



Graduate
Education



2026

NSF GRFP ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDE

Guidance for New & Current Fellows



NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDE FOR GRFP FELLOWS

Georgia Institute of Technology
Office of Graduate Education

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NSF Documents and Links

- [GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows \(NSF 25-033\)](#)
- [NSF Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [NSF Contact Information](#)
- [GRFP Module \(Research.gov\)](#)
- Grant number: DGE-2545526, valid from 09/01/2025 to 08/31/2030

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What Changed in This Edition

This edition updates the June 2026 version. Fellows should delete earlier versions and refer exclusively to this guidance.

- Enrollment is now stated as an independent stipend-eligibility trigger, separate from internship funding source.
- Career Center registration is not required for fellows who maintain at least 12 credit-bearing hours.
- Internships located abroad must be registered through the Office of International Education via ATLAS.
- Appendix A has been replaced with the current Internship Guide for GRFP Fellows.

1. Introduction

This document updates the November 2024 edition. It includes all policy updates from the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Administrative Guide (NSF 25-033, effective April 2025). Fellows and programs should delete earlier versions and refer exclusively to this guidance.

2. Key Updates from NSF 25-033

- Summer-start option eliminated. Summer-start Fellows (cohorts 2024 and earlier) may finish on their existing May 1 – April 30 cycle.
- The Annual Activities Report (AAR) now requires your advisor to certify that an Individual Development Plan (IDP) is established and reviewed each year.
- Paid medical leave: Fellows on Tenure may take up to three months of paid leave within the three tenure years for qualified medical or dependent-care needs, subject to pre-approval by the Coordinating Official.

3. Fellowship Year Start and Status Declaration

Selecting Georgia Tech

On NSF Research.gov, choose Georgia Tech Research Corporation.

- During the first year of the Fellowship, Fellows must follow the Major Field of Study listed in the application's disciplinary degree program (for example, Chemistry).
 - After completing the first year, the Fellow may switch their Major Field of Study and/or the eligible STEM degree program.
- Consult the [NSF GRFP Solicitation](#) for a list of eligible degree programs, including all Major Fields of Study and related subfields.

Declaring Status

Each year, you declare either On Tenure or On Reserve in NSF Research.gov. On Tenure indicates that you are receiving NSF stipend payments. On Reserve means that you are not receiving any NSF funding and can pursue a GRA, GTA, or other fellowship funding.

You have five years to use the three years of Tenure funding. Reserve status can only be declared for entire years of your fellowship, not parts of a year. The fellowship year runs from August 1 to July 31 annually.

Medical deferral, military deferral, and forfeit status can be declared monthly. Forfeit status is used while On Tenure if you wish to perform an activity (GTA, GRA, internship, and similar) that is not permitted during Tenure.

Fellow Status	Fellowship Status	Stipend Eligible?	Description
Active	On Tenure	Yes	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree-granting program and receiving the GRFP stipend.
Active	On Reserve	No	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree-granting program but is not receiving a GRFP stipend.
Active	Forfeited	No	Fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree-granting program but is not receiving a stipend during all or part of a Tenure year. Stipend not utilized is lost.
Leave	On Medical Leave (paid)	Yes	Fellow is on a leave of absence due to a medical or dependent-care situation. Paid medical leave is limited to up to three months.
Leave	On Medical Leave (unpaid)	No	Fellow is on a leave of absence due to a medical or dependent-care situation and is not receiving a stipend.
Leave	On Military Leave	No	Fellow is on active duty in the U.S. military service.
Completion	Completed with Degree	No	Individual who graduated within the five-year Fellowship period.
Completion	Completed	No	Individual who completed the five-year Fellowship period before graduating with a degree.
Completion	Terminated	No	Fellowship terminated for cause, or the fellow voluntarily discontinued the Fellowship during the five-year period.

4. Eligibility to Receive NSF GRFP Funding

All NSF GRFP Fellows at Georgia Tech must self-verify that they meet all of the following eligibility criteria by the application deadline.

- Be a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident.
- Intend to enroll or be enrolled in a research-based master's or doctoral degree program in an eligible Field of Study in STEM or STEM education.
- Have never previously accepted an NSF GRFP Fellowship. If previously offered a Graduate Research Fellowship, have declined by the acceptance deadline.
- Have never previously applied to GRFP while enrolled in a graduate degree program.
- Have never earned a doctoral or terminal degree in any field.
- Have never earned a master's or professional degree in any field, or completed more than one academic year in a graduate degree-granting program, unless returning to graduate study after an interruption of two or more consecutive years immediately preceding the application deadline, and not enrolled in a graduate degree program at the application deadline.
- Not be a current NSF employee.

Your Major Field of Study

Fellows should select the Major Field of Study and the subfield closest to their research interests. If the subfield is not listed, it may not be eligible for NSF GRFP. The Major Field of Study choice determines the disciplinary knowledge of the experts who review your application.

- If you are offered a fellowship, it will be within this Major Field.
- Fellows cannot change their Major Field of Study in their first year.

Misrepresentation

In cases where Fellows have misrepresented their eligibility or have failed to comply with the Fellowship Terms and Conditions, the Fellowship will be revoked, and the case may be referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. This action may require the Fellow to repay Fellowship funds to the National Science Foundation.

Maintaining Your Eligibility

Submit your Activities Report to Georgia Tech and declare your status for the following fellowship year each spring.

- Include your signed Faculty Advisor Form with your submission.
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or above.
- Enroll full-time by the end of your registration period.
- Maintain RCR requirements.

Class Registration

Register at your first available opportunity. Refer to the Registrar's website for the official calendar and registration timelines. Under Georgia Tech policy, funds will only be disbursed if you are registered full-time, including during the summer semester.

- Full-time enrollment for graduate students is 12 hours every semester.
 - 9 of which must be taken for a letter grade or pass/fail credit during fall and spring.
 - 6 of which must be taken for a letter grade or pass/fail credit during summer.
 - Thesis research hours (for example, 8999, 9000) count as graded hours.

Enrollment Determines Stipend Eligibility

If you are not registered in the minimum required credit-bearing hours for a semester, you are not eligible to receive your NSF GRFP stipend for that semester. This applies regardless of whether you are on an internship and regardless of the internship's funding source. See Appendix A, Section 9.

Please Note

All NSF GRFP fellowships are credited to student accounts in bulk. All fellows who have declared On Tenure status must register for classes as soon as possible each semester so that peer fellows receive their disbursements promptly.

Start of Your Funding: RCR Training

All NSF GRFP Fellows must complete two forms of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training.

- Online RCR training must be completed within 90 days of receiving funding.
- Discussion-based RCR training must be completed within one year of receiving NSF GRFP funding.

The RCR Compliance Policy is intended to meet the RCR training requirements of federal funding agencies and other sponsors. The RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students and the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students outline the requirements for specific categories of graduate students. Georgia Tech will not be able to certify students' adequate academic progress unless they have completed their RCR training.

Some programs may have additional RCR requirements, so check with your program directly. Information about the training that fulfills this NSF requirement is available from the Georgia Tech RCR Program.

5. On Tenure Status: Tuition/Fees, Stipend, and Other Costs

Tuition and Fees

NSF provides Georgia Tech with a \$16,000 cost-of-education (COE) allowance per fellow. Fellows are fully funded, which includes tuition, mandatory fees, and a monthly stipend.

Subsidized Student Health Insurance (SHIP) for Fellows

As a GRFP Fellow, you receive the same subsidy for your Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) as GRAs and GTAs. The Bursar will post the reduced (subsidized) charge to your student account each term. NSF does not cover this charge, but you can waive your coverage if you are covered by an external policy.

What you'll pay: Most of the premium is covered centrally – up to about 85% – **so you're billed only the lower, subsidized amount.**

Plan	Fall 2026	Spring/Summer 2027
Student Plan (non-GRA/GTA/full fellowship)	\$1,378.82	\$1,910.66
Subsidized Plan (GRA/GTA/full fellowship)	\$206.82	\$286.60

Enrollment and Waiver Deadlines

Coverage does not auto-enroll from one policy year to the next. Eligible students must enroll during the open enrollment period each new policy year. The policy year runs August 1 through July 31.

Term	Enrollment / Waiver Window	Coverage Period
Fall 2026	July 20 – September 25, 2026	August 1 – December 31, 2026
Spring/Summer 2027	December 7, 2026 – February 19, 2027	January 1 – July 31, 2027

Waiving Coverage

Fellows are in the mandatory insurance group, so the charge is added automatically. If you are covered by an external policy that meets USG requirements, you must request a waiver during the open enrollment period, and you must waive in both fall and spring. International students cannot waive with a non-ACA-compliant plan.

If You Are on an Internship

Registering an internship does not remove the insurance charge. Students in the mandatory group who are taking credit-only hours — including a term registered through the Graduate Internship Program — are still assessed insurance as a registered student. Budget for the charge even in a term where you are enrolled only in the INTN audit course. See Appendix A, Section 9.

Stipend

The NSF stipend is \$37,000 for 12 months, with a monthly rate of \$3,083. Georgia Tech reimburses any difference between your department's standard stipend and the NSF stipend.

Fellowship payments are disbursed to students through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OSFA), not through HR/Payroll. Because your funding is a fellowship rather than an appointment, it follows the Financial Aid disbursement schedule, and the OSFA academic year runs from August 1 through July 31. Payments are deposited into your Banner account at the end of each month; see the OSFA stipend payment dates page for the exact date each term.

Important: Moving from a GRA/GTA to Fellowship Funding

Fellows receive a full month's stipend at the end of August, the first month of the new academic year.

If you are supported through a GRA or GTA appointment during the summer, that appointment should generally be terminated **effective July 31** so your fellowship funding can begin with the new academic year on **August 1**. This prevents overlap between the assistantship and the fellowship stipend, and keeps you from being On Tenure and holding a GRA/GTA at the same time.

Confirm each month's disbursement date on the [OSFA stipend payment dates](#) page.

Payments and Direct Deposit

Direct deposits processed via eRefund are sent directly to your bank account.

- Your bank must be a U.S. bank.
- Funds can be deposited into either your checking or savings account, but not both.
- Georgia Tech cannot make deposits into money market checking accounts.

To sign up for direct deposit through your student payment portal:

1. Log in to the Student Payment Portal using your GT Account and password.
2. Click the Refunds tab in the menu.
3. Click the Set Up Account button.
4. Fill in your bank account information (you will need a check to obtain the routing and account numbers).
5. Click Continue.

Questions about the direct deposit process: contact the Bursar's Office at bursar.ask@business.gatech.edu, (404) 894-4618, or in person on the first floor of Lyman Hall, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Taxes

Funds from fellowship stipends used for qualified expenses are exempt from federal and state taxes. Qualified expenses include tuition, fees, and other related costs that Georgia Tech explicitly requires for degree completion. Any stipend portions spent on personal items and living expenses, such as clothing, food, rent, and transportation, are subject to federal and state income taxes. Fellows do not need to fill out tax withholding forms.

Other Employment

NSF GRFP Fellows may not be On Tenure and hold a GRA/GTA appointment simultaneously. If you wish to pursue a GRA/GTA, you must have declared On Reserve status before the start of a fellowship year, or declare Forfeit status before the assistantship.

To declare Forfeit status:

1. Log in to research.gov and select Request Fellowship Status Change.
2. Choose the appropriate year (the 2025/2026 academic year is fellowship year 2025) and select Request Change.
3. On the next screen, set your new status to Forfeit and enter the information as it pertains to your situation. For the start date, select the first date of your internship or appointment.
4. Before the end of your forfeit period, return to Research.gov and choose Tenure as your new status.

Georgia Tech allows NSF GRFP Fellows to work up to 10 hours per week while On Tenure.

- Work cannot be that of a GRA/GTA.
- Work performed cannot relate to the Fellow's research.
- Work cannot be considered in service of the Institute. Examples of non-allowable work include serving as a grader, proctor, or lab assistant.
- Outside employment is discouraged because the NSF GRFP Fellowship is intended to provide the Fellow with ample time for research and study.

Check Before Accepting

If you are considering any form of work while On Tenure at Georgia Tech, email fellowships@grad.gatech.edu to confirm it is permissible before accepting the role.

One-Time Exception: GA to Teach

Georgia Tech does not allow NSF GRFP Fellows to be employed as GRAs or GTAs while On Tenure. However, a department may hire a Fellow to serve as a Graduate Assistant (GA) for only one semester to complete a teaching appointment that satisfies program requirements. Fellows should be hired as Graduate Assistants with a monthly stipend, and not as GTAs. A tuition waiver should not be placed on the student record.

These restrictions and instructions do not apply when teaching or teaching assistant duties are part of a registered class requirement for course credit rather than for pay.

Outside Funding

Fellow Status	Funding Source	Stipend Eligible?
On Tenure	Non-federal pay (for example, industry internship)	Yes, if the activity supports your training and is within the 10 hours/week limit or a nominal summer internship, and you maintain the required enrollment.
On Tenure	Federal salary or fellowship	No. You must forfeit the GRFP stipend for those months.

6. Internships While on Tenure

Appendix A contains the full Internship Guide for GRFP Fellows. This section summarizes the essentials.

Type	What It Means	Impact and Forfeiture
Non-Federal Internship	Internship funded by a private company, university, or state/local government and not funded by a federal agency (for example, SpaceX, Google, state agencies).	Fellows can stay On Reserve or On Tenure with advisor and CO approval. No NSF approval needed. No forfeiture on funding-source grounds.
Federally Funded Internship	Internship where the support comes from a U.S. federal agency (NASA, DOE, NIH, DoD, NSF) or a federally funded program.	On Tenure: you must forfeit the GRFP stipend for the months you are paid by a federal agency. On Reserve: no extra forfeiture. Forfeited months are lost and not recoverable.

Second Trigger: Enrollment

Funding source is not the only thing that affects your stipend. If you are not registered in the minimum required credit-bearing hours for a semester, you are not eligible for the stipend that semester – whether the internship is federal or non-federal. These two triggers operate independently. See Appendix A, Sections 8 and 9.

You do not need prior approval from NSF for a standard external internship, provided you:

- Remain enrolled at the required level at Georgia Tech,
- Continue making satisfactory academic progress toward your degree, and
- Complete your Annual Activities Report (AAR) as usual.

Report the internship experience in your next AAR, particularly under research, professional development activities, or broader impacts. To approve your internship, the Coordinating Official needs a copy of your offer letter and a letter of support from your advisor on Georgia Tech letterhead.

Registering Your Internship

Whether you must register through the Career Center depends on your enrollment. There are two paths, described in full in Appendix A, Section 9.

Path	Enrollment	Registration and Stipend
Path 1 – Maintain 12 credit-bearing hours	At least 12 credit-bearing hours (graded or pass/fail). Thesis/research hours (7000/9000) count.	Career Center registration is not required. Stipend continues, unless the internship is federally funded.
Path 2 – Register the internship	12 total hours: minimum 9 graded/pass-fail (fall/spring) or 6 (summer), with INTN audit hours filling the remainder.	Register through the Graduate Internship Program, which enrolls you in the tuition-free, non-credit INTN audit course. Stipend forfeited for that semester.

Registering for the INTN audit course does not incur tuition fees. Standard tuition rates apply if you enroll in additional classes concurrently. Timelines and deadlines for each semester are available on the Career Center webpage; complete registration before the relevant deadlines.

Note that the INTN audit course carries no tuition, but it does not exempt you from the mandatory student health insurance charge. Fellows in the mandatory group taking credit-only hours are still assessed insurance as a registered student. See Section 5.

Internships Located Abroad

If your internship is located outside the United States, you must also register it through the Office of International Education (OIE) using ATLAS. This requirement applies regardless of which enrollment path you choose and is separate from Career Center registration.

[Register your internship abroad in ATLAS](#)

Questions: contact the Graduate Internship Program Manager at grad-internship@gatech.edu, or education.abroad@oie.gatech.edu for internships abroad.

7. On Reserve Status

GRA/GTA Appointments

Fellows on Reserve status are permitted to hold GRA/GTA appointments at any time.

Internships on Reserve

If you plan to pursue an internship while on Reserve status, no action with NSF is required. Georgia Tech registration steps still apply, including OIE registration for internships located abroad.

8. Medical and Military Leave

Medical Leave

Medical Leave must be requested in monthly increments, up to a maximum of 24 months. NSF support provides up to three months of paid medical leave.

- The unused, deferred months of Tenure or Reserve are available for use later, extending beyond the standard five-year limit.
- Fellows in Medical Leave status must submit an AAR stating they are on medical leave, and the Medical Leave must be renewed if it extends into a new fellowship year.

Military Leave

Military Leave is intended for Fellows who must interrupt their graduate studies for active duty in U.S. military service. While on Military Leave, a Fellow's fellowship clock stops, so the remaining time available for Tenure or Reserve periods is not affected.

- Fellows must request Military Leave via the GRFP Online Module and submit a copy of their duty orders to the CO at the awardee institution.
- Fellows in Military Leave status must submit an AAR stating they are on Military Leave and declare fellowship status annually.
- Military Leave status must be renewed if it extends into a new fellowship year.

9. Yearly Reporting Requirements and Declaring Next Year

Submit your Annual Activities Report to Georgia Tech and declare your status for the following fellowship year each spring. The AAR requires advisor certification, including confirmation that your Individual Development Plan has been established and reviewed.

Graduating

Fellows who are graduating should wait until they are within 30 days of graduating to log in to research.gov and update the fellowship status for the current fellowship year to complete with degree.

10. Resources

Funds for Travel

NSF does not provide travel support funding for GRFP fellows to attend conferences. One possible resource is SGA's Graduate Conference Fund. You should also contact your faculty supervisor and your major department to ask if supplemental funding is available to support your travel.

Application and Writing Support

The Georgia Tech Naugle Writing and Communication Center provides individual consultations, workshops, and writing programs for the Georgia Tech community. They offer free one-on-one assistance with oral and written work, including presentations, fellowship applications, research papers, and theses. For the quickest response, email wcc@gatech.edu with questions about services, to reserve presentation rehearsal rooms, or to request assistance with booking an appointment.

Publication Information

All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the Fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP support using the following statement:

This material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. DGE-2545526. Any opinions, findings, 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.

NSF INTERN

The Non-Academic Research Internships for Graduate Students (INTERN) supplemental funding opportunity allows NSF to consider requests for up to six months of additional support for graduate students on active NSF grants. To qualify:

- Graduate students must have completed at least one academic year in their graduate program and be making satisfactory progress toward degree completion.
- The PI of the NSF GRFP award may request supplemental funding for one or more graduate students to help them acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences that enhance their preparation for a successful long-term career through an internship in a non-academic setting.
- [Georgia Tech: Preparing to Apply for NSF INTERN Supplemental Funding](#)

Georgia Tech Resources

- Georgia Tech NSF GRFP Webpage: grad.gatech.edu/nsf-grfp
- [Georgia Tech NSF GRFP Onboarding Quick Reference](#)
- Graduate Internship Program (Career Center): career.gatech.edu
- Register an internship abroad (OIE): [ATLAS registration](#)

NSF Resources

- [NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\) Website](#)
- [GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows \(NSF 25-033\)](#)
- [GRFP Module \(Research.gov\)](#)
- [FAQ: Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\)](#)

APPENDIX A

Internship Guide for GRFP Fellows

Detailed guidance on internship planning, fellowship status management, enrollment requirements, and institutional processes at Georgia Tech.

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1. Welcome and Purpose

Internships provide NSF GRFP Fellows with opportunities to develop technical expertise, gain professional experience, and explore career pathways across industry, government, nonprofit, and academic sectors. Because fellowship funding is governed by NSF requirements and Georgia Tech administrative processes, participation in internships must be carefully planned.

This guide is designed to help Fellows understand how internships may affect fellowship status, stipend eligibility, enrollment requirements, reporting obligations, and institutional processes. It should be used alongside the NSF GRFP Administrative Guide, Research.gov resources, and Georgia Tech fellowship guidance.

Important Reminder

When in doubt, contact the Graduate Fellowships Manager before accepting any internship offer. Early coordination helps prevent funding disruptions and compliance issues.

fellowships@grad.gatech.edu

2. NSF GRFP at Georgia Tech – Overview

At Georgia Tech, NSF GRFP recipients are supported through a coordinated administrative model involving the Office of Graduate Education (OGE), Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OSFA), and the Bursar's Office to ensure proper disbursement of funds and compliance with NSF guidelines.

Because NSF GRFP funding is administered differently from assistantships (e.g., GRA/GTA), fellows must actively manage how their funding interacts with enrollment, employment, and institutional systems. Unlike assistantships, NSF GRFP funding is subject to federal restrictions on concurrent funding and employment.

Fellowship Award Structure

Component	Amount	Details
Stipend	\$37,000/year	Paid directly to the student via OSFA
Cost of Education (COE)	\$16,000/year	Provided to institution to support tuition and fees
Duration	3 funded years	Usable over a 5-year fellowship period
Flexibility	On Tenure / On Reserve	Fellows must strategically select usage of funded years

Core Fellow Responsibilities

- Maintain eligibility and academic progress
- Understand and actively manage fellowship status selections
- Maintain required enrollment each term – and understand how enrollment affects stipend eligibility
- Complete annual reporting requirements (AAR) in Research.gov
- Understand how internships and employment affect stipend eligibility
- Review NSF and Georgia Tech guidance regularly

3. Understanding Your Fellowship Status

Each year, you must declare how you will use your fellowship. This choice is made in Research.gov and directly affects your stipend, enrollment requirements, and internship eligibility.

ON TENURE	ON RESERVE	FORFEIT
Actively receiving NSF stipend. NSF funding restrictions apply.	NSF stipend not active. Other funding sources may be used. Years preserved for future.	Specific months when the NSF stipend cannot be received. Forfeited months are LOST – not recoverable.

On Tenure

- You receive your NSF stipend (\$37,000/year)
- NSF covers your Cost of Education (COE) allocation
- You must comply with NSF funding restrictions
- You must meet the enrollment requirements described in Section 9 to remain stipend-eligible

On Reserve

- NSF stipend support is not active during that fellowship year
- Other institutional funding (GRA/GTA, department fellowships) may be used
- Fellowship years are preserved for future use
- Enrollment requirements still apply per department/program

Forfeit

- Used for specific periods when NSF stipend support cannot be received
- Required when accepting a federally funded internship while On Tenure (months of federal pay)
- Also required when you will not maintain the minimum credit-bearing enrollment for a semester (full semester)
- Forfeited stipend months are permanently lost and cannot be recovered
- Forfeit does not change the annual fellowship status selection
- Status must be updated in Research.gov before the internship begins

4. Federal vs. Non-Federal Internships

One of the most critical questions in internship planning is determining who is funding the internship. The funding source directly affects your stipend eligibility and required compliance steps.

NON-FEDERAL INTERNSHIP	FEDERALLY FUNDED INTERNSHIP
Funded by: • Private companies (Google, SpaceX, etc.) • Universities • State government agencies • Local government agencies Generally allowed while On Tenure. Stipend forfeiture NOT required on funding-source grounds.	Paid by a federal agency: • NASA, NIH, NSF • DOE, DoD • Any U.S. federal agency or federally funded program Stipend forfeiture REQUIRED while On Tenure for the months of federal pay. Forfeited months are permanently lost.

Decision Tip: When in Doubt, Treat it as Federal

If the compensation ultimately comes from a federal source — even indirectly — treat it as federal funding and check with the Graduate Fellowships Manager before accepting the role.

Second Trigger: Enrollment

Funding source is not the only thing that affects your stipend. If you are not registered in the minimum required credit-bearing hours for a semester, you are not eligible to receive your NSF GRFP stipend for that semester — whether the internship is federal or non-federal. These two triggers operate independently.

5. Decision Guide: What Is Allowed?

Use the quick reference below to determine your internship options based on your fellowship status, the funding source, and your planned enrollment.

Scenario	Allowed?	Action Required
On Tenure + Non-Federal + full credit-bearing enrollment	Generally allowed	No forfeiture. Maintain at least 12 credit-bearing hours. No Career Center registration required.
On Tenure + Non-Federal + below minimum enrollment	Allowed with semester forfeit	Not eligible for the stipend that semester. Forfeit the semester in Research.gov before the start date. Register through the Career Center for INTN.
On Tenure + Federal + full credit-bearing enrollment	Allowed with monthly forfeit	Forfeit the NSF stipend for the months of federal pay. Update Research.gov BEFORE starting.
On Tenure + Federal + below minimum enrollment	Allowed with semester forfeit	Not eligible for the stipend that semester. Forfeit the semester in Research.gov before the start date. Register through the Career Center for INTN.
On Reserve + Any Internship	Generally allowed	No NSF forfeiture required. Department enrollment expectations still apply. Follow GT registration steps.

If Both Triggers Apply

If you are On Tenure, accepting a federally funded internship, and will also fall below the minimum credit-bearing enrollment, the semester forfeiture governs. You are not eligible for the stipend for that full semester.

6. Internships While on Tenure

If Your Internship Is Non-Federal

You may generally remain On Tenure if:

- The internship supports your professional development
- You remain enrolled in at least 12 credit-bearing hours (graded or pass/fail)
- You maintain satisfactory academic progress
- You complete the required Georgia Tech steps in Section 10
- You submit your offer letter and advisor support letter to fellowships@grad.gatech.edu

Result: Allowed. You may keep your NSF stipend **provided you maintain the minimum required credit-bearing hours for the semester**. If you drop below that threshold, you are not eligible for the stipend for that semester, even though the internship is non-federal.

If Your Internship Is Federally Funded

If the internship pay comes from a federal agency or federally funded program, you cannot receive both the NSF GRFP stipend and a federal internship salary or stipend at the same time.

Result: You must forfeit your NSF stipend for the applicable months. Those forfeited months are permanently lost and non-recoverable. See Section 8 for forfeiture steps.

7. Internships While on Reserve

If you are On Reserve, you are not receiving NSF stipend support for that fellowship year.

- You may generally pursue a federal internship
- You may generally pursue a non-federal internship
- No NSF forfeiture action is typically required
- Regular Georgia Tech internship registration steps still apply
- Review department expectations regarding enrollment and academic progress

Result: Internships are generally allowed while On Reserve without additional NSF stipend conflict.

8. Forfeiting Your Stipend – Step-by-Step

You must update your status in Research.gov before the internship begins if either of the following applies:

- **You are On Tenure and accepting a federally funded internship.** Forfeit the months of federal pay.
- **You will not be registered in the minimum required credit-bearing hours for the semester.** Forfeit the full semester. This applies to federal and non-federal internships alike.

If both apply, the semester forfeiture governs.

Critical: Act Before the Internship Starts

Do not wait until after the internship begins to update your fellowship status. Late updates may create compliance issues. Process the forfeit request in Research.gov BEFORE your start date.

Research.gov Forfeit Steps

1. Log in to Research.gov at research.gov
2. Select Request Fellowship Status Change
3. Choose the appropriate fellowship year
4. Select Forfeit
5. Enter the start date tied to the internship period (months of federal pay, or the full semester if the forfeiture is enrollment-based)
6. Before the end of the forfeit period, return to Research.gov and change your status back to Tenure (if applicable)

Important Forfeiture Notes

- Forfeiture for federal pay applies only to the affected months
- Forfeiture for insufficient enrollment applies to the full semester
- Forfeited stipend months are permanently lost – they cannot be recovered
- Forfeit does not change your annual fellowship status selection (On Tenure remains your annual designation)
- Contact the Graduate Fellowships Manager if you are uncertain about which months to forfeit

Contact fellowships@grad.gatech.edu before and after completing this process

9. Enrollment Requirements During an Internship

Your enrollment configuration determines whether you can receive your NSF GRFP stipend during an internship. There are two paths. Internship registration alone does not satisfy enrollment requirements.

Path 1 – Maintain 12 Credit-Bearing Hours (stipend continues)

Enrollment	At least 12 credit-bearing hours (graded or pass/fail). Thesis/research hours (7000/9000) count.
Career Center registration	Not required
INTN course	Not used
Stipend	Eligible, unless the internship is federally funded – in which case forfeit the months of federal pay (see Section 8).

Path 2 – Register the Internship (stipend forfeited for the semester)

Enrollment	12 total hours: minimum 9 graded/pass-fail hours (fall/spring) or 6 (summer), with INTN audit hours filling the remainder.
Career Center registration	Required – enrolls you in the INTN course
INTN course	Audit hours only; documents the internship and maintains full-time status
Stipend	Not eligible for that semester. Forfeit in Research.gov before the internship begins. Forfeited months are permanently lost.

Enrollment Strategy Tips

- Thesis/research hours (7000 or 9000 level) are the most common way fellows reach 12 credit-bearing hours without adding coursework – this is the path that preserves your stipend.
- INTN is an audit course. It does not count toward the 12 credit-bearing hours that determine stipend eligibility; it only fills the gap to 12 total hours for full-time status.

- Because INTN carries no credit-bearing hours, choosing to register your internship necessarily puts you below the 12-hour credit-bearing threshold and forfeits the semester's stipend.
- Summer has a lower graded minimum under Path 2 (6 hours vs. 9 in fall/spring).
- Decide your path before the term begins. Switching after the registration deadline is generally not possible.

10. Georgia Tech Registration Process

Before beginning any internship, complete the following required steps with Georgia Tech.

Required Documentation for the Graduate Fellowships Manager

Send the following to fellowships@grad.gatech.edu:

- **Offer Letter** from your employer, including internship start and end dates, total hours per week, and work site address
- **Letter of Support from Your Advisor** on Georgia Tech letterhead confirming support for the internship

Submit Documentation Early

Send your documentation to the Graduate Fellowships Manager as soon as you receive your offer letter. Processing and review take time, and you should not begin the internship until all steps are completed.

Recommended Pre-Internship Process

1. Receive internship offer.
2. Discuss the opportunity with your faculty advisor and obtain their support.
3. Determine internship funding source (federal vs. non-federal).
4. Determine your enrollment path (see Section 9): 12 credit-bearing hours, or registered internship with INTN.
5. If federal and On Tenure, begin the forfeit process in Research.gov before the start date.
6. If you will be below 12 credit-bearing hours, begin the semester forfeit process in Research.gov before the start date.
7. Develop an enrollment plan with your advisor and graduate coordinator.
8. Submit offer letter and advisor support letter to fellowships@grad.gatech.edu.
9. If you will not be enrolled in at least 12 credit-bearing hours, register through the Graduate Internship Program via the Career Center (see Section 11).
10. If the internship is located outside the United States, register through the Office of International Education via ATLAS (see Section 12).
11. Confirm all stipend and enrollment arrangements are in place before the internship begins.

11. Career Center Registration – Step-by-Step

Georgia Tech graduate students who will not maintain at least 12 credit-bearing hours (graded or pass/fail) during an internship must register through the Graduate Internship Program via CareerBuzz. This process enrolls you in the appropriate INTN course, maintains your student status, and supports visa compliance for international students.

If You Will Maintain 12 Credit Bearing Hours

Career Center registration is not required. You remain enrolled full-time through your credit-bearing hours and continue to receive your NSF GRFP stipend, subject to the federal funding rules in Section 4.

Step 1: Complete the Experiential Learning Application

1. Log in to CareerBuzz
2. From the homepage, select “Resources” (left-side menu)
3. Under Gain Access to Co-Op & Internships, click “Set Applicant Type”
4. Submit your application

Approval Timeline: Applications are typically reviewed within 2 business days.

Step 2: Submit Your Placement Information

1. Log in to CareerBuzz
2. Select “Experiential Learning” from the left-side menu
3. Click “Add New”
4. Watch the required Experiential Learning video
5. Complete and submit the Placement Form

Required Documentation

- Offer Letter from employer (including internship start/end dates, total hours/week, exact work site address)
- Advisor Approval Form (submitted via DocuSign)

International Students (CPT/OPT)

F-1 visa holders must obtain CPT or OPT authorization before beginning an internship **regardless of enrollment level**. This requirement is independent of whether Career Center registration is needed. Contact the Office of International Education (ISSS) early in the process, as authorization processing takes time.

- Office of International Education (OIE/ISSS): iss@gatech.edu
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT): required for most internships during enrollment
- Optional Practical Training (OPT): for post-graduation or qualifying internships
- iStart processing times vary – check current timelines on the OIE website

Questions? Contact the Graduate Internship Program Manager at grad-internship@gatech.edu.

12. Internships Located Abroad

If your internship is located outside the United States, you must register it through the Office of International Education (OIE) using the ATLAS system. This is a separate requirement from Career Center registration and applies regardless of which enrollment path you choose in Section 9.

Required: OIE Registration via ATLAS

Register your internship abroad through the Office of International Education before you depart:

[Register your internship abroad in ATLAS](#)

What OIE Registration Does

- Documents your international placement and confirms you remain a registered Georgia Tech student during your term abroad
- Issues the registration permit associated with your placement
- Enrolls you in the state-mandated travel and health insurance required of all Georgia students traveling abroad (a per-term fee applies)
- Connects you with an advisor who can address country-specific requirements

What OIE Registration Does Not Change

- Your stipend eligibility. The two enrollment paths in Section 9 still govern. OIE registration does not substitute for meeting the 12 credit-bearing hour threshold.
- Your funding-source obligations. A federally funded internship abroad still requires forfeiture of the months of federal pay while On Tenure (see Sections 4 and 8).
- Your Graduate Fellowships Manager documentation. Still submit your offer letter and advisor support letter to fellowships@grad.gatech.edu.
- Career Center registration, if you will be below 12 credit-bearing hours. Both registrations may be required.

International Students on F 1 Status

If you hold F-1 status and your internship is abroad, contact ISSS before you make travel arrangements. Time outside the United States can affect your visa status, re-entry, and CPT/OPT eligibility. This is separate from and in addition to OIE education abroad registration.

Plan Early

Registration, insurance enrollment, and any country-specific requirements take time to process. Begin the OIE registration as soon as you accept an international offer, and coordinate the timing with your Research.gov forfeiture steps if either forfeiture trigger applies.

Questions: education.abroad@oie.gatech.edu

13. Annual Reporting (AAR)

NSF requires all GRFP Fellows to submit an Annual Activities Report (AAR) in Research.gov. Internship activities must be documented in this report.

What to Include

Internship experiences can be reported under:

- Research activities
- Professional development
- Broader impacts
- Technical skills development
- Workforce preparation

Advisor Certification

The AAR requires advisor certification. Coordinate with your faculty advisor early to ensure they are prepared to certify your report and confirm your IDP has been updated.

Recordkeeping Tip

Maintain accurate records throughout your internship (project descriptions, skills gained, professional connections, broader impact contributions). This greatly simplifies AAR completion at reporting time.

14. NSF INTERN Supplemental Opportunity

NSF INTERN is a supplemental funding opportunity designed to provide GRFP Fellows with professional experiences beyond the traditional academic environment. It is separate from standard external internships.

Potential Benefits

- Funding to support a professional experience at a non-academic host organization
- Exposure to new sectors and applied research environments
- Workforce development and expanded professional networks
- Support for broader impacts activities

How to Apply

Georgia Tech has prepared specific guidance for fellows interested in NSF INTERN supplemental funding. Review the guide available on the OGE website: [Preparing to Apply for NSF INTERN Supplemental Funding](#).

15. Common Mistakes to Avoid

Avoid These Common Errors

- ✗ Accepting a federal internship while On Tenure without requesting forfeiture in Research.gov
- ✗ Forgetting to switch your fellowship status back to Tenure after a forfeit period ends
- ✗ Assuming all internships are treated the same regardless of funding source
- ✗ Assuming INTN audit hours count toward the 12 credit-bearing hours required for stipend eligibility
- ✗ Assuming a non-federal internship protects your stipend even if you drop below the minimum credit-bearing hours
- ✗ Dropping below 12 credit-bearing hours mid-semester and losing the full semester's stipend
- ✗ Falling below 12 credit-bearing hours without registering through the Career Center before the internship begins
- ✗ Failing to submit the required offer letter and advisor support letter to the Graduate Fellowships Manager
- ✗ Failing to register an internship located abroad through the Office of International Education via ATLAS
- ✗ Assuming Career Center registration satisfies the OIE requirement for an internship abroad, or vice versa
- ✗ Waiting until the last minute to check whether a role is federal or non-federal
- ✗ Forgetting to document internship activities in the Annual Activities Report (AAR)

16. Pre-Internship Checklist

Use this checklist before accepting and beginning any internship as an NSF GRFP Fellow.

Before Accepting the Internship

- ☐ Confirm you can maintain the minimum required credit-bearing hours for every semester the internship spans
- ☐ Determine whether the internship is federally or non-federally funded
- ☐ Determine whether the internship is located inside or outside the United States
- ☐ Confirm your current fellowship status in Research.gov (On Tenure or On Reserve)
- ☐ If On Tenure and federal internship: determine which months require forfeiture
- ☐ Contact fellowships@grad.gatech.edu if you have any uncertainty about funding source or stipend implications
- ☐ Discuss the internship with your faculty advisor and obtain their support

After Accepting the Internship

- ☐ Choose your enrollment path: 12 credit-bearing hours (stipend continues) or registered internship with INTN (semester stipend forfeited)
- ☐ If using Path 2: confirm you will meet the graded-hour minimum (9 fall/spring; 6 summer)
- ☐ If required: submit the forfeit request in Research.gov BEFORE the internship start date
- ☐ Submit offer letter and advisor support letter to fellowships@grad.gatech.edu
- ☐ If below 12 credit-bearing hours: complete the Experiential Learning Application in CareerBuzz
- ☐ If below 12 credit-bearing hours: submit placement information and required documentation in CareerBuzz
- ☐ If the internship is located abroad: register through the Office of International Education via ATLAS before departure
- ☐ If the internship is located abroad: confirm travel/health insurance enrollment is complete
- ☐ If international student (F-1): contact ISSS for CPT/OPT authorization
- ☐ Confirm all stipend arrangements and enrollment are in place before starting

After the Internship

- ☐ If applicable: update Research.gov status back to On Tenure after the forfeit period ends
- ☐ Document internship experience in your Annual Activities Report (AAR)
- ☐ Update your IDP to reflect new skills, professional development, and career goals
- ☐ Confirm advisor has certified your AAR

17. Key Contacts

Contacts

Office / Resource	Use For
Graduate Fellowships Manager fellowships@grad.gatech.edu	Fellowship status, stipend, compliance, forfeit requests, offer letter review
Graduate Internship Program Manager grad-internship@gatech.edu	CareerBuzz registration, INTN course, placement forms, advisor approval forms
Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid finaid@gatech.edu	Stipend disbursement, direct deposit, student account processing
Office of International Education – ISSS iss@gatech.edu	CPT/OPT authorization for international students
Office of International Education – Education Abroad education.abroad@oie.gatech.edu	ATLAS registration for internships located outside the United States, travel/health insurance
NSF Research.gov nsfgrfp.org	Fellowship status changes (On Tenure, On Reserve, Forfeit), Annual Activities Reports

APPENDIX B

Frequently Asked Questions

Common questions on program overview, fellowship status, payroll, academic changes, internships, leave, reporting, and contacts.

Frequently Asked Questions – Contents

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How to Use This FAQ

This FAQ organizes NSF GRFP guidance alongside Georgia Tech local process notes. It supplements, and does not replace, the NSF GRFP Administrative Guide and Research.gov.

Confirm your individual circumstances with the Graduate Fellowships Office at fellowships@grad.gatech.edu before making any status, employment, leave, or program change.

1. Program Overview and Eligibility

1. What is the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)?

The NSF GRFP supports eligible graduate students pursuing research-based master's or doctoral degrees in eligible STEM or STEM education fields. At Georgia Tech, fellows select Georgia Tech Research Corporation in Research.gov when identifying the institution.

2. What eligibility requirements should fellows keep in mind?

- Be a U.S. citizen, national, or permanent resident.
- Be enrolled or intend to enroll in a research-based master's or doctoral degree program in an eligible STEM or STEM education field.
- Maintain full-time enrollment, satisfactory academic progress, a GPA of 3.0 or above, and Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) requirements.
- Submit the required Annual Activities Report and declare status each spring.

3. Can I change my Major Field of Study?

During the first fellowship year, fellows must follow the Major Field of Study listed in the application's disciplinary degree program. After completing the first year, fellows may switch their Major Field of Study and/or eligible STEM degree program if the new program remains consistent with NSF GRFP eligibility requirements.

2. Fellowship Status, Tenure, Reserve, Forfeit, and Status Changes

4. What does “on Tenure” mean?

On Tenure means the fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree-granting program and is receiving the NSF GRFP stipend.

5. What does “on Reserve” mean?

On Reserve means the fellow is enrolled full-time in an eligible degree-granting program but is not receiving NSF GRFP stipend support during that fellowship year. Fellows can use Reserve to pursue GRA, GTA, or other fellowship funding.

6. How long do I have to use my GRFP funding?

Fellows have five years to use three years of Tenure funding. Reserve status is declared for an entire fellowship year rather than part of a year. The fellowship academic year runs from August 1 through July 31.

7. What is Forfeit status?

Forfeit status is used during an on Tenure year when the fellow participates in an activity that is not permitted while receiving NSF stipend support, such as accepting certain federal salary or a GRA/GTA appointment. Forfeited stipend months are lost and not recoverable.

8. What is a Fellowship Status Change Request?

A Fellowship Status Change Request is submitted in Research.gov when a fellow needs to change status, such as moving into Forfeit status or returning to Tenure after a forfeit period.

- Log in to research.gov.
- Select “Request Fellowship Status Change.”
- Choose the appropriate fellowship year.
- Select the new status, such as Forfeit or Tenure.
- Enter the requested dates and information.

Note Submit status change requests before the effective date whenever possible so stipend processing and fellowship records remain accurate.

3. Payroll, Compensation, Appointments, and Income Verification

9. What is the NSF GRFP stipend amount?

The NSF GRFP stipend is \$37,000 for 12 months, paid at a monthly rate of \$3,083.

10. When are GRFP stipend payments made?

At Georgia Tech, stipend payments are processed by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and deposited into fellows' Banner accounts at the end of each month. Fellows should consult the current Georgia Tech stipend payment dates for specific disbursement dates.

11. How do I receive direct deposit?

Direct deposits are processed through eRefund and sent to a U.S. bank account. Funds may be deposited into either checking or savings, but not both, and cannot be deposited into money market checking accounts.

- Log in to the Student Payment Portal using your GT Account and password.
- Open the Refunds tab.
- Select "Set Up Account."
- Enter bank routing and account information.
- Continue and submit the setup.

12. Should my GRA appointment end before my fellowship begins?

For a fellow moving from a GRA appointment to GRFP Tenure funding on August 1, end the GRA appointment effective July 31 so the fellowship can begin August 1 without overlapping the GRA appointment and the GRFP stipend.

13. Can I hold a GRA/GTA appointment while On Tenure?

No. NSF GRFP fellows may not be on Tenure and hold a GRA/GTA appointment simultaneously. A fellow who wants to pursue a GRA/GTA must either declare on Reserve before the fellowship year begins or declare Forfeit status before the assistantship.

14. Can my department supplement the difference between the NSF stipend and the department standard stipend?

Georgia Tech reimburses any difference between the department's standard stipend and the NSF stipend. Implementation should be coordinated through the department, the Graduate Fellowships Office, and payroll/financial administrators.

15. Can a department hire me in a supplemental role?

NSF GRFP fellows may work up to 10 hours per week while on Tenure only if the work meets the restrictions described in the guidance. Work cannot be that of a GRA/GTA, cannot relate to the fellow's research, and cannot be considered "in service" of the Institute. Examples of non-allowable work include grader, proctor, or lab assistant roles.

A one-time exception allows a department to hire a fellow as a Graduate Assistant (GA) for only one semester, with a monthly stipend and not as a GTA. A tuition waiver should not be placed on the student record.

Note Fellows considering any form of work while on Tenure should contact fellowships@grad.gatech.edu before accepting the role.

16. Can my department hire or designate me as an affiliate to maintain Georgia Tech resource access?

Yes. Departments may designate or hire a GRFP fellow as an affiliate when needed to maintain access to Georgia Tech resources after a GRA appointment ends. The department manages the specific affiliate process.

17. How can I verify income when leasing an apartment?

Because GRFP support is a fellowship stipend rather than a traditional assistantship appointment, fellows may need to provide alternative income documentation to leasing offices.

- NSF GRFP award letter.
- Georgia Tech fellowship appointment or support letter.
- Documentation of the annual stipend and monthly payment amount.
- Fellowship payment schedule or stipend disbursement information.
- A verification letter from the Graduate Fellowships Manager, if needed.

Note If a leasing office asks for employment verification, explain that the support is fellowship/scholarship funding and provide fellowship income documentation instead.

4. Academic Program Changes, Advisors, and Degree Completion

18. Can I change advisors while I am an NSF GRFP fellow?

Yes. Switching advisors does not by itself change GRFP funding, provided the fellow remains eligible, enrolled in an appropriate research-based program, and making satisfactory academic progress.

- Follow department procedures for changing advisors.
- Update institutional records that identify the advisor.
- Ensure future AARs are reviewed by the appropriate advisor or, if an advisor is unavailable, by the CO when permitted.

19. What if I do not have an advisor during the AAR certification period?

If an advisor is unavailable, has departed, or a fellow is between advisors, the Coordinating Official (CO) may sign the Annual Activities Report in lieu of an advisor when appropriate.

20. Can I change majors or departments at Georgia Tech?

Yes, a major or department change may be allowed if the new department or program still falls under the GRFP Major Field of Study selected for the award and remains an eligible research-based graduate program.

Note Consult the Graduate Fellowships Manager before processing the change, especially if the new program is in a substantially different field.

21. What program changes are generally allowed?

- Research program to research program within the NSF GRFP award field.
- Department change within the same GRFP-supported field.
- Advisor change or research group/lab change.
- Interdisciplinary research shift that remains within the awarded field.
- Ph.D. program to research-based master's-only program.

22. Can I change from a Ph.D. program to a master's-only program?

Yes. Changing from a Ph.D. program to a master's-only program is allowed if the master's program remains an eligible research-based graduate program and remains aligned with the GRFP award field.

23. What should I do after completing a master's degree?

After the ma is completed, submit the AAR and include the degree completion date. Also report publications, presentations, outreach, and other fellowship-related accomplishments as applicable.

24. What program changes are not allowed?

Fellows may not change from a research/thesis-based graduate program to a professional, course-only, or non-research program. The fellowship is intended to support research-based graduate study.

- Research/thesis-based program to professional/non-thesis program.
- On-campus research program to a fully online program.
- Research master's or Ph.D. to course-only degree path.
- Eligible NSF field to an ineligible field.
- Degree-seeking status to non-degree status.
- Any change that removes the research component that formed the basis of the GRFP award.

5. Enrollment, Employment, and Internships

25. What enrollment level is required?

Funds will only be disbursed if fellows are registered full-time, including during summer. Full-time enrollment for graduate students is 12 hours every semester. During fall and spring, 9 of the 12 hours must be letter grade or pass/fail credit. During summer, 6 of the 12 hours must be letter grade or pass/fail credit. Thesis research hours count as graded hours.

26. Can I participate in a non-federal internship while on Tenure?

Yes. A non-federal internship can be compatible with on Tenure status if the activity supports training and follows applicable limits and approvals. No NSF approval is needed for a standard external internship if the fellow remains enrolled full-time, continues making satisfactory academic progress, and completes the AAR as usual.

27. Can I participate in a federally funded internship while on Tenure?

Yes, but if the internship is funded by a U.S. federal agency or federally funded program and the fellow accepts federal salary or stipend during the same period, the fellow must forfeit the GRFP stipend for those months. NSF does not allow dual federal support.

28. What should I provide to have an internship approved?

The Coordinating Official needs a copy of the offer letter and a letter of support from the advisor on Georgia Tech letterhead.

29. Do I need to register my internship?

It depends on your enrollment. If you will maintain at least 12 credit-bearing hours (graded or pass/fail), Career Center registration is not required. If you will be below that threshold, register through the Graduate Internship Program, which enrolls you in a tuition-free, non-credit INTN audit course reflecting full-time engagement.

Note Internships located outside the United States must be registered through the Office of International Education via ATLAS, regardless of enrollment level.

30. What if I am on Reserve and take an internship?

If the fellow is on Reserve, no action with NSF is required for an internship. Georgia Tech registration steps still apply.

6. Medical and Military Leave

31. Can NSF GRFP fellows take medical leave?

Yes. Medical Leave must be requested in monthly increments, up to a maximum of 24 months.

32. Is paid medical leave available?

Yes. NSF support provides up to three months of paid medical leave for qualified medical or dependent-care needs, subject to pre-approval by the Coordinating Official.

33. Are medical leave months forfeited?

No. The unused, deferred months of Tenure or Reserve are available for use later, extending beyond the standard five-year limit. These months are deferred rather than forfeited.

34. What reporting is required while on Medical Leave?

Fellows in Medical Leave status must submit an AAR stating they are on medical leave. Medical Leave must be renewed if it extends into a new fellowship year.

35. How does Military Leave work?

Military Leave is for fellows who must interrupt graduate study for active duty in U.S. military service. While on Military Leave, the fellowship clock stops and remaining Tenure or Reserve periods are not affected.

- Request Military Leave through the GRFP Online Module.
- Submit a copy of duty orders to the CO at the awardee institution.
- Submit an AAR stating Military Leave status and declare fellowship status annually.
- Renew Military Leave if it extends into a new fellowship year.

7. Annual Activities Report (AAR), IDP, and Reporting

36. What is the Annual Activities Report (AAR)?

The AAR is the annual NSF GRFP report documenting fellowship activities and status. Fellows must submit the Activities Report to Georgia Tech and declare status for the following fellowship year each spring.

37. What should I include in my AAR?

- Research accomplishments and progress.
- Publications, presentations, creative works, or other scholarly products.
- Internships and professional development activities.
- Broader impacts or outreach activities.
- Degree completion information, if graduating or completing a master's degree.
- Leave status, if on Medical Leave or Military Leave.

38. Who signs or certifies my AAR?

Fellows should include a signed Faculty Advisor Form with their submission. If a fellow does not have an advisor or the advisor is unavailable, the CO may sign in lieu of an advisor when appropriate.

39. What is the IDP requirement?

The AAR requires the advisor to certify that an Individual Development Plan (IDP) is established and reviewed each year.

40. What should graduating fellows do in Research.gov?

Fellows who are graduating should wait until they are within 30 days of graduating to log in to [research.gov](https://www.research.gov) and update fellowship status for the current fellowship year to “complete with degree.”

8. Grant Number, Publications, and Acknowledgments

41. What is the Georgia Tech NSF GRFP grant number?

The Georgia Tech NSF GRFP grant number is DGE-2545526, valid from 09/01/2025 to 08/31/2030.

42. Do publications and presentations need to acknowledge NSF GRFP support?

Yes. All publications, presentations, and creative works based on activities conducted during the fellowship must acknowledge NSF GRFP support.

43. What acknowledgment statement should I use?

Use the following statement:

This material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program under Grant No. DGE-2545526. Any opinions, findings, 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.

44. Where should I include the acknowledgment?

- Journal articles and manuscripts.
- Conference papers, posters, and presentations.
- Theses and dissertations.
- Creative works and other scholarly products based on fellowship-supported activities.

9. Contacts and Resources

45. Who are the key Georgia Tech contacts?

Contact	Use For
Dr. Bonnie Ferri Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Education	Georgia Tech NSF GRFP Principal Investigator
Camile E. Matthews Graduate Fellowships Manager fellowships@grad.gatech.edu	Coordinating Official (CO): fellowship status, stipend, compliance, forfeit requests, offer letter review
Office of the Bursar Fellowships Accountant fellowship.ask@gatech.edu	Fellowship payment posting and student account questions
Financial Aid grad@finaid.gatech.edu	Stipend disbursement and financial aid records
Bursar – Direct Deposit bursar.ask@business.gatech.edu (404) 894-4618	eRefund setup and direct deposit questions

46. Where can fellows find additional guidance?

- Resources available on grad.gatech.edu/nsf-grfp
 - NSF GRFP Administrative Guide for Fellows.
 - NSF GRFP Frequently Asked Questions.
 - NSF GRFP Module in Research.gov.
 - Georgia Tech Registrar calendar and registration timelines.
 - Georgia Tech RCR resources.
 - Georgia Tech Internship Guide for GRFP Fellows.
- Georgia Tech Career Center internship registration guidance: career.gatech.edu.

10. Quick Checklists

Starting NSF GRFP Tenure Funding

- ☐ Declare on Tenure in Research.gov for the fellowship year
- ☐ Register full-time as early as possible each semester
- ☐ Complete required RCR training by the applicable deadlines
- ☐ Set up direct deposit/eRefund in the Student Payment Portal
- ☐ If transitioning from GRA funding, coordinate the appointment end date before the fellowship start date
- ☐ Confirm any supplemental funding or affiliate access arrangements with the department

Before Changing Program, Major, or Advisor

- ☐ Confirm the new program remains research-based and degree-seeking
- ☐ Confirm the new program remains within the NSF GRFP award field, especially during the first fellowship year
- ☐ Consult the advisor, graduate coordinator, department, and Graduate Fellowships Office
- ☐ Update institutional advisor/program records
- ☐ Plan AAR certification, including CO certification if an advisor is unavailable

Medical Leave Request

- ☐ Contact the Graduate Fellowships Office and CO before the leave begins when possible
- ☐ Request leave in monthly increments
- ☐ Confirm whether paid medical leave applies; paid leave is limited to up to three months
- ☐ Track deferred months, which are available for later use rather than forfeited
- ☐ Submit the AAR stating Medical Leave status and renew the leave if it extends into a new fellowship year

Your Primary Contact

Graduate Fellowships Manager

Camile E. Matthews
fellowships@grad.gatech.edu

When in doubt, contact the Graduate Fellowships Manager before making a status, employment, leave, or program change.