

## **Incorporating Graduate Research Assistants (GRA), Graduate Research Fellows (GRF), and Graduate Fellows (GF) into Sponsored Projects Proposals**

GW has three categories of graduate student appointments that can be funded by sponsored projects. At the proposal stage, the PI should identify the category that best fits the project objectives. Graduate students can either be a GRA, GRF or GF, but cannot be both on the same project. If the GRA appointment is being continued during the summer months, the same hourly requirement applies.

All involved in this process should be familiar with the sponsor guidelines on allowed costs. Please note that it is the Principal Investigator (PI)'s responsibility to review sponsor guidelines to ensure a GRA, GRF or GF are allowable for proposal submission.

	<b>Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)</b>	<b>Graduate Research Fellow (GRF)</b>	<b>Graduate Fellow (GF)</b>
<b>Type of Student</b>	Full-time Graduate student*	Full-time Graduate student*	Full-time Graduate student*
<b>Service Requirements</b>	20 hours/week, at least 1 full semester**	At least 1 full semester	At least 1 full semester
<b>Appointment Type</b>	Award with service requirements	Fellowship	Fellowship
<b>Payment Method</b>	Monthly salary	Stipend and/or Tuition	Stipend and/or Tuition
<b>Purpose</b>	Work on research projects to produce generalizable knowledge, as assigned and supervised by the PI	Engage in research programs or participate in training to further his/her individual educational development	Engage in research programs or participate in training to further his/her individual educational development
<b>AY Payment Average (Masters)</b> (see below on budgeting)	Range is \$16-26,000 for a Master's candidate***	Range is \$16-26,000 for a Master's fellow***	Range is \$16-26,000 for a Master's Fellow***
<b>AY Payment Average(Doctoral)</b> (see below on budgeting)	Range is \$20-30,000 for a Doctoral candidate	Range is \$20-30,000 for a Doctoral fellow	Range is \$20-30,000 for a Doctoral fellow
<b>Tuition Component</b>	Available if the project meets the criteria noted in 'Additional Information'	Request for tuition if allowed by sponsor	Request for tuition if allowed by sponsor
<b>Funding Source</b>	Refer to opportunity announcement	Refer to opportunity announcement	Purely training grant

\*Full-time graduate student means registered for 18 credits per academic year, unless they are certified full-time

\*\*If a graduate student will work fewer than 20 hours/wk, they should be hired as a temporary wage employee. Graduate students are not allowed to exceed 20 hours/wk

\*\*\*Summer rates are pro-rated based on the academic year

**1. Graduate Research Assistants (GRA)** - Graduate Research Assistants are graduate students who are employed by the university and are supported by internal or external funding sources. The money is paid to the student as compensation for services for work that contributes to the scope of the project. This compensation is in the form of salary. A more detailed GRA definition is available at <http://research.gwu.edu/student-support#Grad>.

The Indirect Costs associated with the Salary and Fringe will be included in the budgets if permitted by the sponsor. Tuition can be requested as well, provided that tuition is allowed by the sponsor.

A sample budget and budget justification is provided below for a GRA.

**Sample GRA Budget:**

Note: this budget assumes that the student will be registered for 18 credit hours over the academic year. Accordingly, the Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships (GSAF) will cover 2/3 or 67% of the tuition up to 12 credit hours per academic year, if the grant covers the university’s standard negotiated on-campus F&A rate and the school does not have a closed budget. The remaining credit hours can be included in the budget if allowed by the sponsor.

GRA salary (51122)			\$22,000
Fringe Temporary (51891)*		6.50%	\$1,430
Tuition (57111)*	\$1,490	6 credit hours	\$8,940
Total Direct Costs			
\$32,370			
Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) **		MTDC	\$23,430
F&A (Indirect Costs)***		59.50%	\$13,941
Total Budget for the GRA			\$46,311

\*Fringe, tuition and F&A rates vary by year and/or by school. For current Tuition, Fringe, and F&A rates, please refer to Student Accounts (<http://studentaccounts.gwu.edu/tuition-rates>) and the Controller (<https://controller.gwu.edu/fa-rate>)

\*\*MTDC excludes the tuition costs

\*\*\*Facilities & Administrative costs (Indirect Costs excludes tuition from the calculation)

If the student will continue the GRA appointment over the summer, the monthly rate is calculated as follows: Academic year rate/9; in this case: 22,000/9 = \$2,444.44

**Sample GRA Budget justification:** *We are requesting support for one Graduate Research Assistant (TBD or name if known). A graduate research assistant will support the project at 50% FTE level during the academic year. He or she will assist the PI with [include research duties, such as . . . ]. The GRA will be paid wages for the services rendered.*

**2. Graduate Research Fellows (GRF)** – Graduate Research Fellows may be requested where 1) training is a substantial part of the student's experience and, 2) funding agencies allow stipends and tuition to be charged to sponsored projects. When both conditions are met, the PI has the option of

appointing the graduate student as a Graduate Research Fellow. PIs should consult with their department administrator or sponsored projects administrator to determine if training is a substantial component and to ensure the budget justification provides adequate description of the training. Please note that the student’s research must be related to the scope of the project. A more detailed GRF definition is available at <http://research.gwu.edu/student-support#Grad>.

GRFs should be included in the proposal budget and budget justification. A sample budget and budget justification is provided below.

**Sample GRF Budget:**

Note: this budget assumes that the student will be registered for 18 credit hours over the grant’s yearly budget period. GSAF does not cover tuition for a GRF. Stipend and/or Tuition can be included on the budget if allowed by the sponsor.

GRF stipend (57115)			\$22,000
Tuition (57111)*	\$1,490	18 credit hours	\$26,820
Modified Total Direct Costs		MTDC	\$48,820
F&A (Indirect Costs)**		59.50%	N/A
Total Budget for the GRA			\$48,820

\* Tuition varies by school and/or by year. For current rates and rates that are applicable for a specific school, please go to: Student Accounts (<http://studentaccounts.gwu.edu/tuition-rates>)

\*\* Facilities & Administrative costs (Indirect costs - excludes stipend & tuition from the calculation)

If the student will continue the GRF appointment over the summer, the monthly rate is calculated as follows: Academic year rate/9; in this case: 22,000/9 =\$2,444.44

**Sample GRF Budget Justification:** *We are requesting support for one Graduate Research Fellow (TBD or provide name). Student stipend and tuition is requested for the graduate research fellow as part of a training component of the project. Student training is an important objective of the research project and the scope of the research will [form a portion of the student’s thesis or other training objective]. The rates are determined by GWU established policies.*

**NOTE:** Budget justification should clearly delineate who will be responsible for supervising the Graduate Research Fellow and who will be responsible for completing the objectives of the project. GRFs are considered trainees, so PIs should ensure there is enough effort by non-trainees to complete the “work” of the project.

**3. Graduate Fellows (GF)** – Graduate fellows are graduate students in a pure training role. Graduate fellowships may be funded by the university or an external grant making body. Graduate fellows receive educational assistance, such as tuition fellowships and/or stipends, as appropriate, to support their training. Budget is calculated identically to that for the Graduate Research Fellow. Please note that the student’s research must be related to the scope of the project. A more detailed GF definition is available at <http://research.gwu.edu/student-support#Grad>.

Note: GSAF does not cover tuition for a GF. Stipend and/or Tuition can be included on the budget if allowed by the sponsor.

### **Stipend/Salary Structure:**

For Graduate Research Assistant, Graduate Research Fellows, and Graduate Fellows, academic year (9 month) stipend and/or salary levels are:  
\$16K-\$26K for MS full time graduate students  
\$20K-\$30K for PhD full time graduate students

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **TUITION FELLOWSHIP FOR GRAs**

PIs are encouraged to write tuition into sponsored projects if it is allowed by the sponsor.

If a full-time student is hired as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), supported by a grant that covers the university's standard negotiated on-campus F&A rate, hired by the program where they are earning their degree, and is deemed deserving of a merit award by the director of the graduate program, the Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships Office (GSAF) will award a tuition fellowship equal to **two-thirds** of the applicable tuition or up to six credits in the Fall and Spring. For these students, the award will be automatic and will not need to be cleared prior to the submission of the grant. Tuition fellowships for other students may also be granted by the office or by individual schools and units, but will not automatically be awarded.

Only students in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the Columbian College, the Elliott School, the School of Engineering and Applied Science, the Graduate School of Business, the School of Nursing, or the College of Professional Studies will be eligible for tuition fellowships awarded by GSAF. These tuition fellowships will not be charged to sponsored projects.

Please note that students will not be able to "bank" tuition credits and use them in future semesters. In instances where a student requires less than 18 credits, for example dissertation credit, GSAF will cover 67% of the cost of the credit.

For the 1/3 not covered by GSAF, the tuition can be requested by the PI of their Department and/or School Dean.

If you have questions about a graduate student appointment proposed in a sponsored project, please reach out to your HR client partner or your designated point of contact for proposal development within your school/department.