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.
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

- 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.