

Indige-FEWSS: Frequently Asked Questions

Funding

Q:	What is the NSF NRT?
A:	<p>NSF NRT is the National Science Foundation Research Traineeship (NRT) Program. The NSF Research Traineeship (NRT) program is designed to encourage the development and implementation of bold, new, and potentially transformative models for STEM graduate education training. The NRT program aims to ensure that NRT Trainees in research-based master’s and doctoral degree programs develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to pursue a range of STEM careers. The NRT program includes two tracks: the Traineeship Track and the Innovations in Graduate Education (IGE) Track. The Traineeship Track is dedicated to effective training of STEM graduate students in high priority interdisciplinary research areas, through the use of a comprehensive traineeship model that is innovative, evidence-based, and aligned with changing workforce and research needs.</p> <p>The NSF NRT award runs June 2017 to June 2022. NSF #DGE1735173</p>
Q:	What does the NSF NRT fellowship fund?
A:	<p>The NSF NRT fellowship provides funding to cover tuition, required costs of education (fees), student-only health insurance through the University of Arizona, and \$34,000 NRT stipend for a 12-month appointment.</p> <p>NRT-funded trainees cannot be charged tuition or any other required costs of education while they are receiving a NRT stipend.</p> <p>Funding is awarded for ONE YEAR to Masters or TWO YEARS to PhD students. The 2021-2022 Cohort is provided with ONE YEAR of funding regardless of degree program.</p>
Q:	What is a funded NRT Trainee and a non-funded Trainee?
A:	<p>All trainees (funded and non-funded) were selected based on a competitive selection process. A funded NRT trainee receives a fellowship (explained above). A non-funded trainee does not receive a fellowship but receives program support. NSF Trainee definition: “a research-based STEM graduate student (MS or PhD) who is accepted into the institution’s NRT program and is expected to complete all the required program elements as described in the proposal. Trainees do not have to receive stipend and tuition support directly from the NRT. Trainees can be supported from a variety of sources including research assistantships, teaching assistantships, fellowships, scholarships or other funding.”</p>
Q:	How will the NRT stipend be distributed?
A:	<p>NSF NRT stipends will be disbursed directly into funded NRT trainee’s UA bursar’s account. The distribution schedule: August 15; September 15; January 15; March 15; June 1; and July 30, provided all benchmarks are met. Stipend disbursement requires reporting of satisfactory progress and fulfillment of trainee duties prior to disbursement dates. Failure to make satisfactory progress or failure to complete duties will result in withholding of the disbursements until all requirements are met. In addition, at the end of each trainee’s tenure, disbursement of the last stipend is contingent upon completion of all required exit reporting.</p>

Funding (continued)

Q:	Does the NRT stipend cover my health insurance?
A:	<p>Funded NRT trainees receive student health insurance while receiving funding. <i>If you are a non-funded NRT trainee, you are responsible for your health insurance.</i> All UA graduate students are required to maintain student-only health insurance.</p> <p>Must enroll online: https://health.arizona.edu/2019-2020-student-health-insurance-plan</p> <p>Orientation to Vaccination Checklist online: https://www.health.arizona.edu/graduate-students STUDENTS MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF MMR VACCINATION</p> <p>*Note that health insurance premiums paid during the spring semester provide coverage through summer. https://health.arizona.edu/2019-2020-campus-care-benefits-coverage-period</p> <p>For additional information please visit http://www.health.arizona.edu/insurance.htm</p>
Q:	Does the NRT Fellowship cover out-of-state tuition?
A:	<p>Funded NRT trainees will have <i>full tuition remission regardless of state residency status</i> for their funding tenure. Additional tuition information can be found at the Office of the Registrar www.registrar.arizona.edu. You may determine your state residency status here http://registrar.arizona.edu/personal-information/requirements-resident-status</p>
Q:	<p>What are UA's mandatory fees? Will the NRT stipend be available in time to pay UA fees?</p>
A:	<p>While receiving NRT funding, funded NRT trainees are not responsible for mandatory education fees. The exact amount of each semester's fees can be found on the bursar's office schedule.</p> <p>https://bursar.arizona.edu/tuition/fees.</p> <p>For students enrolling full time, the fee schedule will freeze at this amount for 4 years. NRT funding only covers Fall/Spring mandatory fees. Summer fees are separate and the trainee's responsibility. Fees are due on the first day of classes.</p>
Q:	Will I pay income tax or other taxes on my award?
A:	<p>It is the trainee's responsibility to file taxes and report qualifying income. The University of Arizona will not withhold taxes from your stipend distribution. Based on information from the IRS website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >the stipend amount will be considered taxable income >the tuition/fees/insurance portion of the award meets the conditions to be tax-free <p>Additional information can be found on the IRS website:</p> <p>https://www.irs.gov/help/ita/do-i-include-my-scholarship-fellowship-or-education-grant-as-income-on-my-tax-return</p> <p>And</p> <p>https://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc421</p> <p>Students with questions about credits they may qualify for can visit www.IRS.gov and search for Tax Benefits for Education Information Center or download Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education.</p> <p><i>*Please seek the advice of a tax professional to discuss your unique situation.</i></p>

Q:	Are there funds to support the cost of publishing my research?
A:	Trainees are encouraged to publish! Indige-FEWSS will contribute to publication expenses. Please also work with your home department and advisor to cover costs with departmental funds.
Q:	How will other awards affect my NRT fellowship?
A:	Trainees may accept other awards and responsibilities. However, per NSF guidelines; <i>the NRT fellowship must be placed on “reserve status” while a student is funded by and responsible to another fellowship/traineeship/assistantship/award.</i>
Q:	How can I access additional funding to travel for my research or to attend events?
A:	There are many grants available to graduate students for research and travel expenses. Please share with other NRTs when you learn of an organization or opportunity! Check with professional organization, honors societies and conference organizers, too. Check out these sites: https://gpsc.arizona.edu/travel-grants https://gidp.arizona.edu/carter-travel-award https://gidp.arizona.edu/gruener-research-travel-award https://grad.arizona.edu/futurestudents/tags/travel-grants http://engineering.arizona.edu/current/funding-opportunities
Q:	As a funded NRT, will I be eligible for renewed funding?
A:	We encourage non-funded and funded Trainees to re-apply for the funding award, although we cannot guarantee preferential treatment to Trainees at any award level.

Arriving on campus

Q:	When and how do I enroll in courses?
A:	New graduate students can find enrollment info and deadlines online General Information here: http://registrar.arizona.edu/students/courses/enrolling-in-courses?audience=students&cat1=10 How to register and additional info here: http://registrar.arizona.edu/courses/how-register-courses?audience=students&cat1=10&cat2=30
Q:	May I enroll in an online graduate program as a NRT?
A:	No. All trainees must be based in Tucson during the academic year and must take courses in person at the main UArizona campus in Tucson.
Q:	Is there a Grad Student orientation at the UA?
A:	Yes. There is an optional, university-wide orientation for new graduate students who begin in the Fall: https://gpsc.arizona.edu/resources-future-students
Q:	Is there an Indige-FEWSS Welcome? Is it required?
A:	Yes. The PI, Dr. Karletta Chief, will provide a formal welcome at the first meeting of the academic year. An Indige-FEWSS Welcome Happy Hour will be held at the start of each semester. Time and place TBD. This is not mandatory but encouraged.

Q:	Does the Indige-FEWSS program require attendance at any UA pre-enrollment meetings or seminars?
A:	No. However, Indige-FEWSS encourages trainees to attend UA new student orientations.
Q:	Is there on-campus housing?
A:	UA offers graduate student housing https://housing.arizona.edu/home/graduate-housing

Training, Evaluation, Advising, and Seminar Requirements

Q:	What trainings are required of NSF fellows/trainees?
A:	<p>NSF requires all postdocs, graduate students, and undergraduate students funded through an NSF grant to receive instruction in the responsible conduct of research.</p> <p><u>Certification: NSF Responsible Conduct of Research</u> The certificate will be valid for 1,095 days (4 years) from completion. This training is 4 courses, available online, including the required “Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research” and three electives.</p> <p>UA offers RCR training here http://rgw.arizona.edu/rcr Scroll down to Registration Instructions for NSF RCR Certification. Use your NET ID to access the training. Once you register, you have 365 days to complete the 4 components.</p> <p>NSF FAQ on RCR https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rcr/rcrfaqs.jsp</p> <p>IndigeFEWSS research and community engagement requires additional training by our full team via the CITI Program : Social & Behavioral Research with Human Subjects and Native American Research.</p> <p>Learn more at the CITI Program https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/</p>
Q:	What are the evaluations for Indige-FEWSS trainees?
A:	There will be a survey at the very start of the traineeship and upon completion of your trainee tenure. Additionally, there will be pre-/post-coursework surveys, one-to-one interviews and/or focus groups after major components (community immersion, internship, specific projects).
Q:	Am I required to have an Indige-FEWSS core faculty member as my MS/PhD advisor and graduate committee chair? Or just as my advisor for the GIDP minor?
A:	It is highly encouraged that trainees work with the NSF Indige-FEWSS Core faculty as their primary advisor, committee members, or as unofficial advisors. We encourage communication and collaboration with NSF NRT Indige-FEWSS Core Faculty in regards to research and training. Funded trainee award letters stated the advisor for trainee program. Please discuss committee members with your advisor.

Q:	What is the seminar series? Is this mandatory for trainees?
A:	<p>All trainees, regardless of funding status, will enroll in ENV5 696N for Fall and Spring semesters for the duration of their traineeship, unless otherwise directed by the PI. This is a one-unit course, for one hour each week, encompassing professional development, cultural engagement and research management topics.</p> <p>Trainees are also required to attend the professional seminar series “Native Voices in STEM.”</p> <p>Time/location TBD each semester based on trainee and faculty schedules!</p>
Q:	Where do I learn more about the GIDP PhD Minor: Indigenous Food, Energy and Water Systems?
A:	<p>Visit the GIDP website for this university-wide minor offering https://gidp.arizona.edu/indige-fews And speak with your Indige-FEWSS advisor about how to fit the coursework into your research and education timeline. Please check the website for course availability – some courses are available only once an academic year! https://grad.arizona.edu/catalog/programinfo/IFEWSMING https://uaccess.schedule.arizona.edu/psp/pubsaprd/UA_CATALOG/HRMS/h/?tab=DEFAULT</p>
Q:	Will language courses be provided or required to support the cultural immersion element of training?
A:	<p>We encourage all trainees to engage in professional development as time allows. Language lessons are not required for interacting effectively and professionally with our Diné College partners and the Navajo Nation communities.</p>
Q:	What teaching opportunities are available for Trainees?
A:	<p>Indige-FEWSS will contribute FEWS modules to the Diné College TCUP STEM 10-week summer program (beginning 2020). Dr. Valerie Shirley may be consulted for additional information on this element of the training and professional development vshirley@email.arizona.edu Trainees are encouraged to speak with their faculty advisor about other teaching opportunities that arise.</p>

Training, Courses and Resources to support your training

Encouraged - ENV5 508 : Scientific Writing for Environmental, Agricultural and Life Sciences
 (Dr. Jean McLain)

Resources to support your graduate experience and training

University of Arizona Graduate Center <https://gradcenter.arizona.edu/>