your fellowship allowance to pay these costs once the fellowship begins. You may use your fellowship allowance for your expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence and related items when you are in travel status on business related to your NSF-supported project. Travel within the U.S. does not require prior NSF approval.

You must travel economy airfare. If this isn't possible, please contact the program office for exceptions. Train, bus or other surface carriers may be used in lieu of, or as a supplement to, air travel at the lowest first-class rate by the transportation facility used. If such travel, however, could have been performed by air, the allowance will not normally exceed that for economy airfare.

Stipend Supplementation

Each fellow is expected to devote full time to research during tenure. However, because it is generally accepted that teaching or similar activity constitutes a valuable part of the education

and training of many postdoctoral fellows, a Fellow may 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 these activities. Compensation for such activities is not permitted.

Fellows are permitted to solicit and accept 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.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is not available through NSF but you are strongly encouraged to secure health insurance. The fellowship allowance may be used to purchase your health insurance. You should discuss with your Host Institution whether or not you can participate in a group plan or if you need to purchase your own policy. You may find COBRA coverage is available to you. Be sure that your insurance is applicable to destinations abroad if you have chosen a host institution outside the United States.

Veteran's Benefits

As a result of the enactment of P.L. 91-219, effective March 26, 1970, educational benefits payments from the Veterans Administration may now be received concurrently with and supplementary to Fellowship payments from the National Science Foundation.

Future Employment

The award and acceptance of a Postdoctoral Fellowship does not obligate a Fellow, the National Science Foundation, or the United States Government with regard to future employment or future service of any kind.

Federal and/or Armed Forces Employees

If, during any part of a Fellowship tenure, you will be a member of the Armed Forces or on leave from a position in the Federal Service, a statement must be filed from a cognizant official of the Government organization involved specifying (1) the funds, if any, that will be made available to you during tenure and the purpose for which they will be provided, and (2) the funds, if any, that will be made available to your host Institution on your behalf. NSF and your host institution must reach a mutually satisfactory agreement regarding your support during tenure before any funds can be provided under the Fellowship.

Liability

NSF cannot assume any liability for accidents, illnesses or claims arising out of any work supported by your award or for unauthorized use of patented or copyrighted materials. You are advised to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to insure or protect yourself and your property.

Rights to Inventions or Writings

NSF claims no rights to any inventions or writings that may result from its fellowship awards. However, you should be aware that NSF, other Federal agencies, or private parties may acquire such rights through other grant support. Fellows at foreign institutions should be aware that specific provisions regarding allocations of intellectual property rights apply to particular countries, and you should be cognizant of any such provisions before commencing work.

Referrals to the NSF Office of the Inspector General

The NSF Inspector General is responsible for investigating all allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as allegations of research misconduct in connection with NSF programs and operations. You shall promptly refer to the NSF Inspector General (oig@nsf.gov; www.nsf.gov/oig or 1-800-428-2189) any allegations or credible evidence of research misconduct or criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to misappropriation, fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct involving NSF funds.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

[AAG Chapter VI.G.](#) details NSF requirements for international travel and research.

Foreign Tenure

International affiliations, either short-term or for the duration of the fellowship award, are allowed and encouraged.

All arrangements for affiliation with a fellowship institution abroad and provision for housing are the responsibility of the Fellow. Some Fellows, particularly those with families, have experienced difficulty in finding suitable housing in foreign countries. Fellows should be aware that housing shortages exist in many foreign cities, and that living costs may exceed those in comparable cities in the United States. Early correspondence with the host institution regarding housing needs is recommended.

For Fellows going abroad, travel time from the United States to a fellowship institution and from that institution to the United States, up to a maximum of one week each way may be considered as part of tenure. Thus, the actual tenure at the fellowship institution, as shown on the Starting and Termination Certificates, may be up to two weeks less than the total authorized tenure for which stipends are to be paid.

Additional funding from the Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE) may be available for awards with international host institutions. Please contact your program officer for details. Allowable expenses for OISE support of fellowship awards may include:

- Round trip economy airfare, necessary ground transportation, baggage allowance
- In-country travel at foreign location
- Relocation allowance
- Living allowance
- Health insurance allowance
- Support for field/lab expenses, materials, supplies and equipment
- Partial support for language training
- Return professional visit(s)
- Dependent support
- Institutional allowance

Foreign Travel

If you and your sponsoring scientist judge it appropriate for you to travel abroad, you must seek NSF approval before you travel. You can request prior approval with an email to the

Program Officer. The only fellowship funds available for such travel are within the Fellowship Allowance. In your e-mail, please include the purpose of the trip and an itinerary. If you are attending a scientific meeting, it is expected that you will be giving a presentation; therefore please give the title of your presentation and the name, place, and date of the meeting in the request for approval.

You are responsible for making all arrangements for securing a passport and visa. Visa regulations vary greatly by country, and to avoid the possibility of lengthy delay, you should make the necessary applications well before departure.

All travel to be reimbursed from Federal funds must be made via use of U.S. flag carriers if such service is available per the Fly America Act (For restrictions concerning the use of non-U.S. Flag carriers while on foreign travel see [AAG Chapter VI.G.1](#) for details).

FELLOWSHIP RESOURCES

Additional Opportunities

As you begin your independent research career, you may wish to apply for NSF research grants. Especially appropriate for new investigators is an NSF-wide “cross-cutting” program called the Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER). See www.nsf.gov for more information.

APPENDIX I.

PRFB Program Solicitation Excerpts

Excerpts from the current Program Solicitation are included here for convenience only. Individuals should refer to the original documents and/or contact the Program Office by e-mail to fully address specific situations.

Applicants must

- be U.S. citizens (or nationals) or permanent residents of the United States (i.e., have a "green card") at deadline;
- earn or plan to earn the doctoral degree in a scientific or mathematical field prior to the requested start date of the fellowship and have not accepted an academic appointment;
- either currently be a graduate student or, at the deadline date, have served in a position requiring the doctoral degree for no more than 12 full time months since earning the degree;
- present a research and training plan that falls within the purview of BIO and ***includes the required information for the specific competition as described in this document;***
- select both a host institution and sponsoring scientists different from the doctoral degree and the current position;
- not have received Federal funding of more than \$20,000 as PI or co-PI (except graduate fellowships and doctoral dissertation improvement grants);
- not have submitted the same project to another NSF program; AND
- not be a named participant on any other proposal submitted to NSF, including regular research proposals, concurrent with the fellowship application, regardless of who is the named principal investigator.

Fellowship Competitive Areas

Fellowship Competition Area 1: Broadening Participation in Biology

Through this program, BIO seeks to increase the diversity of scientists at the postdoctoral level in biology, and thereby contribute to the future vitality of the Nation's scientific enterprise. Groups that are significantly under-represented in biology in the U.S. include Native Americans (including Alaskan Natives) and Native Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Hispanics. Individuals with disabilities are also under-represented. The goal of the program is to prepare minority biologists and others who share NSF's diversity goals for positions of scientific leadership in academia, industry, and government. The research and training plan in these applications must fall within the purview of the BIO Directorate and explain how the fellowship award will broaden or effectively encourage the broadening of participation of under-represented minorities in biology supported by BIO.

Fellowship Competition Area 2: Intersections of Biology and Mathematical and Physical Sciences. The purpose of these fellowships is to provide substantially broadening postdoctoral research and training opportunities to junior researchers who have conducted doctoral research in biology or physical and mathematical sciences and who present a research and

training plan at the intersection of biology with mathematical and physical sciences. These fellowships require dual mentorship of the Fellow. The mentors must write one integrated statement that is part of the application. An applicant trained in biology must present a research and training plan to gain expertise, techniques, or knowledge in physical or mathematical sciences and apply it to research topics in biology. An applicant trained in physical or mathematical sciences must present a research and training plan using biological systems. The biological research proposed must fall within BIO's purview. The goal of the fellowships is to provide an opportunity for cross-training to enhance the Fellow's ability to conduct integrative and interdisciplinary research.

Fellowship Competition Area 3: National Plant Genome Initiative (NPGI) Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

Plant improvement is undergoing a revolution through the application of new tools for genotyping and phenotyping, and in the quantitative theory used for selection. In addition, the flood of data being generated requires new computational tools to provide an effective framework for basic plant biology research and plant improvement. The purpose of these fellowships is to provide postdoctoral training opportunities that target interdisciplinary research in plant improvement and associated sciences such as physiology and pathology, quantitative genetics, and computational biology. Applicants with strong backgrounds in a single disciplinary area may consider expanding their expertise with research in associated fields. For example, a Ph.D. in plant breeding may consider a fellowship in statistical genetics with a focus on application to plant improvement. Plant breeding is increasingly interdisciplinary and requires sophisticated modeling and experimental techniques; therefore, new connections are needed between biology and the mathematical/computational/statistical sciences. The research and training plan of each fellowship must address important scientific questions within the scope of the goals of the NPGI (http://www.nsf.gov/bio/pubs/reports/npqi_five_year_plan_2009_2013.pdf).

Eligible Fields of Study

For Competitive Areas 1 and 2, a research and training plan whose focus falls within the scope of any of the core programs in the Directorate for the Biological Sciences (BIO) is eligible for support within each competitive area. Further restrictions may apply for particular postdoctoral competitions. Be aware: "Research with disease-related goals, including work on the etiology, diagnosis or treatment of physical or mental disease, abnormality, or malfunction in human beings or animals, is normally not supported. Animal models of such conditions or the development or testing of drugs or other procedures for their treatment also are not eligible for support." See NSF Grant Proposal Guide, [Chapter I.B](#). While it is expected that research of fundamental biological significance may often have broader impacts to medicine, applications determined to have a clear biomedical focus will be returned without review. **If your proposal mentions human disease**, you should discuss its appropriateness with one of the listed Program Officers. Priority is given to research areas where BIO plays a unique or special role among NSF programs and total Federal funding. If your research is in an area of biology not primarily funded by BIO or if you are uncertain, you are strongly encouraged to call one of the BIO Program Officers to discuss the appropriateness of the research.

APPENDIX II.

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities

Fellows who have disabilities may apply for funding for special assistance or equipment through the Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) program, GPG.II.D.3 ([http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp - 23IID3](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_2.jsp-23IID3)). The PI will be responsible for submitting the NSF proposal for a Supplemental funding request to the existing PRFB Award. If multi-year funding is requested, the PI is responsible for requesting continuation of the FASSED, based on the Fellow's Satisfactory Progress.

Proposal

Fellows should discuss their accommodation needs with their host institution and sponsoring scientist and prepare a proposal including any ancillary documents, such as the sponsoring scientist's letter of support. The proposal should include an overview of current research and a detailed budget (annual and cumulative) and justification. The PRFB Fellow submits the proposal, as a Supplemental funding request to the existing PRFB Award. Requests must be submitted at least two months before funds are needed. Funding decisions will be made on the basis of the justification and availability of program funds, with any resultant funding provided through a formal amendment of the existing PRFB Award. FASSED proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the PRFB Program Office.

Reporting

Once awarded, Fellows are required to address how the FASSED award facilitated their research in their Annual Activities Reports (i.e., include a paragraph that begins with "FASSED:" under the "Fellowship Summary" section in the Activities Report).