

Terms of Appointment – Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowships

NOTE: Through its fellowships administered by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the Ford Foundation funded Predoctoral awards between 1986 - 2023. The following Terms of Appointment apply to Predoctoral Ford Fellows awarded through 2023.

The goals of the Ford Foundation Fellowships are to increase the diversity of the nation's college and university faculties by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, to maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and to increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

The Ford Foundation Fellowships at the predoctoral level are intended to identify and facilitate the academic, intellectual, and professional development of individuals who have demonstrated superior scholarship, are committed to a career in teaching and research at the college or university level, show promise of future achievement as scholars and teachers, and are well prepared to use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

Predocctoral fellowships are intended for students who, at the time of award, have at least three years of study remaining toward the attainment of their Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) or Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) degree in the behavioral and social sciences, the humanities, engineering, mathematics, the physical sciences, or the life sciences.

Conditions of Awards

By accepting or renewing this award, individuals are affirming that their career goals include teaching and research at the college or university level.

By accepting or renewing this award, individuals are affirming that they plan to use a total of three years of support from the Ford Predoctoral Fellowship.

By accepting or renewing this award, Fellows are confirming that they will pursue a Ph.D. or Sc.D. at an accredited nonprofit United States institution of higher learning offering Ph.D.s or Sc.D.s in a field eligible for support in this program.

New Fellows are required to be enrolled full-time in a Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree program no later than the fall of the year in which the award is received. Stipend payments are contingent upon providing required documentation to the Fellowships Office of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine by the established deadlines (see Fellowship Tenure and Stipend section for additional details).

Renewing Fellows are required to be enrolled full-time in a Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree program no later than the fall of the year in which the award is renewed. Stipend payments are contingent upon providing required documentation to the Fellowships Office by the established deadlines (see Fellowship Tenure and Stipend section for additional details).

Stipend payments are contingent upon the Fellow adhering to the Proposed Plan of Graduate Study and Research (see Major Changes section for additional details).

A delay in receipt by the Fellowships Office of the required documentation may result in a delay in the receipt of stipend payments.

If enrollment is temporarily suspended or terminated, or if the Fellow is no longer enrolled full-time in the degree program, or if the Fellow graduates prior to the end of their fellowship year, funds received after the date of suspension, termination, or graduation must be returned.

Acceptance of the fellowship affirms that the information contained in the fellowship application and supporting documents is true and accurate to the best of the individual's knowledge.

Fellows are expected to conform to all institutional and departmental policies and procedures, as well as health and safety requirements and any student code of conduct.

Major Changes

Major changes in the Proposed Plan of Graduate Study and Research or a change of fellowship institution require prior approval by the Fellowships Office. Failure to notify the Fellowships Office of an intended change may result in the forfeiture of the fellowship. Requests for approval regarding major changes must be sent in writing to FordAwards@nas.edu.

Fellowship Tenure and Stipend

The predoctoral award provides a maximum of three academic years of stipend support, which are referred to as years of fellowship **tenure**. All three years of tenure must be used within the five-year period of eligibility. Years when Fellows are not on tenure during the five-year period of eligibility are referred to as Ford **deferral** years.

Stipend payments will be made when a Fellow is on tenure and all necessary documentation has been provided.

Predocctoral Fellows enrolled in a doctoral degree program for the academic year, including the summer, have the option of selecting a tenure period that is 9 or 12 months. Fellows enrolled in a doctoral degree program for Fall and Spring only must select a 9-month tenure period. If the awardee knows with certainty that they cannot use the full amount of support at the time of the award, they are not eligible for the fellowship.

Tenure and stipend schedule are determined when a Fellow accepts or renews the Ford Foundation Fellowship award. The information entered by the Fellow may be changed up to the 15th day of the month prior to the start/renewal date (e.g., August 15 for a September 1 start). To change tenure or stipend schedule, please contact FordAwards@nas.edu.

New Fellows

New Fellows must begin the first year of tenure on September 1st of the year in which the award is received, and they must remain on tenure for at least one full academic year (9 or 12 months). After completing the first year of tenure, Fellows must choose to renew or defer additional years of tenure. However, all three years of tenure must be used within the five-year period of eligibility.

New predoctoral awardees must provide **documentation of enrollment** in a Ph.D. or Sc.D. program at the chosen fellowship institution.

- **Documentation of enrollment** requires submission of a completed [Enrollment Verification Form](#) (EVF) or your institution's equivalent.
- The EVF or equivalent form must be submitted no later than August 15th in order to receive the first stipend payment in September. The EVF or equivalent form may be uploaded to the Ford Fellows web module or may be sent electronically to FordAwards@nas.edu.

In cases where it is not possible to submit documentation of enrollment by August 15, **confirmation of admission** must be provided by August 15th in order to receive the first stipend payment in September.

- For new graduate students who have not been previously enrolled in graduate school, **confirmation of admission** requires submission of a letter from the graduate department affirming that the Ford Fellow is admitted in a Ph.D. or Sc.D. program.
- For new Ford Fellows who were enrolled in graduate school during the prior academic year, **confirmation of admission** requires submission of a copy of university transcripts from the immediate prior semester.
- The **confirmation of admission** may be uploaded to the Ford Fellows web module or may be sent electronically to FordAwards@nas.edu.

Failure to provide **documentation of enrollment** or **confirmation of admission** by August 15 will delay the first stipend payment in September. In all cases, **documentation of enrollment** must be submitted by **September 15** in order to continue receiving stipend payments.

Renewing Fellows

After completing the first year of tenure, Fellows must choose to renew or defer additional years of tenure. However, all three years of tenure must be used within the five-year period of eligibility.

Renewing Fellows may begin their second and third year of tenure on:

1. **June 1st** for 12 months, if they are enrolled during the summer,
2. **September 1st** for 9 months, if they are not enrolled during the following summer and/or may have other sources of funding for summer months, or
3. **September 1st** for 12 months, if they are enrolled during the following summer.

Tenure years may not overlap.

Renewal of the predoctoral fellowship is contingent on submission of several forms to the Ford Fellows web module. Deadlines for these requirements are provided in the Ford Fellows web module. Required documentation includes:

- [Renewal Verification Form](#) (RVF) providing certification from the Fellow's academic institution that satisfactory academic progress toward the Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree is being made and confirming the Fellow has a designated faculty adviser by the end of the first fellowship year,
- An **official transcript** for their prior academic year, and
- An **end-of-year report** from the prior year of tenure, if applicable (see Reporting Requirements section of this document for additional details).

Stipend

An annual stipend of \$27,000 is paid directly to the Fellow in monthly installments during the tenure year. In special cases, the stipend may be disbursed through the Fellow's institution when disbursement by the institution is in the best interest of the Fellow.

Stipend funds disbursed by an academic institution must be distributed to the Fellow in full within the Fellow's selected tenure period. Any undisbursed funds remaining after the conclusion of the tenure period must be returned. The institution is expected to make every effort to disburse the full amount of the stipend to the Fellow within the tenure period.

There is no dependency allowance, institutional grant, or travel allowance provided as part of the predoctoral fellowship award.

Concurrent Awards and Employment

Fellows receiving funding from multiple sources are urged to discuss and negotiate the terms of the funding with all sources, including the Fellowships Office, and their university. Limited stipend supplementation from other sources may be received while on Ford tenure. However, the overall level of compensation from all sources should not exceed the amount of a standard assistantship salary at the department or institution. Funding that comes with a full-time stipend can only be accepted when not actively on Ford tenure, for example, during a Ford deferral year. Ford Fellows who elect a 9-month tenure schedule (from September 1 to May 31) are permitted to receive other sources of funding or employment during the summer months when they are not on Ford tenure.

Concurrent Awards

A Ford Foundation Fellow may not accept a stipend from another major fellowship, internship, or similar internal and external awards while on a year of tenure for the Ford Foundation Fellowship.

Concurrent Employment

Doctoral programs may include a reasonable amount of teaching or other activities that are designed to contribute to the Fellow's academic progress and career development. In all instances, the scholarly and professional development of a Fellow should govern the assignment of these activities, rather than service to the Fellow's institution. Participation in full-time paid or unpaid internships or other full-time paid activities, even if required for degree completion, cannot be undertaken during a tenure year.

Ford Fellows are permitted to accept part-time/half-time teaching or research assistantships if 1) it is required by the program, 2) if it is necessary to secure stipend supplementation, benefits, or tuition waivers, or 3) if it is beneficial to the Fellow's career development. However, the overall level of compensation from all sources should not exceed the amount of a standard assistantship salary at the department or institution. If the position is full-time, Fellows on tenure are not permitted to accept the assistantship.

Leave of Absence

A Fellow on tenure may need to request a "leave of absence" from the Fellowship for personal or family medical events that prevent the Fellow from pursuing their program of study. During an approved leave of absence, and at the request of the Fellow, the fellowship tenure and stipend may be continued for a period of up to six weeks from the beginning of an approved leave of absence. For any additional time required away from the fellowship, tenure and stipend payments will be suspended until the Fellow resumes their program of study. Fellows requesting a paid or unpaid leave of absence must contact FordAwards@nas.edu. Reinstatement or continuation of tenure and stipend payments after the leave period concludes is contingent upon the Fellow providing any requested documentation to confirm enrollment in their Ph.D. or Sc.D. program.

Health Insurance

No health insurance is provided through the Ford Foundation Fellowship award.

Taxation

A Ford Foundation Fellowship award is considered income from a non-compensatory fellowship or scholarship. The Fellowships Office is not required to report payments on IRS Form W-2 or 1099-MISC and will not send Fellows an official tax form. For any questions about taxation, Fellows should consult a tax professional or the Internal Revenue Service office to determine their individual tax liability.

Reporting Requirements

Fellows are required to submit two progress reports during each year of tenure. These include a mid-year report at the end of the fall semester, and an end-of-year or final report at the end of the tenure year. If Fellows are encountering any difficulties at the fellowship institution or in receiving fellowship funds, they are encouraged to contact the Fellowships Office before submitting a mid-year report. Failure to submit required reports may result in stipend payment suspension until the requirements are fulfilled, and failure to submit an end-of-year report may delay or prevent renewal of tenure.

Fellows are required to maintain up-to-date contact information in the Ford Fellows web module during and after the term of their fellowship to allow the Ford Foundation to track progress and facilitate professional interaction, enrichment, and participation among current Fellows and alumni. In addition, Fellows may be asked to complete periodic surveys that assist the Ford Foundation in evaluating the effectiveness of this program.

Conference of Ford Fellows

The Conference of Ford Fellows brings together newly awarded predoctoral, dissertation, and postdoctoral Fellows, along with a group of Fellowship alumni who plan and lead the Conference. The Conference provides opportunities for an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and opportunities to identify mentors and peers from across the country. The Fellowships Office also invites representatives from a selection of university and commercial publishers.

New Fellows will be invited to attend the Conference of Ford Fellows in the fall of their award year. Pending the availability of funds, support may be provided for other Fellowship related activities. The Ford Foundation will cover domestic travel, hotel accommodations, and other eligible travel expenses for in-person Conferences.

Regional Liaisons

Regional Liaisons are Fellowship alumni who volunteer to serve as senior mentors to current Fellows in their defined geographic area. For contact information, you can access [this list of Regional Liaisons](#). In particular, new Fellows are encouraged to avail themselves of this valuable resource.

Liability

Neither the National Academy of Sciences nor the Ford Foundation assumes any liability or responsibility whatsoever for the payment of any compensation with regard to a Fellow's possible involvement in any accident or incident causing injury to other persons or damage to property.

Neither the National Academy of Sciences nor the Ford Foundation assumes any responsibility to the Fellow or their dependents for any compensation for injury, disability, or death of the Fellow during the tenure of the fellowship or travel to and from the fellowship institution.

Program and Award Administration

The Fellowships Office of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine administers the Ford Foundation Fellowship programs and follows the progress of Fellowship alumni's professional careers. Inquiries concerning all aspects of program and award administration should be directed to:

The Fellowships Office
The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
500 Fifth Street, N.W., Keck 576
Washington, D.C. 20001
Tel: (202) 334-2860
Email: FordAwards@nas.edu