FELLOWSHIP FOCUS

RENSSLEAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
OFFICE OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

DID YOU APPLY? LET US KNOW!

Whether you applied for the NSF GRFP this week or have submitted an application for another external funding opportunity, please let us know by filling out this brief survey.

The Office of Graduate Education collects this information so we can better tailor our outreach and advising. Some fellowships require Institute supplementation or facilitation—help us ensure your funding transition goes smoothly by letting us know where you've applied.

UPCOMING WORKSHOP

Fulbright US Student Program Info Session. What would you do if you could study anything, anywhere? The Fulbright program provides grants for coursework, research, or English Teaching Assistantships abroad for one year. Eligible candidates are US citizens who will have at least a bachelor's degree by the start of the grant period; students remain eligible until they earn a PhD. Join Alice
Broussard, graduate fellowship advisor, to learn more about these grants and how to apply.

- Monday, November 13. 12 - 1 pm. Union 3606 - Shelnutt. Register.

### UPCOMING DEADLINES

New and early-stage doctoral students may be eligible to apply for a number of large, multi-year fellowships. These are the awards most often won or pursued by Rensselaer students:

#### NOVEMBER deadlines

- **Ford Predoctoral Fellowship.** 3 years of funding within a 5-year period. Disciplines: All. Eligibility: Planning a career in teaching and research at the college/university level; sustained personal commitment to communities underrepresented in the academy.
- **GEM Fellowship.** Up to 5 years of funding and a paid internship with sponsoring employer. Disciplines: STEM. Eligibility: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Native.
- **National Physical Science Consortium Fellowship (NPSC).** Up to 6 years of funding. Disciplines: STEM. Eligibility: PhD student able to accept two paid summer internships; emphasis on recruitment of a diverse applicant pool.

#### DECEMBER deadlines

- **National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG).** 3 years of funding. Disciplines: STEM. Eligibility: PhD student in 1st or 2nd year of study.
• **SMART Scholarship.** Up to 5 years of funding. Disciplines: STEM. Eligibility: Graduate student able to accept paid summer research internships and post-graduation employment at a Dept. of Defense lab (one year of employment for each year of funding).

**JANUARY DEADLINES**

• **Department of Energy Computational Science Graduate Fellowship** (DOE CSGF). Up to 4 years of funding. Disciplines: STEM. Eligibility: 1st year PhD student.


• **Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration Stewardship Science Graduate Fellowship** (DOE NNSA SSGF). Up to 4 years of funding. Disciplines: high energy density physics, nuclear science, or properties of materials under extreme conditions and hydrodynamics. Eligibility: PhD student in 1st or 2nd year of study.

**EXPLORE MORE OPPORTUNITIES**

• Find links to graduate funding databases [here](#).

**FEATURED OPPORTUNITIES**

**NSF Mathematical Sciences Internship Program.** 10-week internship at a National Lab with a stipend of $1,200/week. Open to full-time PhD students in mathematics, statistics, or applied mathematics. Both US citizens and international students are eligible. Deadline: February 1, 2018.
Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute seeks to increase diversity in the biomedical research community. Applicants must have a PhD and an offer to join a lab as a postdoctoral researcher. Fellows receive $250,000/year in research funding and a $20,000 expense allowance for up to 4 years. Deadline: January 10, 2018.

Link Foundation Fellowships. 1- and 2-year doctoral fellowships with stipends of $29,000/year. Open to both US citizens and international students.


APPLICATION ADVISING

The Office of Graduate Education offers one-on-one advising to help you submit the most competitive application. To ensure a productive meeting:

- Discuss a draft of your research statement with your advisor before requesting an appointment.
- Send your materials to be reviewed no later than 24 hours before your scheduled appointment. If your appointment is on a Monday, your materials are due the previous Friday by 5pm.

Book online, or email Alice Broussard to schedule an appointment.
Book online to review successful RPI applications to the NDSEG, SMART, NEUP, Fulbright, AAUW, and more.

**OCTOBER WRITING TIP**

Linguist and cognitive psychologist Steven Pinker warns against the curse of knowledge—in which the writer uses jargon without explanation, leaves gaps in logic, or omits key details.

For fellowship applications, ask yourself: are reviewers experts in your field (NSF GRFP), or are they from across disciplines (Fulbright)? Different audiences have different knowledge bases. Share your work with a representative reader and ask them to mark any sections that are confusing or need further explanation.

Similarly, reviewers can't understand the breadth of your experience unless you state it explicitly. For example, if you were a Teaching Assistant, did you write quizzes? Give a guest lecture? How did you contribute to students' learning in meaningful, tangible ways? Be specific.
FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Aaron Rowen
SMART Scholar
PhD candidate, Industrial and Systems Engineering
Advisor: Martha Grabowski

Research interests: The operation and performance of complex systems, and the impact of new technology on the safe operation of these systems. I am particularly interested in safety-critical systems and transportation systems.

Q: What inspired you to apply for the SMART?
A: My advisor. The award is administered by the American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE) and is focused on the kind of application I'm interested in for my work.

Q: Did you apply for other fellowships at the same time?
A: I also applied for the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG); I was not offered an NDSEG award.

Q: What did you learn during the application process?
A: I believe that I was selected due to the alignment of my research interests with the goals of the organization providing the award. The essays were very important in conveying that alignment to reviewers. I am glad that I spent time carefully writing and editing the written portions of this application. I was fortunate to have help editing from my Advisor, and from Alice Broussard, the fellowship program administrator.

Q: What's your #1 tip for future applicants?
A: It is useful to learn as much as possible about the fellowship you are applying for, and the goals of the organization providing the funding. Allow this information to color your writing during the application process. This is analogous to doing your research on a company before a job interview.

Q: Which aspect of SMART is most valuable to you?
A: SMART is a scholarship-for-service program, which provides a fellowship and stipend while I complete my degree, and a job after. Acceptance of this fellowship is a commitment to work for the Department of Defense after graduation. At first, I considered this a liability. I now consider the job to be a valuable part of this award, due to how well it appears it will align with my research and career goals. It can also be viewed as a post-doc opportunity, increasing my value to an employer after my commitment.

I also consider the award validation of the importance of my research. My confidence is boosted by organizations as important as the ASEE and DoD lending credibility and financial support to my work. This is an important aspect of the fellowship.