UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program - 2025 Request for Proposals
UC-National Laboratory In-Residence Graduate Fellowships

Fellowship Overview and Priorities

The University of California (UC), Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) have a close, long-standing and strategically important collaborative relationship that offers graduate students unique research, training, and career development opportunities. The UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program is leveraging that relationship by offering a competitive Fellowship award that provides up to three years of support for Ph.D. candidates who wish to conduct thesis research on-site at LANL or LLNL. UC graduate students who have advanced to doctoral candidacy are eligible to request a two- or three-year in-residence Fellowship. The proposal must include a research plan approved by the UC dissertation advisor, and identify a research mentor at one of the two eligible UC-affiliated national laboratories who will provide mentorship, guidance, and oversight during the Fellowship period in collaboration with the student's UC dissertation advisor. Fellows must be advanced to candidacy before the beginning of the award, must devote at least 80% time to the proposed research, and must be in-residence for at least 6 months at the national lab during each year of the Fellowship term. Fellows must remain enrolled at their UC campus, and in good academic standing, for the term of the Fellowship. Proposals from students historically underrepresented in the identified fields are encouraged. The award will be administered by the student's home UC campus and the student will be the grantee of record.

The UC-National Lab Graduate Fellowship provides the following support:

- An annual award of $75,000 for two or three years
- A $5,000 travel allowance (total for the Fellowship period) to support project-related travel
- Indirect cost recovery of up to 8% (total direct cost basis) to the student's home UC campus

Fellowship funds may be used for stipends, UC tuition and fees, and travel consistent with the proposed research. See the FAQs for general guidance on UC tuition and fees for students advanced to candidacy.

The national laboratory (LANL or LLNL) must provide:

- Laboratory scientist who will serve as mentor and research supervisor
- Office space, a computer, access to appropriate research facilities, data sets, or other resources required to complete the proposed research
- A structured mentoring and research oversight plan
- Structured opportunities to learn about the laboratory's research mission and facilities, participate in seminars, lectures, and other research training activities

Key Dates

RFP release:	Tuesday, April 2, 2024
Program Information Sessions:	Monday, April 22, 10-11am Pacific Time
	Thursday, April 25, 1-2pm Pacific Time
Letters of Intent (LOI) due:	**Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time**
Notification of LOI outcome decision:	Friday, June 14, 2024
Full proposals due:	**Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time**
Notification of review outcome:	December 13, 2024 (expected)
Graduate Fellowship start date:	April 1, 2025

Please see our website for program information session registration links.

Overview of Application and Review Process

We strongly encourage all applicants to begin the Letter of Intent and application preparation and online submission process early to accommodate any potential delays due to technical issues.

Program Information Sessions: Two program information sessions will be held on April 22 and April 25. Please register on our website. Participation in one of the sessions is strongly recommended.

Letter of Intent (LOI): Applicants must submit a formal LOI using the SmartSimple website. LOIs will be reviewed for compliance with program requirements, eligibility, and appropriateness of the research project for the national labs. No feedback or comments will be provided on the LOI. The LOI submission deadline will be strictly enforced, and no application may move forward without an approved LOI.

Invitation to Submit Full Proposal: LOI approval will grant access to the full application materials on SmartSimple. All proposals must be submitted in accordance with the instructions, templates, and guidelines provided, and must conform to the requirements of the final version of the RFP. *It is the applicant's responsibility to check the program website for updates, clarifications, or changes prior to submitting the full proposal.*

Full Proposal Submission: Full proposals should be submitted through the Contracts and Grants or Sponsored Projects Office at the applicant's campus. It is the applicant's responsibility to follow campus rules, procedures, and timelines for submitting a proposal. The proposal submission deadline will be strictly enforced**.**

Proposal Review and Selection: UC Research Initiatives will manage a competitive review and ranking of proposals based on the criteria outlined in this RFP. The multidisciplinary review panel will be composed of researchers selected for their relevant expertise. Applicants should prepare their proposals in language accessible to a general scientific audience.

Final funding decisions and selection are at the discretion of the UC Office of the President, Research & Innovation. Decisions may not be appealed, but declined proposals may be revised and resubmitted in the next award cycle without prejudice. Awards are contingent on availability of funding.

Eligibility and Exclusion

Applicants must be full-time graduate students enrolled in a doctoral program (Ph.D. degree or equivalent) at one of the 10 UC campuses (Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, or Santa Cruz). Students must be in good academic standing, have advanced to candidacy by the Fellowship start date, and remain in good standing and enrolled full-time (not in absentia status) throughout the Fellowship. Applicants must commit a minimum of 80% time on the proposed research and must be in-residence at least 6 months each Fellowship year at either LANL or LLNL. The UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program funding is limited to research that is unclassified, has no restrictions on publication, and is not restricted by classification or deemed export rules.

Award Requirements

1. Research Plan: The applicant must develop, and author, a detailed description of the research aims and activities to be conducted during the Fellowship term. This plan must describe the expertise, facilities, data, or other resources from the lab that are instrumental in completing the research. The research conducted during the Fellowship must fulfill the requirements for a doctoral dissertation as approved by the UC dissertation advisor, and the plan must demonstrate the feasibility of completing the degree within the specified timeframe.

2. National Laboratory Research and Training Opportunities: The applicant must identify a national laboratory scientist at LLNL or LANL who will serve as the on-site supervisor and mentor for the duration of the Fellowship, and who will devote adequate time and effort to ensure the Fellow receives the support necessary to progress to degree. *The national laboratory mentor must be in-residence at the lab during the Fellowship period, and may not serve concurrently as the Fellow's UC dissertation advisor.* The national laboratory must provide space, access to data, facilities, and other resources necessary to complete the proposed research, as well as a structured mentoring and supervision plan to ensure the success of the Fellowship project. This plan should include training, education, and professional development opportunities, laboratory orientation, access to seminars, workshops, and other skill development programs, and, where

possible, opportunities to interact with other staff members, graduate students, or trainees at the lab. Additional laboratory scientists may provide informal or structured research guidance and mentorship.

3. <u>Joint Research Oversight and UC Dissertation Advisor Approval</u>: The Fellow's research will be jointly supervised during the award term by their UC dissertation advisor and the national laboratory mentor. The UC advisor must document approval of the proposed research plan, and commit to provide collaborative supervision with the national lab mentor of the applicant. Proposals must describe the structure of this collaborative mentorship and any additional benefits from collaboration between the UC and national lab.

4. <u>Evidence of Advancement to Candidacy and Good Academic Standing</u>: Applicants must provide evidence of good academic standing and documentation from the applicant's UC dissertation advisor indicating that the applicant is advanced to candidacy or is on track with every expectation of being advanced to candidacy prior to the Fellowship start date.

How to Apply: In-Residence Graduate Fellowships
As noted above, the application process is comprised of two mandatory stages: Letters of Intent (LOI) and Full Proposals.

The required LOI includes the following information:
1. Applicant name, department of enrollment, and UC campus; the student applicant is the PI of record for the award
2. Date of advancement to candidacy (expected date if not yet advanced) and academic status
3. Name, title, department, and UC campus affiliation of the graduate student's dissertation advisor
4. Identification of the national laboratory proposed for the in-residence Fellowship
5. Name, title, division, and national lab affiliation of the proposed national lab mentor
6. An abstract (2400 characters / ~350 words) providing a brief description of the proposed scope of research, and identification of the specialized facilities, data, instrumentation, or other unique resources that will be used at the national lab. Avoid jargon and write in a manner accessible to a general scientific audience.

Full Proposals: The proposal narrative is limited to 8 single-spaced pages (items #2, #3, and #4 below). The total page limit will be strictly enforced, and general guidelines regarding the length of each section are provided. The proposal must use the provided templates, and will include the following sections:

1. <u>Abstract</u>: The abstract should be appropriate for a general scientific audience. Avoid discipline-specific jargon or technical terms. The abstract will be made publicly available on our website.

2. <u>Proposed Research Plan</u> (5 pages): Identify the specific aims, research activities, and scholarly contributions of the proposed research, including the innovative components that will advance scholarship in the proposed field. The plan should be written for a general scientific audience and must include a description of the lab facilities, data, or resources that the applicant will use, and explain the importance of conducting the research at a national lab. A two- or three-year timeline for completing the research during the Fellowship period is required and must identify specific milestones to be achieved at six-month intervals that will be used to assess progress. If the applicant would like to be considered for a third year, they must choose the three-year fellowship option in the 'project duration' drop-down menu at the LOI stage. The proposal should include the proposed scope of work, timeline, and accomplishments for the first two years, and the remaining project activities and goals that would be completed in the third year if awarded. The applicant must author the proposed research plan. One additional page for literature cited (not included in the 5-page limit) may be included.

3. <u>Mentorship and Training Plan</u> (2 pages): The proposal must include a detailed mentorship and training plan developed in consultation with the laboratory mentor and the applicant's dissertation advisor, describing 1) the specific training and mentorship activities, including any additional training and professional development opportunities the lab will provide to supplement the dissertation research; 2) the resources committed by the national lab; and 3) the structure of the oversight plan during the Fellowship period, including joint supervision with the UC advisor to ensure timely progress to degree.

4. <u>Applicant Statement</u> (1 page): The statement should describe how the applicant's background, experiences and trajectory inform their research and career goals. Applicants may describe how these experiences contribute to their potential to make a unique contribution to their research field, take particular advantage of the national laboratory

training opportunity, and/or position them to enhance the diversity of the research pipeline or bring perspectives historically underrepresented in their field or research area.

5. <u>Additional Proposal Requirements</u>: 1) Applicant's graduate transcript(s); 2) applicant's curriculum vitae or biosketch (3-page maximum); 3) dissertation advisor's curriculum vitae or biosketch (3-page maximum); 4) lab mentor's curriculum vitae or biosketch (3-page maximum); 5) identification of any human subject (IRB), animal use, or biohazard issues and the approach to compliance (1-page template); 6) blind recommendation letter from the applicant's dissertation advisor nominating the applicant for the Fellowship, providing concurrence and approval of the proposed research, and indicating when the student advanced or will advance to candidacy; 7) letter from the proposed national lab mentor, endorsing the applicant, agreeing to oversee the proposed research, and committing to providing laboratory space, supervision, access to necessary resources, as well as mentorship and training as described in the proposal; 8) applicant disclosure of all fellowships or other sources of funding received during the applicant's graduate career and concurrent funding during the proposed Fellowship period. No additional attachments beyond those listed here are allowed.

Scoring Criteria

1. <u>Research Excellence</u>: The results of the proposed research should make a significant advance in scholarship and provide progress toward degree. The research plan should be appropriate for the level of the applicant, clearly relate to their thesis research plan, and be feasible in the proposed timeframe. Relevance of the research to the national laboratory resources and mission must be clearly demonstrated, and endorsed by the national laboratory mentor. The timeline should indicate clear milestones for annual assessment in each proposed Fellowship year.

2. <u>Strength of Training, Supervision, and Mentorship</u>: The quality and engagement of the laboratory mentorship and UC dissertation advisor's support and endorsement of the proposed research and training plan, and level of supervision should be evident. The strength of the training and mentorship plan should ensure the student receives adequate time and supervision to progress to degree and has access to all necessary resources. This includes the extent of structured opportunities to engage with lab scientists, other trainees, and with experts and programs in place at the lab for Fellows. A strong plan will also demonstrate collaborative and integrated oversight by both the UC dissertation advisor and the laboratory mentor.

3. <u>Qualifications of the Applicant and Quality of Academic Preparation</u>: The applicant's academic record should demonstrate their potential to conduct successful research and make significant progress to degree with minimal start-up time, and include evidence of strong, appropriate preparation for the research through both coursework and prior research or training. Important criteria include the extent to which the applicant demonstrates the likelihood of success and academic productivity, the extent to which the applicant will enhance the diversity of the research pipeline or bring perspectives historically underrepresented in their field or research area, and likelihood that the applicant will be advanced to candidacy by or before the Fellowship start date.

4. <u>Additional Considerations</u>: 1) Considerations related to human subjects, animal use or biohazards, and the proposed compliance plan; and 2) concurrent research or fellowship support for the student.

Research Program Oversight

The UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program is administered under the auspices of UC Research Initiatives (UCRI) in the Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) at the UC Office of the President. Funded proposals are required to submit annual progress and fiscal reports as well as a final report of research outcomes four years from the award start date. Fellows will be assigned to a UCRI program officer who will serve as the program contact.

Awards are contingent on the availability of funding, and compliance with research and reporting requirements.
For Fellows who request three years of funding at the time of application, a written assessment of progress and a review of the accomplishments and milestones achieved will be required at the end of the third quarter of year 2 (month 21), along with letters from the UC dissertation advisor and lab mentor. The final approval of a third year will be made by UCRI based on a review of the materials.

Program Contact Information

For questions on program scope and priorities, please contact UCRI@ucop.edu

For administrative questions regarding the application process and technical questions related to the use of SmartSimple, please contact: RGPOGrants@ucop.edu

Laboratory Contact Information

UC graduate students with questions about the research and training resources available at the laboratories, or who need assistance identifying a mentor in a particular scientific area, should contact the designated Laboratory personnel:

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
Eric Schwegler – Director of Academic Engagement Office, schwegler1@llnl.gov, 925-424-3098

Los Alamos National Laboratory
Heather H. Erpenbeck – University Collaborations Office Leader, hawk14@lanl.gov, 505-665-9020

Attachments
Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions
Appendix 2: Instructions for Submitting a Letter of Intent
Appendix 3: Other RGPO Policies and Pre-Award Requirements

Updated Program Announcements, FAQs, RFP clarifications (if any), and information on program information sessions will be posted on the UCRI website. To ensure LOI and proposal submissions meet all program requirements, applicants are strongly encouraged to check the website for any program updates prior to submission: https://ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/lab-fees/lfrp-grad-fellows.html

Appendix 1:
2025 UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program
UC-NL In-Residence Graduate Fellowships
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Version Dated: April 2, 2024

Please refer to the 2025 Request for Proposals (RFP) for program requirements
This document is a supplement to the RFP and is intended to provide additional guidance to applicants. Based on questions we receive, it may be updated periodically. Applicants are responsible for checking the [program website](#) for updates.

How to Apply:
All application materials must be submitted online via [SmartSimple.](#) **Applicants are required to submit an LOI as the first step in the application process**. The full proposal materials are available only after approval of the LOI. Additional instructions regarding LOI submissions are available in Appendix 2.

Required Letters of Intent (LOIs) are due Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time
Full Proposals are due Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 12:00 noon Pacific Time

Eligibility and Fellowship Structure

1. **Who can apply for this funding opportunity?**
   Any graduate student enrolled full-time in a doctoral program at one of the ten UC campuses may apply, provided the student is in good standing at their campus and is, or will be, advanced to candidacy at the Fellowship start date. Students who are not advanced to candidacy at the time of application, but will be advanced by the Fellowship start date, must have their dissertation advisor indicate the likely date for achieving that status in their recommendation letter.

2. **What disciplines are eligible?**
   The Fellowship is open to graduate students in any discipline or field for which the Fellowship placement at LANL or LLNL is relevant and beneficial.

3. **Can a Masters student apply?**
   The program is only open to students enrolled in doctoral (or equivalent) programs. Students enrolled in terminal Masters programs are not eligible.

4. **Should I apply for a 2-year fellowship term or a 3-year fellowship?**
   At the time of application, the applicant must indicate their interest in either a 2-year or 3-year fellowship. This must be done at the LOI stage by selecting the three-year fellowship option in the 'project duration' drop-down menu. If the applicant would like to be considered for a third year, the proposal must include the proposed scope of work and accomplishments for the first two years, and then the proposed activities and goals for the third year. The review and determination of the year 3 extension will occur during the beginning of the 4th quarter of year 2, and will be based on an assessment of the accomplishments and milestones achieved to date, and letters from the UC dissertation advisor and lab mentor regarding the expected success and value to be derived from a third year in the program.

5. **How should I develop and write my research plan?**
   The graduate student applicant is the PI and author of the proposal, and should take primary responsibility for developing the detailed research plan. You are expected to incorporate guidance from your UC dissertation advisor in developing the scope of the research to ensure it fulfills the degree requirements of your department. Proposals written by the dissertation advisor on your behalf will receive low priority.

6. **Who needs to approve of my proposal prior to submission?**
   Applicants to the program must develop a proposed plan of research with their UC-based dissertation advisor and a researcher at either LANL or LLNL who will serve as a mentor and supervisor for the duration of the Fellowship. The full proposal requires letters from both the dissertation advisor and the lab-based mentor indicating concurrence with

the research plan, and commitment to oversee the work and training of the graduate student. The letter from the lab mentor must also describe the lab's commitment to provide any required resources for the duration of the Fellowship.

7. **Does the UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program match me with a national lab mentor and supervisor?**
No. In consultation with your dissertation advisor, you are responsible for identifying a suitable researcher to work with at the national lab and securing any needed agreements prior to applying. Contacts at the national labs that can help you if you need guidance are provided on the last page of the RFP. Please note that the UC dissertation advisor must also approve the proposed training plan and research topic. UC Research Initiatives, which manages the Lab Fees Research Program, does not provide matching services as part of the Fellowship program.

8. **Can the same person serve as both UC dissertation advisor and national lab mentor?**
No. The lab mentor must be in-residence at the national lab during the Fellowship period, and may not serve concurrently as the Fellow's UC dissertation advisor.

9. **Can I apply to the Fellowship program if my advisor is applying for or participating in a Lab Fees Research Program Collaborative Research and Training Award?**
Yes, you are eligible to apply to the Fellowship program during the same competition cycle with an advisor's participation in a UC-NL CRT proposal. However, if awarded, you may not receive concurrent funding from both the UC-NL CRT and the Graduate In-Residence Fellowship. A disclosure of all your current and anticipated funding is required in both the LOI and the full proposal.

10. **My national lab mentor has asked if I can be involved in classified research or activities at secure sites during my Fellowship at the lab. Is this allowed?**
The dissertation research you undertake for the Fellowship must be on unclassified research only, with no restrictions on publication. At the discretion of the host lab, and with joint agreement among the Fellow, dissertation advisor, and lab mentor, the Fellow's training experience may include access to classified discussions or restricted activities. However, obtaining the required security clearance cannot delay commencement of the Fellowship or proposed dissertation research, or otherwise delay academic progress to degree.

11. **I am currently employed at the national lab while enrolled at UC. Am I eligible for this fellowship?**
That depends. Full-time UC graduate students who have a prior or current part-time research training position at the national lab may be eligible, as long as they are not already sponsored by the national laboratory to pursue their doctoral studies. An applicant who has a career appointment at the national lab, has been an employee of LLNL or LANL, or currently holds other Fellowships related to that work, should contact the national lab representatives listed in the RFP to discuss their appointment type and eligibility.

12. **Do I have to be a US Citizen to apply?**
No. There is no citizenship requirement to receive a UC National Laboratory Fees Research program fellowship. We only require that the student be in good academic standing (with full-time graduate student status and not in absentia at a UC campus) for the duration of the fellowship. If a non-US citizen is awarded a fellowship, the national lab may require additional paperwork for access to the site or equipment. Please contact the national lab representatives listed at the end of the RFP for more specific inquiries.

13. **Can I apply for this fellowship if I want to do my research at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory or another national laboratory?**
No. This Fellowship is for UC graduate students to pursue research in-residence at either Los Alamos or Lawrence Livermore National Lab only.

14. **Can a UC faculty member serve as an advisor to more than one applicant?**
Yes, a UC faculty advisor may have more than one dissertation advisee (fellowship applicant) apply in a particular year.

15. **Can a national laboratory scientist serve as mentor/supervisor to more than one applicant?**
The fellowship applicant should ask the proposed lab mentor if the mentor intends to sponsor more than one UC National Laboratory In-Residence Graduate Fellowship applicant in a given competition cycle. If so, the student and

lab mentor should consult with the national laboratory contacts listed in the RFP, or their laboratory division lead, to ensure the proposed arrangements will provide the student with sufficient support and supervision. To support the student's success, identification of an alternate lab mentor/supervisor or arrangements that include a primary mentor (who signs off of the training plan) and a co-mentor may be considered with the approval of the national lab.

Allowable Costs and Fellowship Budget

16. **Is this fellowship paid as a UC Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) appointment?**
No, this graduate fellowship provides $75,000 annually to cover student tuition and fees, with the remaining funds to be paid as a monthly stipend to the student. An additional $5,000 is available for travel costs to be used by the student for travel or relocation to the national lab or other travel directly related to the fellowship. The fellowship travel funds are reimbursed to the student in accordance with UC campus travel policy.

17. **Is the indirect cost reimbursement included in, or in addition to, the annual award amount?**
Funding is awarded to the graduate student's campus and home department. The campus receives an indirect cost reimbursement of 8% (on a Total Direct Cost basis). These IDC funds are paid in addition to (not deducted from) the annual award amount of $75,000 and total travel funds of $5,000.

18. **Does overlapping funding from another fellowship or research position affect the eligibility or amount of this fellowship?**
If you have other overlapping fellowship funding, this award amount may be reduced as part of the review of Other Support. If you have questions about tuition and fees once you have been advanced to candidacy, please check with your campus Graduate Division or Graduate Dean's Office. Tuition, fees, and policies may change from year to year subject to the Regents of the University of California, and campuses may differ.

19. **Can the award funds be used for anything other than the approved budget?**
No. Please see FAQ 16 above on allowable costs. Any unobligated or unexpended funds remaining at the expiration or termination of this award must be returned to UCOP within 90 days of the end of the approved fellowship period. Extensions beyond the approved award end date are not allowed.

Proposal Submission and Application Guidelines

20. **Does the Letter of Intent need to be submitted through the campus Contracts & Grants or Sponsored Projects Office?**
No, LOIs do not need to be submitted through the C&G or SPO. A signature from an institutional signing official is not required for LOI submission.

21. **Who is my campus signing official?**
Your full proposal must be submitted through your campus Contracts & Grants / Sponsored Projects Office. Most campuses require a minimum of 5 working days in advance of the proposal submission deadline to review and submit the proposal. The signing official is the individual who is authorized to act for your UC campus and will electronically submit your full application on your behalf. For help identifying the correct individual in your campus Contracts & Grants / Sponsored Projects Office, you may contact your department administrator or dissertation advisor. Please adhere to all campus-specific instructions and timelines for submitting your proposal to obtain approval before the proposal submission deadline in the RFP. In accordance with your campus guidelines, you may be asked to add any required campus administrators to the "PI assistant" role on your proposal.

22. **I missed the deadline to submit an LOI, can I still submit a full proposal without the LOI?**
No. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept LOIs after the deadline, and only applicants who are invited to submit a proposal based on their LOI may submit a full proposal.

23. How will LOIs be reviewed?

LOIs will be evaluated for responsiveness to the RFP in three areas: 1) compliance with program requirements; 2) eligibility; and 3) appropriateness of the research project for the national labs.

24. My LOI was accepted, and I received approval to submit a full proposal. Is the LOI binding or can I make changes?

The LOI must fairly represent your research plan (as described in the abstract) and the national laboratory where you propose to be in-residence. Eligible proposals that diverge significantly from the approved LOI may be less competitive for funding.

25. The application requires a graduate transcript. Can I submit an unofficial transcript?

Yes, an unofficial transcript suffices for the application. We may request an official transcript for verification if you are awarded a Fellowship. If you have received your master's degree from an institution other than your current institution, please also include that transcript.

26. How is the blind letter of recommendation from my UC advisor submitted?

One and only one letter of recommendation may be submitted and it must come from your dissertation advisor in the academic department conferring your degree. Once you submit your advisor's information in SmartSimple, they will receive an email from SmartSimple with a link to the required template and instructions on how to upload the letter directly into the system. This letter is blinded – you will not be able to view it. Once the dissertation advisor submits the letter, an updated status will appear in SmartSimple. In contrast, the lab mentor's letter, which commits to providing resources and following the mentorship plan, is uploaded by you as part of the proposal submission.

Appendix 2:
UC National Laboratory Fees Research Program
Letter of Intent Submission Instructions
UC-National Laboratory In-Residence Graduate Fellowships
Version Dated: April 2, 2024

Please refer to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2025 awards for program requirements.
This is a supplement to the UC-NL In-Residence Graduate Fellowships RFP, and is intended to provide additional guidance and technical support to applicants. Based on questions we receive, it may be updated periodically. Applicants are responsible for checking the [program website](#) for updates.

The University of California (UC) Office of the President is pleased to provide applicant instructions for submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the [UC-National Laboratory In-Residence Graduate Fellowships (UC-NLGF)](#) announced on April 2, 2024. Submission and approval of a Letter of Intent (LOI) is required to submit a full proposal. LOIs must be submitted **by May 30, 2024 before 12:00 noon Pacific Time in the SmartSimple System**. We encourage early submission of LOIs. Please note: LOIs will not be accepted after the deadline.

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE LOI SUBMISSION PROCESS
The LOI must be submitted through SmartSimple at https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/. Applicants may submit LOIs via the online system any time between April 2, 2024 and May 30, 2024. The LOI submission must be **completed** (not merely initiated) by the 12:00 noon PT deadline. Therefore, plan ahead in preparing your submission.

Step 1: Applicant Registration with SmartSimple
Applicant Principal Investigators (PIs) must register as users of SmartSimple to submit an LOI and complete a proposal at https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/. The Applicant PI is the UC graduate student.

All Users Accessing SmartSimple for the First Time:
1. When accessing SmartSimple for the first time, all users should click the "**Register Here**" button under "**Principal Investigator Registration**" and follow the instructions to enter your institution, name, and contact information.
2. Each UC campus has one institution in the system; be sure to search for "University of California" to find their listings.
3. If you need to change the institution that your account is associated with, please contact us.
4. Your user account will then be created. You will receive an email with instructions to create a password and complete your account profile. Once you have completed this step, skip to Step 2: LOI Preparation.
5. If you see a pop-up message indicating that an account with your email address already exists, return to the main login page (https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/), and click the "**Forgot Password**" link. You will receive an email with a link and instructions to reset your password. **If you do not receive the password reset email within one hour, please contact us using the contact information at the end of this document. Make sure to check your spam or junk folder.**

Returning Users: Applicants who have previously registered with SmartSimple or are returning to complete an in progress LOI should enter their username and password under "**Login**" and click the "**Login**" button on the SmartSimple homepage.

Step 2: LOI Preparation and Submission

1. Once logged into the system, click on "**Available Funding Opportunities**" (upper right corner).
2. Find the row for the In-Residence Graduate Fellows, then click "**Apply.**" You will then be taken to the Eligibility Check.

3. Complete the Eligibility Check and click **"Submit."**
   - The Eligibility Check contains a series of questions and statements regarding applicant eligibility. You must provide an answer to acknowledge that you meet all eligibility criteria mentioned. Upon submitting a "Yes" response, you will be able to start the LOI process. If your answer is "No," you are not eligible to apply.

4. Review the Helpful Tips, and click **"Continue"** to begin your LOI.

   Instructions
   By clicking the Continue button below, you will begin your application.
   1. **Helpful Tip #1:** As you work on your proposal, remember to frequently click the Save Draft button at the bottom of the application page. Any changes you make to the application will not be retained until you click the Save Draft button, so we recommend you click it often while working on your proposal.
   2. **Helpful Tip #2:** You will be required to upload PDF files during this process. If your file name has special characters within it (e.g. period, dash, etc), the file may not upload properly. Remove all special characters from your file names before attempting to upload them.

   [◎ Continue]

5. Once in the LOI interface, you will see two options on the left sidebar: Main and Notes.
   - **Main:** Click this tab to access each section of the LOI. Detailed instructions for each section are provided below.
   - **Notes:** Click this tab to create Notes for your LOI. Click "+" to add a new Note. Any Notes stored here are for the applicant's reference only and will not be reviewed by program staff. Please make sure to include all relevant project information in the LOI sections under the Main tab.

6. In the "**Main**" tab, complete each section of the LOI and submit by the deadline. Please see below for detailed descriptions of each section. Note: Be sure to save your work often by clicking **"Save Draft."** You can access your LOI in later visits for additional work by selecting **"Open"** under **"In Progress Applications"** on the Home screen.

STEP BY STEP: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH LOI SECTION
1. Additional details for each section of the online LOI submission form are provided below. To begin the LOI, please select **Apply** from the **"Available Funding Opportunities"** page; if you have already started an LOI select the **"Home"** page and the **"In Progress Applications"** tile.
2. The LOI sections: **Title Page, Applicant/Principal Investigator, Project Information, Project Contacts, Budget, and Signature Page,** can be completed in any order and in any number of sessions prior to the deadline. You can move between sections by clicking directly on the section headings, or by clicking the "NEXT >" text at the bottom of the screen. Required fields are denoted with a red asterisk (*****). **Note:** Please be sure to save your work periodically or after each entry.
3. As you move through each section using the horizontal navigation bar, instructions are always available for download at the top of the page.
4. Click the **"Preview"** button at any time to view, download, or print a pdf version of your LOI.

LOI Section: Title Page
- **Project Title:** Please enter the project title here (100 characters or fewer including spaces).
- **Project Duration (Year):** Using the drop-down menu, select the duration of the project (two or three years). To be considered for the third year, you must select the three-year option.
- **Project Start Date:** The project start date will be auto-filled with the funded project start date of April 1, 2025.
- **Project End Date:** Please enter the project end date here, based on the number of years requested. For a two-year award, the project end date is March 31, 2027; for a three-year award, the project end date is March 31, 2028.
- **Proposed In-Residence Lab Location:** Please indicate Lawrence Livermore National Lab or Los Alamos National Lab.
- **Resubmission:** Select Yes or No to specify whether this application is a Resubmission.
  - **If Yes:** Select your previous application from the drop-down menu. If your previous application is not listed, select "Not Listed Above" and click "Save Draft." Additional fields will appear for you to enter the original application number and original application project title.
- **Graduate School and Candidacy Status**: Please answer the questions regarding your academic status:
  - Are you a full-time student enrolled in a doctoral program at one of the 10 UC campuses? (Yes/No)
  - Have you advanced to candidacy? (Yes/No)
  - What is the date of your advancement to candidacy (confirmed or anticipated)? (enter a date in the text box)
- **Are you willing to commit to be in-residence at the proposed lab location for at least 6 months each year of the fellowship?** (Yes/No)

LOI Section: Applicant/Principal Investigator
Applicant/Principal Investigator information will be auto-populated from the "My Profile" section of your SmartSimple account. Please review this section for accuracy. To make changes to this information, click on your name in the upper right corner of the page, and select "My Profile." Save your changes. Return to the LOI by selecting **"Home"** in the upper right corner of the screen, and then the "In Progress Applications" tile. You can also go directly to the "My Profile" page in your account to make changes at any time.

LOI Section: Project Information
- **Lay Abstract:** In the textbox provided, concisely summarize the proposed project. This abstract is limited to 2,400 characters including spaces (approximately 350 words) and should be written in a manner that is appropriate for a general scholarly audience. Information must be entered as text only (scientific notations, special characters, fonts, and other rich-text formatting cannot be saved or displayed). The text will automatically wrap: carriage returns should be used for the start of a new paragraph but should NOT be used at the end of each line. The abstract is non-confidential, and may be published or circulated by the Program. An abstract is required.
- **Subject Area(s):** Select the subject area(s).

- **Focus Area(s):** Start typing a character and choose your project's focus area(s) from the drop-down menu. See Appendix 2A for a list of focus areas.

LOI Section: Project Contacts

- **Project Personnel:** At the LOI stage, you **must** enter the Applicant Principal Investigator of the project; for this award, the Applicant PI is the graduate student applicant. In addition, enter the UC dissertation advisor of the applicant and the national lab mentor of the applicant. Click **"Enter Project Personnel."** A separate window will open. Using the **"+"** button, enter the names and details of the Applicant PI (Graduate Fellow), the UC dissertation advisor, and the national lab mentor. For each entry, you must provide the full ranked title the person assumes at their institution (e.g., Assistant Professor, Professor). List only these three individuals – do not include other grant personnel on the LOI.
    - **Role on Project:** For each personnel, select their role on the project from the drop-down list. Only include personnel with the Role of Applicant Principal Investigator, Dissertation Advisor, or Mentor. See Appendix 2B for the list of allowed roles on Fellowship proposals.
    - **Institution Type:** Select "Academic/Research Institution" for each personnel from a UC campus or national lab.
    - **PI/Co-PI column**: Disregard this column.
    - Click **"Save"** to save your changes. Click **"Close"** to return to the Project Contacts tab and **"Save Draft."**
    - **Upload Personnel Biosketches**: *Biosketches are not required at the LOI stage, but the button will still appear in this table.* When uploading a biosketch, please use the "print to PDF" functionality if using an NSF or other fillable PDF template. *Tip:* Click "Save Draft" to display a link to the biosketch that you uploaded.

LOI Section: Budget

- **Amount Requested:** Enter the estimated total amount requested (direct cost) for each year of the proposed project. This amount should be $75,000 plus the portion of the total $5,000 travel allowance allocated to that year. Click **"Save Draft,"** and the system will calculate the total amount requested. This amount is an estimate only and is not binding. If your LOI is approved, you may adjust the amount(s) in the full application stage. Tip: You must first select the project "duration" on the Title Page in order for the system to display the budget line(s) per project period.

LOI Section: Signature Page

All applicants must certify that that the statements provided in the LOI are true, complete, and accurate to the best of the applicant's knowledge. The applicant is aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject him/her/them to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. The applicant agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project and to provide the required progress reports if a grant is awarded as a result of this application.

- **Applicant Signature: Check the box to certify the information in your LOI.**
- **Signee:** Type your full name into the field.
- **Date:** Select the date on which you have signed the LOI. Tip: click "Save Draft" after selecting the date.

Review your LOI: Preview button

Click the **"Preview"** button to view or download a PDF of your LOI submission. The Preview button is made available so applicants may print or download their LOI submission. Click on the "Preview" button with the print icon (upper left corner) to view, print, or download the completed LOI.

Submit your LOI

Click the "**Submit LOI**" button to submit your LOI to the program. If you decide not to submit the LOI and no longer want to be considered for this funding opportunity, you may wish to withdraw your LOI. Clicking on **"Withdraw"** will completely remove the LOI record from your account. In lieu of "Withdraw" you can choose not to submit a completed LOI.

Confirming Status of Your Submitted LOI

Following the submission of an LOI to SmartSimple, applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of the LOI. The email confirmation typically arrives within a few minutes (the length of time may be greater near the submission deadline). If you do not receive the SmartSimple confirmation email within an hour of your submission, please contact us using the contact information provided at the end of this document. You can also confirm the status of your LOI submission by going to your SmartSimple home page, under the **"Home"** link in the upper right corner and clicking on **"Submitted/Under Review Applications."**

Questions and Technical Support

Should you have any questions regarding your application, please contact:

- UC Research Initiatives at UCRI@ucop.edu regarding program scope, priorities, and eligibility.
- Research Grants Program Office at RGPOGrants@ucop.edu regarding application and pre/post-award procedures, and technical questions regarding SmartSimple.

For the most up-to-date application and review cycle information refer to the following website:
https://ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/lab-fees/lfrp-grad-fellows.html

Appendix 2A: Focus Areas

These responses are collected for RGPO-wide data purposes. Please select the areas that most closely match your research.

Animal Sciences	Electronics and Electronics Manufacturing	Nanotechnology
Anthropology	Energy	Networking and Internet Technologies
Art and Art Practice	Energy Policy	Neuroscience
Astronomy and Astrophysics	Engineering	New Nicotine Products
Atmospheric Science	Engineering – Chemical	Nicotine Dependence
Behavioral Sciences	Engineering – Civil	Nuclear Sciences
Biochemistry	Engineering – Electrical	Opportunistic Infections
Bioengineering and Biotechnology	Engineering – Mechanical	Pathogenesis
Biofuels	Engineering – Nuclear	Patient Safety Research
Biology	Environmental Sciences	Physics
Biology- Molecular/Cell	Epidemiology	Planetary and Space Science
Biophysics	Etiology	Plant Science
Cancer – Breast	Evaluation Research	Plasma Physics
Cancer – Lung	Gender and Women's Studies	Policy
Cancer – Other	Genomics/proteomics	Political Science
Cancer Detection Methods	Geography	Prevention
Cardiovascular Disease	Geology	Prognosis
Chemistry	Health and Wellness	Psychology
Climate Studies and Climate Change	Healthcare Services and Systems	Pulmonary Diseases
Communications	History	Race and Ethnicity
Community Engaged Research	HIV/AIDS	Security Studies
Community-based Participatory Research	Humanities	Sexuality Studies
Computer Science	Imaging	Socioeconomic Status
Cosmology	Immigration	Sociology
Criminology and Incarceration	Immunology	Solar Energy
Cultural Studies	Information Technology	Statistics
Demography	International and Area Studies	Stem Cell Biology
Developmental Biology	Interventions	Theoretical Physics
Digital Media	Languages and Linguistics	Therapeutics/Treatment
Disease Transmission	Marine and Oceanic Sciences	Tobacco Use
Disparities and Social Inequality	Materials Science and New Materials	Tobacco Use Cessation
Earth Science and Geophysics	Mathematics and Computational Sciences	Toxicology
Economics	Microelectronics	Vaccine Development
Education	Molecular Biology	

Appendix 2B: Project Personnel Roles – Definitions, Guidelines, and CV/Biosketch Requirements

The Laboratory Fees Research Program requires the following roles on In-Residence Graduate Fellowship proposals.

Role on Project	Definition	Biosketch Required on LOI?	Biosketch Required on Full Proposal?
Applicant Principal Investigator	The Applicant Principal Investigator is the applicant student and lead investigator on the Fellowship. They execute the research project, serve as the project's main contact, and are responsible for providing progress and other reports to RGPO.	No	Yes
Dissertation Advisor	The Dissertation Advisor is the applicant's UC advisor with responsibility for oversight of the student's academic progress and completion of the doctoral program. The Dissertation Advisor must document approval of the proposed research plan, and commit to provide collaborative supervision with the national lab Mentor.	No	Yes
Mentor	The Mentor is the national laboratory scientist at LLNL or LANL who will serve as the on-site supervisor and mentor for the duration of the Fellowship, and who will devote adequate time and effort to ensure the Fellow receives the support necessary to progress to degree. The Mentor must be in-residence at the lab during the Fellowship period, and may not serve concurrently as the Dissertation Advisor.	No	Yes

A Role on Project must be selected for each individual listed in the Project Personnel table in SmartSimple, which can be found on the Project Contacts tab of the application. Other roles which you may see as options in SmartSimple may not be used for this Fellowship.

Appendix 3:
Other RGPO Policies and Pre-Award Requirements

The following relevant policies and requirements for awards made by the UCOP Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) apply to all proposals nominated for funding. These requirements are outlined in the formal "pre-funding" notification that will be sent to applicants nominated for funding by the peer review and ranking process, and this appendix may not include all pre-award requirements.

Condition of Award for UC Faculty
In accordance with University of California policy, investigators applying from a UC campus must submit proposals through their campus contracts and grants office ("Policy on the Requirement to Submit Proposals and to Receive Awards for Grants and Contracts through the University," Office of the President, December 15, 1994"). Investigators from other UC locations or from the national laboratories should apply through their institution's contracts and grants office. Investigators with a joint or multi-location appointment should consult the eligibility guidelines in the RFP to determine through which location they are eligible to apply.

Human Material and Animal Subjects
Approvals for use of human subjects and material, animals, and biohazards are not required at the time of application. When such approvals are applicable to the research, applicants must apply to the appropriate board or committee as soon as possible in order to expedite the start of the research, and you must do so within 30 days of notification that an award has been offered. Applicants may formally request an extension of this deadline if justified by specific circumstances of the research. All reasonable efforts must be made to obtain appropriate approvals in a timely fashion. Projects that do not obtain the necessary approvals in a timely manner may have their funding reduced or withdrawn.

For multicampus collaborations, if your research requires IRB approval, we encourage you use the UC IRB Reliance Registry to streamline your approval process. Please note that each study location is still responsible for obtaining other applicable ancillary approvals such as Conflict of Interest, Radiation Safety, etc. Contact your Campus IRB Reliance Coordinator for more information about the UC IRB reliance process.

Publications Acknowledgement and Open Access
All scientific publications and other products from a RGPO-funded research project must acknowledge the funding support from UC Office of the President, with reference to the specific funding program (e.g., LFGF) and the assigned grant ID number.

RGPO is committed to disseminating research as widely as possible to promote the public benefit. All publications based on funding received from RGPO are subject to the University's Open Access Policy. To assist the RGPO in disseminating and archiving the articles, the grantee institution and all researchers on the grant will deposit an electronic copy of all publications in the UC Publication Management System, UC's open access repository promptly after publication. Notwithstanding the above, this policy does not in any way prescribe or limit the venue of publication.

Deposition of Equipment and Supplies at the End of the Grant
Equipment purchases made by projects funded by the research program must be made by UC campuses and are the property of the UC Regents. Special permission must be sought in advance to purchase equipment for a non-UC campus or entity. In the rare event it is approved, the disposition of the equipment must follow RGPO rules.

Other Requirements
Upon request, awardees must supply the following information or documents:
1. Supply approved indirect (F&A) rate agreements as of the grant's start date and any derived budget calculations.
2. Supply any missing application forms or materials, including detailed budgets and justifications for any subcontract(s).
3. IRB or IACUC applications or approvals pertaining to the award.
4. Resolution of any scientific overlap issues with other grants or pending applications.
5. Resolution of any Review Committee and Program recommendations, including specific aims, award budget, or duration.
6. Modify the title and lay abstract, if requested.

All grant recipients must abide by other applicable pre- and post-award requirements pertaining to Cost Share, Indirect Cost Rates, Monitoring & Payment of Subcontracts, Conflict of Interest, Disclosure of Violations, Return of Interest, Equipment and Residual Supplies, Records Retention, Open Access, and Reporting.