



DISSERTATION GRANT PROGRAM & WILLIAM SUTTLES GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

Office of the Vice President for Research

Application Deadline: 5 p.m. October 1, 2021

PURPOSE & GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the Dissertation Grant Program sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Graduate School is to support the completion of scholarly dissertation research in any discipline of doctoral level graduate students at Georgia State University. The grant program is designed to help full-time (at least 9 hrs./semester) doctoral graduate students meet the cost associated with completing their dissertation work. There is one campus-wide competition for these awards each year and award winners may elect to apply the funds to the current or to the next fiscal year.

Applicants to this Dissertation Grant Program may also be nominated for the **William M. Suttles Graduate Fellowship** by their dissertation director as part of their application for the Dissertation Grant. There is a place on the application cover page to note whether the applicant is a Suttles nominee and justification and support for this nomination must be included in the letter of support from the Dissertation Director (more details below). The fellowship will be awarded to the applicant deemed to have the most outstanding qualifications and accomplishments within their field of study and who also submits an outstanding dissertation grant proposal as determined by the team of faculty reviewers.

AMOUNT AND TIME FRAME OF AWARD

- Award amount is \$2,000
- Award period can be current fiscal year (01/01/22 - 06/30/22) or next fiscal year (07/01/22 - 6/30/23). All funds must be expended during the time period awarded and can only be used for dissertation-related expenses.
- ***Awardees should be within approximately 2 years of completing and defending their dissertation from the time the award is activated.***

The ***Suttles Fellowship is an additional monetary award of \$1,500*** on top of the \$2,000 dissertation award. Because the Suttles award is a fellowship, the funds do not need to be used for dissertation expenses and a budget is not required. The Suttles Fellowship funds may be used in any manner the student desires (can be used for personal living expenses, for example). If not used before the student graduates, the fellowship funds will be given to the awardee in the form of a check from the university when the student leaves GSU.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

- Open to all doctoral level graduate students in any discipline that have **an approved dissertation prospectus or its equivalent**. A dissertation prospectus is simply an officially approved dissertation project. This does not require that applicants have completed their qualifying exams which vary across disciplines. Applicants must have their Doctoral

Director certify in their letter of support (more details below) that the eligibility requirements have been met.

- Doctoral students are limited to one (1) dissertation grant award from Georgia State.
- ***Applicants should be within approximately 2 years of completing and defending their doctoral degree.***

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Access to application forms

1. Log into the Research Portal at: <http://researchportal.gsu.edu> using your Campus ID and Password.
2. Once you log in, select Internal Grants in the left navigational menu.
3. To begin your submission, click on “Create New Application” and select Dissertation Grant from the menu.
4. This will bring you to the online form and instructions for completing, routing, and submitting your Dissertation grant application. The online application form is one page only.

Drafting and submitting the application

1. Complete all items required on the online application form.
 - * **NOTE:** To enter names and emails on the online form, you will need to use the pop-up search box. If you are blocking pop-ups, this will not work. Please unblock pop-ups on your computer to avoid this problem.
2. Upload and attach your final and complete proposal with all appendices as ***a single PDF file***. Do not attach the Mentor’s letter, but those should be emailed by the mentor (see instructions below).
3. Note any compliance approvals you will need for your work (e.g. human subjects, animal subjects, biohazards, etc.). You can enter the compliance approval number you are listed under if you have it or select “Pending” if you do not. You will need to provide the approval before you can receive any award funding.
4. You may begin your online submission and “Save Changes” if you want to go back later to complete the application. When you go back in to work on a saved draft, you will find it listed under “My Submissions” in the left navigational menu.
5. Fill in the “Workflow” section of the online application form using only as many lines as there are people who have to approve the application. Make sure you have entered the name of your Dissertation Director’s (graduate dissertation mentor) name and email in the first workflow line. Only if your department requires the department chair to approve your application (ask your mentor) should you put the name and email of the Dept. chair in a second workflow line. These are all the required workflow approvals for your proposal.
6. The applicant is responsible for officially submitting the final application. A saved draft is not considered a submitted application.
7. Once you select “Submit,” notifications will automatically be emailed to the people listed in the approval workflow. They will be directed to approve the application online through the Research Portal. The Applicant will receive an email notification when the approvals are completed and the application is officially “submitted.”
 - * **NOTE:** Emails from the submission system are sent from noreply@rs.gsu.edu and may go into the junk email box. If these are not received by applicants or approvers,

please check your junk mailbox for emails from that address and move them into your inbox.

- * **NOTE:** There is a 48-hour grace period after the submission deadline for all approvals to be completed in the Research Portal and for the application status to read “Submission Complete.”
- 8. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check the status of their application in the Research Portal (under “My Submissions”) to make sure approvals are done on time and to make sure the status of their application in the Research Portal reads ‘Submission Complete.’ Follow up with approvers directly to remind them to get approval done.
- 9. If an approver rejects the application for any reason, the applicant will receive an email notice with the reason it was rejected. If the deadline has not already passed, the applicant can go into the Research Portal to revise the submitted application and submit it again for approval.
- 10. If someone listed in the workflow cannot access the system to approve online for any reason, they may send an email approval to our office before the deadline or within the 48-hour grace period (internalgrants@gsu.edu).

Formatting of application

Because proposals are evaluated by an interdisciplinary review panel, they should be written to be understood by faculty who are not in the applicant’s immediate field of study. Applicants should limit their use of jargon and acronyms or provide adequate definitions when necessary. ***Applications should directly address the review and award criteria described below.***

Applications should not necessarily cover the entire dissertation project, but just the remaining portion to be completed with assistance of the funding provided by this award.

Applicant should refer to the project as being their own (use “I” not “we”) and not that of their lab team or mentor.

1. **Online Application Form:** The online application form includes relevant information about the application and the applicant. This “page” is completed in the Research Portal and will be linked to the main body of the application once the application is submitted. All information should be completed on this form before the application is submitted.
2. **Compliance approvals:** Applicants must be listed on all of their Dissertation Director’s relevant compliance protocols that cover the type of research outlined in their proposal and applicants must have completed all relevant compliance training. Specifically, work that uses human subjects, non-human animal subjects, bio-hazardous agents, recombinant DNA molecules, ionizing radiation, and/or biologically-derived toxins must be backed up by the appropriate compliance protocol on which the applicant is named as a student before funding will be made available. If a compliance protocol approval is pending at the time of application, approval must be obtained by the time of award. Adding an applicant to an approved compliance protocol simply involves the PI submitting an amendment to the approved protocol requesting the addition of the applicant’s name and showing that the applicant has completed all relevant training.

3. The **main text of proposal** will be attached as a **single PDF file** to your application cover page in the Research Portal. Don't include a cover page since the application form will serve as your cover page to reviewers. Be sure to use:
- a. 12-point Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman font;
 - b. 1-inch margins on all sides;
 - c. Header on each page that includes project title and applicant's full name;
 - d. Page #s starting with "page 1" on Abstract page;
 - e. The main proposal should include the following sections with the following section titles:
 - i. **Abstract** (no more than ½ page, single-spaced): A very brief summary description of the project including specific aims or goals, a statement of the significance or potential impact of the proposed project within the field of study or beyond, a statement or two about the general methods to be employed, and a statement about the expected outcome(s) of the project (research question(s) to be answered, new information or data to be uncovered, artistic product to be completed, etc.).
 - ii. **Project Description** (no more than 4 pages, single-spaced): This section should begin with a statement of the problem or topic to be studied and a discussion about why (i.e. practical, theoretical and empirical framework) the work outlined in the proposal is important to the field of study or beyond (why is it important this be done?). Along with providing select background literature to support the proposed project idea, the project description should clearly state the specific aims or goals for the proposed project and provide a clear and detailed account of the methodology to be employed. Expected outcomes (results, questions answered, etc.) should be specified and how the methods will lead to the expected outcomes should be discussed briefly. A reference list should be included (if appropriate), but references are not subject to the page limitations.
 - iii. **Applicant's biosketch, curriculum vita, or resume'** (no more than 2 pages, single-spaced): An abbreviated copy of the applicant's brief biosketch (NIH or NSF style), curriculum vita, or resume' must be submitted with the application to support the applicant's qualifications in the proposed field of study. The following information should be included in the vita:
 - Education (listing institutions, degrees, and dates awarded; include any additional relevant training);
 - Relevant professional employment (listing dates; titles; employers);
 - Scholarly works (e.g. publications - published or just submitted, professional presentations of research, artistic works, etc.);
 - If applicable, list any external funding obtained for professional, academic work (can include financial aid or grants applied for and note if these were awarded);
 - Honors and Awards relevant to the applicant's graduate training.
 - iv. **Budget: The total budget cannot exceed \$2,000.** Only expenses that are a direct cost for the dissertation work are eligible for funding. Support may be requested for such costs as supplies, equipment, participant remuneration, and travel for

research purposes (i.e., data collection, travel to archives.) A budget format is included in these guidelines for instructional purposes.

- Travel: Travel required to conduct research or access a specific resource needed to complete a product or production is eligible for funding. Travel must be calculated on the basis of State regulations and Federal per diem rates for specific locations. Travel expenses to attend or present at a professional meeting or conference will not be funded unless there is a specific justification provided in the Budget Justification that it is critical to the completion of the dissertation work. **NOTE: Provide alternative plans if travel is not allowed due to ongoing pandemic.**
 - Supplies and other direct costs: Support may also be requested for supplies, participant remuneration, and equipment necessary for the completion of the dissertation project. Purchase of food for participants (e.g., for focus groups) is not an allowable expense. This internal grant program should not be used to cover expenses typically funded by departments.
- v. **Budget Justification**: A written justification must be included for *each budget item*. All items (including equipment) should be justified in terms of how they will be used in the proposed project. Justification for travel should include the following points (when appropriate):
- Dates and location of travel;
 - Where the proposed trip fits within the overall plan and completion of the project.

4. **Creating and attaching the single PDF file to your online application.**

Creating a single PDF file from multiple documents requires Adobe Acrobat -standard or professional (not the same as Adobe Acrobat Reader).

- a. Once you have all your Word and/or PDF files to be merged, open Adobe Acrobat and click on “Create PDF” in the toolbar on the main screen. If this tool is not visible, click on “View” “Task Buttons” “Show All Task Buttons.”
- b. A window will pop up. Under “Add Files” area click “Browse” to locate and add PDF files to this compilation. You should add them in the order you wish them to appear in the final document.
- c. Once you have selected all the files to be added in the order you want them to merge, click “OK.”
- d. This creates the new merged PDF file and you will need to save it with a new name by clicking on “File” “Save As” and entering the new name for this file.
- e. Upload the single PDF file of your completed cover page in the Research Portal on the cover page where indicated. Make sure the file is attached and be sure to click “Upload” before you proceed.

Alternatively: Most copiers can create a single PDF file by scanning a hardcopy of your collated paperwork.

5. **Letter of support from Dissertation Director**: Applicant should provide the following instructions to your mentor for their letter of support. The applicant’s Dissertation

Director should submit a letter of support separate from the application. The letter should:

- a. Be completed and printed on departmental letterhead;
- b. Provide confirmation that the applicant has an officially approved dissertation prospectus (project);
- c. Assure that the applicant is within approximately two years of completing their doctoral degree, the basis of eligibility for this application;
- d. Explain how the student's project fits with your greater research program and what part of the project work the student will be responsible for.
NOTE: The more positive information included in the letter the more helpful the letter will be for the applicant;
- e. Describe the applicant's qualifications as well as his or her potential for making a contribution to his or her field of study post degree;
- f. If applicant will complete dissertation approval process after application is submitted by before January of the next year, please be very clear about that in the mentor letter to assure their eligibility for the award;
- g. *If the applicant is a **Suttles Fellowship nominee**, the letter of support should include an explanation as to why the Dissertation Director/Advisor believes this student is exceptional, not only among students in their program, but also among students across disciplines and in their field. Letters of support should clearly illustrate that the nominee has superior abilities, experience, and a high potential for success in their discipline. **These letters are critical to the review of Suttles nominees and should reflect the outstanding status and potential of the nominee in a compelling manner.***

The letter should be sent by email directly from the Dissertation Director to internalgrants@gsu.edu, noting the applicant's name in the email subject line. Letters will not be shared with the applicant other than at the Dissertation Director's discretion. **Letters should be received by the Internal Grants email inbox later than 48 hours after the application deadline (preferably before).**

REVIEW PROCEDURES

Funding is awarded to proposals based on the recommendations of a of faculty from the Internal Grant Peer Review Committee representing various disciplines. Reviewers use the review criteria detailed below to evaluate and assign a single, global score for each application. Projects in different disciplines will be reviewed with slightly different criteria. For example, an artistic project will not be judged on research design and methodology, but on content and potential impact of the project within the field.

Review and Award Criteria

1. Overall project criteria:
 - a. Rationale: Does the applicant clearly explain the reason for doing this project (outside of completing their degree)?

- b. Significance and potential impact of the project: How well does the applicant explain the significance of the project? How much might the project impact the applicant's training and potential job placement in their field?
 - c. Clarity and Design: Are the specific aims or goals of the project clearly stated? Is there too much technical jargon? Are the measures and methods to be employed adequate and appropriate to answer the main questions of the project or to achieve the main outcome proposed? Are the measures and methods clearly described and organized?
 - d. Feasibility of the project: Can the proposed project be completed within a reasonable amount of time and is it likely the applicant will complete their dissertation within a two-year period (based on information provided in the application)?
 - e. ***For Suttles Fellowship nominees, is the project rated at the very top in terms of quality and potential impact compared to the typical dissertation project?***
2. Qualifications of the applicant: Has the applicant completed their coursework and have an officially approved dissertation prospectus (NOTE: this does not require completion of qualifying exams which vary across disciplines)? Does the applicant have a track-record of conducting work in the discipline in which their proposed project falls **OR** do they have proof of having specialized skills or appropriate training for completing the project successfully? Is the applicant working under a dissertation director who is qualified to mentor them on this project? (***For Suttles nominees, is the applicant uniquely skilled, experienced and significantly above the average doctoral student? Does the student's CV reflect the breadth of experience and knowledge superior to their peers and indicative of a high potential for success in their field?***)
 3. Letter of support: Does the letter of support from the applicant's Dissertation Director provide evidence of the applicant's qualifications, confirmation of their status for eligibility (completion of coursework and dissertation prospectus) and assessment of their potential job placement and positive impact in their discipline/field of study? Is the letter generally positive and supportive of student? (***For Suttles Fellow nominees, does the letter provide an outstanding and compelling promotion of the applicant for consideration for this award? Does the letter of support reflect information about and nominator's confidence in the superiority of the student's abilities, experience and potential for success in their field that appears to exceed the average student?***)

OTHER INFORMATION

Further information about the Dissertation Grant Program described in this announcement may be obtained by contacting:

Dr. Kelly Stout
Assistant Vice President for Research Operations and Strategic Initiatives
377 58 Edgewood Avenue
Email: kpowellstout@gsu.edu
Phone: 404-413-5475

DISSERTATION GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET FORMAT

Note: This is not a form that must be used, but simply a guideline on what to include on your budget page for this proposal. Each item should be justified in the budget justification.

Budget Item	Amount Requested
Materials and Supplies (itemize)	
Equipment (itemize)	
¹ Travel (location, dates and amount for each trip and itemize)	
² Other Direct costs (itemize)	
PROJECT TOTAL BUDGET	\$2,000

¹Travel expenses must be itemized and each item should be justified in the budget narrative.

²Other Direct costs may include publication costs, human subjects' remuneration, equipment or supplies needed for research, etc.

NOTE: No budget is required for the additional funds awarded to the Suttles Fellowship winner.