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2016-17 Graduate STEM Research Fellowship Program

The Virginia Space Grant Consortium (VSGC) Graduate Research STEM Fellowship Program provides fellowships of \$6,000 in add-on support to graduate students to supplement and enhance basic research support.

Applicants must be enrolled full-time in a program of study in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) and have a specific faculty-mentored research project that has NASA or aerospace relevance.

The purpose of the VSGC Graduate STEM Research Fellowship program is to encourage talented individuals to pursue careers in STEM and support NASA's mission. Awardees will be required to certify through their academic department that basic research support of at least \$6,000 in matching funds is also being provided before funds are released. These Fellowships are intended to enhance basic graduate support such as graduate research assistantships, graduate teaching assistantships, and non-federal scholarships and fellowships.

Graduate Research Fellowships require that students participate in an active faculty-mentored research experience that aligns with aerospace sector and meets NASA's mission. Awards are made annually and are renewable for one year for students making satisfactory academic and research progress. This is a competitive fellowship program and awards are based on merit recognizing high academic achievement and promise.

Goals:

- Encouraging undergraduate students in STEM and NASA-related fields of study to continue to the graduate level
- Promote graduate STEM-related research, while recognizing high academic achievement and promise
- Increasing participation of underrepresented minorities, females, and students with disabilities in aerospace-related careers
- Implementing the goals of the Virginia Space Grant Consortium and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Eligibility

- Must be a U.S. citizen
- Must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student at one of the Virginia Space Grant Consortium member institutions: Hampton University, Old Dominion University, University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, or The College of William and Mary
- Must be in a program of study demonstrating an interest in STEM and supporting NASA's mission
- Must have a grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale

Underrepresented minorities, females, and persons with disabilities are



encouraged to apply.

VSGC Supported Graduate STEM Research Activity

The fellowship program requires students to participate in an active, identified research activity in STEM that has aerospace and NASA applications. The research must be supervised by a faculty mentor and may be conducted on the home campus or at an industrial or government facility. The research activity should be continuous and may be conducted anytime during the academic year, a ten week summer term, or both. For a list of research titles and abstracts recently funded by the VSGC through the Graduate STEM Research Fellowship Program, visit the [VSGC Student Research Conference web site](#).

Required Application Components

The application must be submitted online and all information must be complete or the application will not be reviewed. The components of the application are discussed in more detail below.

1. Description of Proposed Research Aligned with NASA's Mission and a Plan of Study

A statement written by the student in consultation with the faculty advisor should describe the key elements of the proposed research and plan of study. Applicants should submit a proposal for research that is 2-3 pages (not including references) and clearly describes the research objective and methodology. All research projects must be mentored by a faculty member and this mentor will be required to submit a letter of reference for the project. Applicants will be asked to specifically identify how their research relates to [NASA's Mission Directorates](#).

The selection committee is made up of university faculty in a variety of disciplines. Applicants should present their proposed research in a form that will be understandable to a range of readers. For Graduate Renewal applicants, see research progress report information below. Only one Graduate Fellowship application per student per year is allowed.

2. Resume, Letters of Recommendation, and Faculty Advisor's Vita

Applicants will submit a short resume that includes education history, significant accomplishments (e.g. honors or fellowships), and any other relevant information.

Applicants will also provide the names and contact information for two references of which one must be the student's faculty advisor. VSGC will contact both references via email to request a letter of recommendation on behalf of the applicant. References will be provided with a link to submit the recommendation. The faculty advisor must submit a short vita (no longer than two pages) that includes name, current position, title, department, university address, phone number, research to date, and principal publications. For the application to be complete, the faculty advisor must submit a letter of reference and a vita. The VSGC suggests that applicants contact the references listed and inform them that they will receive an email requesting this information on their behalf.

3. Transcript(s)

Unofficial transcripts from all institutions attended and from the current institution with grades through Fall 2015 are required and can be submitted as a PDF in

the online application (see Graduate Fellow Renewal exception below). Applicants must submit one transcript from each institution of higher education attended, whether as an undergraduate or graduate student. If the applicant is selected to receive the award, official transcripts may be required at the time of acceptance. If the applicant does not have a PDF conversion tool, links to free on-line PDF converters are provided within the application.

For Graduate Research Fellowship Renewal Applications ONLY

Current Graduate Research Fellows applying for a Fellowship Renewal do not need to submit old transcripts as VSGC has those on file. **Renewal applicants do need to submit transcripts from a current institution with Fall 2015 semester grades.**

In the **Educational History** section of the application, please list only your current institution. If your institution does not calculate a traditional GPA, please calculate an estimated GPA for the application and add a related comment in the comments field. Renewal applicants only need to submit a progress report 2-3 pages in length for your VSGC-funded research. You do not need to submit a full research proposal for your **continued** research. **Please note that if your research has changed significantly from the previous year, then you need to contact Kirsten Manning at VSGC immediately (kmanning@odu.edu).**

Awardee Requirements

- Awardees should complete all research as proposed and must notify VSGC immediately of any significant changes in the research project or timeline.
- \$1000 of the award must be used by the awardee for supplies and to facilitate travel and presentations at research related conferences.
- Awardees cannot graduate, i.e. complete their course of study before May 2017.
- Awardees are required to participate in the VSGC's Annual Student Research Conference to be held in late March or early April 2017. Participation includes attendance and active involvement throughout the entire conference, an oral presentation on current research progress, and submission of a research brief for inclusion in the conference proceedings.
- Awardees will be required to certify through their sponsored program office and academic department that basic research support of at least \$6,000 in matching funds is also being provided before funds will be released.
- Awardees must provide a head-shot photo and biographical information upon selection.
- Awardees must inform the Consortium of any changes in contact information including email, phone, or address.
- Awardees should plan to respond to academic and employment follow-up surveys administered by VSGC as required by NASA.
- Awardees may also be asked to share research experiences in public forums, classroom presentations, and professional meetings. Presentations that encourage interest in STEM careers and research to high school students are of particular interest to the Consortium.

Disposition of Unused Funds

If the awardee terminates his/her academic program during the 2016-2017 academic year, the University is required to return a prorated share of the scholarship award to the VSGC. Fellowship funds are not transferable.

Application Timeline:

Applications are due by February 8, 2016. Awards will be announced by early April 2016 with funding provided to students through the universities for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Graduate STEM Research Fellowship Application

APPLICATION Deadline February 8, 2016

(Letters of recommendation must be received by February 15th, 2016.)
Applicants will be notified early April.

Any questions can be directed to Anne Weiss at
aweiss@odu.edu

NOTE: Please read all program guidelines including applicant eligibility and reporting requirements before submitting your application.



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