

## USDA/AFRI Predoctoral Fellowships

**Program Area Code** – A7101

**Requested Project Types** – Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Projects

**Requested Grant Type** – Predoctoral Fellowship Grants only

**Application Deadline** – **June 21, 2017 (5:00 p.m., Eastern Time)**

**Program Area Contact** – Dr. Ray Ali; [nifafellows@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:nifafellows@nifa.usda.gov)

**Program Area Priority** – The AFRI Predoctoral Fellowships program area will support projects with:

- a) focused research, education, and extension objectives that are aligned with six AFRI Farm Bill priority areas;
- b) well-developed academic experiences and global competencies;
- c) productive and interactive mentoring;
- d) appropriate and applicable training/career development activities; and
- e) substantive evaluation plans.

**Eligible Predoctoral Fellows** - The individual **must have advanced to candidacy, as per institutional requirements, by June 21, 2017** (as per CFR 3430.303), and provide documentation from the graduate advisor or the institution by the application deadline. The intent of the NIFA Predoctoral Fellowship Program is to support current doctoral students who are at the stage of conducting dissertation research, ultimately leading to completion of the dissertation and respective terminal degree. Predoctoral students, inclusive of those with baccalaureate and/or masters degrees, who meet the aforementioned criteria, may apply. The predoctoral project director (PD) must be a citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States.

### **Proposed Budget Requests –**

- Predoctoral Fellowship requests must not exceed **\$95,000 total per project (including institutional allowance) for project periods of up to 2 years**. Predoctoral Fellowship Grants are not renewable and are limited to a total of **\$47,500 per year**, for:
  - Stipend - up to \$25,000 per year (equals \$2,083.34/month);
  - Tuition, fees, fringe benefits, supplies, travel, workshops, and publications - up to \$19,500 per year;
  - Institutional allowance (in lieu of indirect costs) – up to \$3,000 per year; indirect costs are not permitted on Predoctoral Fellowship Grant awards;
  - With the exception of the stipend, awarded funds in other budget categories may be carried over from year 1 to year 2. The stipend is capped at \$25,000 per year, and cannot be carried over from year 1 to year 2.
- Applications with budget requests exceeding the budgetary guidelines will not be reviewed.

### **Program Area Additional Information:**

- See details for the **REQUIRED Project Summary and Project Narrative format** on the NIFA website at <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Pre-and-Postdoc-Additional->

[Instructions-1.pdf](#). **Proposals that are not in compliance with these instructions can be excluded from review.**

- The predoctoral candidate must be the sole PD listed on the Key Personnel form of the application. The mentor should not be listed as a Co-PD. Select “Graduate Student” for the Predoctoral Fellowship applicant and “Other (Specify)” for the corresponding scientific mentor(s).
- Mentor Letter and the Reference Letters must be included in the Documentation of Collaboration. See the details for submission of Mentor Letter and Reference Letters on the NIFA website at <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Pre-and-Postdoc-Additional-Instructions-2.pdf>.
- In addition to the information on:
  - Attach Biographical Sketch Field, applicants must include Grade Point Average (GPA) and Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores. The Biographical sketch of the Primary mentor (more than one Primary Mentor for integrated project only) should include the number of mentees mentored at least for the last 5 years.
  - Current and Pending Support, the predoctoral applicant and the scientific mentor(s) (as documentation of on-going work in the mentor’s laboratory) must complete current and pending support. This information is only required for the PD (i.e., the student) and the primary mentor.
  - Logic Model and Management Plan, failure to include these components may result in the application not being accepted by the program for evaluation.
- As part of the fellows’ professional development, attendance to other scientific or professional meetings is encouraged.
- At the time of the award and release of funds from NIFA to sponsoring institution, Fellows are required to carry out their projects on a full-time basis (i.e. 100% effort), as specified by the sponsoring institution in accordance with its own policies.
- We highly recommend that applications be submitted through the mentor's institution with the mentor institution listed as the applicant.
- The applicant must identify the functional focus of the fellowship (Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated) leading to a doctoral degree.
- The selection of disciplines to address an issue is to be determined by the prospective applicant in consultation with appropriate mentors.
- Evidence of scholastic achievement should be demonstrated through current doctoral transcript, Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, and other academic successes.
- Priority will be given to applications that show a novel and innovative approach that will advance knowledge in targeted discipline(s). Multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to address AFRI Farm Bill priority areas are encouraged.
- Applications that involve industry participation (e.g., through collaborating mentors) are encouraged.
- Fellows are expected to build the professional skills necessary for career agility; explore opportunities available in academia, industry, government and other career paths; and forge mentorships with professional and business leaders and faculty.