



GRADUATE SCHOOL

Tennessee Fellowships for Graduate Excellence 2021-2022

The Tennessee Fellowship for Graduate Excellence (aka Tennessee Fellowship or TFGE) is the signature graduate fellowship program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The funds for this fellowship are designed to attract top PhD students to our campus. These fellowships awarded by the Graduate School (\$15,000 per year for 4 years) provide funds that are coupled with a departmental graduate assistantship and fee waiver to create a competitive financial package for exceptional PhD students.

In January of 2021, departments will have the opportunity to compete for 5 Tennessee Fellowships that will be available for PhD students starting their programs in fall 2021. For the fall 2021 Tennessee Fellows, departments (or colleges) will be responsible for supplying a 50% GTA/GRA stipend and providing a fee waiver. These awards will be for a total of 4 years.

Requirements

- Nominees must be prospective PhD students who have been approved for admission through the Slate admissions system.
- Nominees must have a guaranteed 50% GTA or GRA position (9-month or 12-month) in the department (college) for four years. These can be internally or externally funded positions.
- Departments (colleges) must provide a competitive stipend.
- Departments will ensure early placement with a mentor to increase chances for success.

Application Process

Applications will be made through the Slate admissions system. Specific instructions will be posted in December 2020 on the Graduate School website

(gradschool.utk.edu). Questions can be sent to gradschooldean@utk.edu. Because only 5 awards will be given, nominations are limited to 1 student per department.

Nominations *must* include:

- an endorsement letter from either the Director of Graduate Studies or Faculty Mentor that includes:
 - a statement on the nominee's qualifications (academic, experience, research, etc.) that make him/her an exceptional candidate for your PhD program
 - an indication of how this student will contribute to the quality of the program and how/if the student contributes to the diversity of the program
 - the faculty mentor or the plan for quickly pairing the candidate with a faculty mentor
- an endorsement letter from the department head including the level of stipend support committed to the student and any other resources available to the student (health insurance, travel support, etc.)
- a resume/CV of the student

Timeline

- January 29, 2021: Applications due in Slate.
- February 1–February 11, 2021: Nominations evaluated.
- February 12, 2021: Awards announced.
- February 15, 2021: Offers made to awardees; the Graduate School and departments working together will develop these offers.
- April 15, 2021: Official deadline for nominees to accept offer. *While we anticipate that many will accept the offer prior to this deadline, we are committed to honoring this nationally approved deadline for acceptance of graduate student support offers.*

Appendix A: Financial Aid

Fellowships will be disbursed to the awardee's MyUTK (myutk.utk.edu) account together with any other financial aid and scholarships that the awardee may be receiving. If there are any unpaid charges at the time of disbursement, the fellowship will be applied towards those outstanding charges. If any excess funds are generated from this award, those monies will be made available to you approximately one week after the funds are disbursed. Being signed up for direct deposit in a MyUTK account can assist in avoiding any delays. The award may be combined with other financial aid up to UT's full estimated cost of attendance, which includes standard amounts for tuition, fees, and averages for housing, food, books, and personal costs related to attending college. If the combined financial aid, including the fellowship, exceeds UT's estimated costs, the amount of any other financial aid may be reduced because of the fellowship.

Please note that this fellowship will be reported on the awardee's annual 1098-T form and may have tax implications. For more information, the awardee should consult with a tax preparer or visit www.irs.gov.

Appendix B: Nomination Process

The [2021-2022 Tennessee Fellowships for Graduate Excellence cycle](#) will be accepting nominations through a Microsoft form, rather than using Admit. Admit is no longer available and we hope to have a new process in Slate ready for the 2022-2023 academic year.

To submit a nomination for an incoming student, please go to: tiny.utk.edu/tfge-nomination and provide the following information:

- Nominee name
- Nominee application ID (found in Slate)
- Letter of Nomination (uploaded PDF)

To find the application ID, look up the applicant's record in Slate. The Application ID will be directly across from their name:

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Applicant 876346631

This nomination will be confirmed with the Director of Graduate Studies. We will use this information to prepare packets for evaluation by our review teams.

If you have any difficulties with this process, please contact gflships@utk.edu and we will provide assistance.