



Ronald E. McNair Doctoral Fellowship (AY 2024-2025)

Ronald E. McNair Doctoral Fellowships support entering graduate students who are alumni of a McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. This Fellowship is a partnership between the Graduate School and UMD programs, and it provides support for the McNair Fellow and enhances their student experience while working toward their doctoral degree. Since the inauguration of the Ronald E. McNair Doctoral Fellowship program, 65 exceptional students have been recruited to UMD.

The Ronald E. McNair Doctoral Fellowship provides support to awarded students throughout the entirety of their doctoral career. The Fellowship enhances a program's standard support package and may total up to \$50,000 per student in support over the duration of the award.

The \$50,000 McNair Doctoral Fellowship is cost shared with the program. The program and/or college must commit to provide \$7,500 towards the McNair Fellowship; the Graduate School will provide the remaining \$42,500. A nomination from a program will signify commitment to this cost-sharing agreement.

The McNair Fellowship is an enhancement to the program's 4-year base support package. The program's base support package for the McNair Fellowship includes a half-time fellowship/assistantship support for year 1 and full-time fellowship/assistantship support for years 2, 3, and 4. **Programs must commit to providing this base support package, plus the \$7,500 cost-share, at the time of nomination for a McNair Doctoral Fellowship.**

NOMINATION DEADLINE: Noon, Wednesday, January 31, 2024, PREFERRED.

Nominations submitted after this date will be considered if funding is still available.

Eligibility

Nominees must be alumni of a McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, and must be a graduate student who is planning to enroll in a PhD program in the upcoming fall and to whom the nominating unit has already made, and will honor, a full funding offer. All PhD programs at University of Maryland, College Park, are eligible to nominate candidates.

The nomination package must show a commitment to provide the prospective McNair Doctoral Fellow with half-time assistantship/fellowship support during the first year and full-time assistantship/fellowship support during years 2, 3, and 4.

Society of McNair Fellows

Students who accept the McNair Fellowship will become members of the Graduate School's [Society of McNair Fellows](#). Program Director, Dr. Christopher Pérez of the Graduate School's Office of Graduate Diversity and Inclusion ([OGDI](#)) offers programming specifically designed to offer guidance and support to the Society of McNair Fellows on a regular basis.

For more information about OGD I or the Society of McNair Fellows, please contact Dr. Christopher Pérez at cperez6@umd.edu.

Fellowship Stipends and Benefits

Stipends

The McNair Doctoral Fellowship enhances the program’s four-year support package with \$50,000 in support over 4.5 years (\$42,500 from the Graduate School and \$7,500 from the program). The \$7,500 cost-share can be funds from the program and/or college; the cost-share support cannot be funded by Dean’s Fellowships.

The first year will include a half-time assistantship (10 hours per week) or fellowship from the program, and a \$12,500 McNair stipend from the Graduate School. For years 2, 3 and 4, the program will provide a full-time fellowship or assistantship and the Graduate School will provide a \$5,000 McNair stipend during each academic year.

McNair Doctoral Fellowship Support for Fall 2024 Cohort

(suggested timeline – can be changed upon request, as noted below)

Academic Year	Graduate School Support	Program Supplementary Support	Program Base Support
2024-25	\$12,500	\$2,500 Grant* (program cost-share support)	HALF-TIME assistantship or half fellowship
2025-26	\$5,000		FULL-TIME assistantship
Summer 2026		\$5,000 Summer Fellowship** (program cost-share support)	NONE while on a \$5,000 fellowship
2026-27	\$5,000		FULL-TIME assistantship or full fellowship
2027-28	\$5,000		FULL-TIME assistantship or full fellowship
Fall 2028	\$15,000 Dissertation Fellowship		NONE while on a \$15,000 fellowship

* The \$2,500 grant is designed to help pay for technology needs, books, travel, or other research-related expenses. This \$2,500 grant is part of the program cost-share requirement and will be administered by the program.

** The \$5,000 Summer Fellowship is designed to support a McNair Fellow in summer 2026 to work on a project that will help them reach a benchmark or advance them through the program. This is normally around the time of reaching candidacy. This \$5,000 award is part of the program’s cost-share requirement and will be administered by the program. The funds can be paid to the student as a program fellowship, or if the student holds a 12 month GAship, the student can retain the GAship and be relieved of duties over the summer.

NOTES:

The Graduate School recommends that McNair Doctoral Fellows hold a half-time assistantship or fellowship in year one, but programs may request the half assistantship/fellowship year be a different year. This request should be made in the initial nomination package.

Based on the student’s progress, the \$5,000 McNair Summer Fellowship and the McNair Dissertation Fellowship can be disbursed on a different timeline. To request a different timeline, programs should contact the Graduate School by February 2026 for the summer award, and by February 2028 for the dissertation award.

McNair Summer Fellowship and Dissertation Fellowship

The \$5,000 McNair Summer Fellowship (summer 2026) and the \$15,000 McNair Dissertation Fellowship (Fall 2028) are available for McNair Fellows who remain in good academic standing and who provide status update reports as specified in the “Support from OGD I” section detailed in these Guidelines. The McNair Summer Fellowship and the McNair Dissertation Fellowship are considered full support; therefore, students must be released from assistantship responsibilities while taking the summer or semester award.

Tuition

McNair Fellows are eligible to receive up to 10 credits of tuition remission each semester. For the first year, 5 credits will be paid by the half-time assistantship and five credits will be paid by the McNair Doctoral Fellowship. In years 2, 3, and 4, the 10 credits of tuition remission will be paid by the full-time assistantship, unless the program chooses to provide a full or partial fellowship in those years.

Health Insurance

McNair Doctoral Fellows who hold a full or half graduate assistantship may choose to enroll in a State of Maryland Health Insurance plan or may choose to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). McNair Fellows with full fellowship support may enroll in SHIP and be reimbursed by the Graduate School. More information about health insurance can be found at gradschool.umd.edu/health-insurance.

Support from OGD I

Through OGD I programming, McNair Fellows will have opportunities to attend sessions focused on mentoring, networking, writing retreats, work/life/school balance, and professional and career development. Community building is an added component to all sessions. OGD I normally holds 5-8 information sessions and workshops each year. McNair Fellows must participate in 75% of the sessions. Beginning in Fall 2024, McNair Doctoral Fellows will have the opportunity to participate in a more formalized McNair Fellows Peer-to-Peer Mentoring program where additional funds may be granted.

McNair Doctoral Fellows will be expected to submit a confidential status update form each semester. Additionally, the student’s advisor will be asked to submit a status update form (see below). OGD I will also provide guidance, training, and resources for advisors and/or programs, upon request.

Advisors

All McNair Doctoral Fellows must have an advisor upon enrollment (the advisor may or may not be the student’s dissertation advisor).

The student’s advisor will be expected to complete a status update report each semester. In an effort to ensure student success, advisors will be asked to meet with Dr. Christopher Pérez of the Office of Graduate Diversity and Inclusion each Spring.

Advisors are also required to communicate these guidelines with their McNair Fellow.

Nomination Packages

University of Maryland programs are asked to prepare the nomination packages. Please prepare the nomination in a single PDF file and include the following:

- 1) **McNair Doctoral Fellowship** cover sheet.
- 2) **Letter of nomination** from the program's Chair or DGS, or the student's prospective advisor.
 - a. The letter of nomination should address the student's exceptional qualifications and promise, and include what contributions the student is likely to make to the program and the field.
 - b. Please do not make any reference to standardized testing scores.
 - c. The letter should cite evidence of the program's commitment to the successful mentoring of diverse doctoral students. This could include training in holistic admission, actions to create a supportive environment for diverse students, past success in recruiting and graduating diverse students, or training in best practices in mentoring graduate students (particularly by the student's likely advisor).
- 3) **Description of the base fellowship/assistantship support** being offered by the program to the student (these base packages must extend at least for the duration of the McNair Fellowship. It is expected that these base packages will be at least comparable to those normally offered by the program. Please note that assistantship support in year 1 normally must be half-time (10 hours) unless special circumstances justify moving the half-GA year to another year. Support in years 2, 3, and 4 must be full-time (20 hours).
- 4) **Nominee's complete application** will be made available to the selection committee in TerpEngage.

Programs must gather the first three items listed above and prepare each one as a PDF file. The three PDF files must be submitted to the Graduate School Awards Portal at terpengage.umd.edu/gsawards/s/ by the nomination deadline.

Selection

Selection decisions are based on excellence, understood as a convergence of the nominee's grades, statement of purpose from the nominee's application to program, prior research or other original scholarship, and the letters of recommendation from the nominee's application to the program. It is also important that the nomination package outline commitment to the McNair Doctoral Fellowship program.

Recruitment-related Expenses

It is expected that the program will actively recruit a successful nominee, including inviting the nominee to campus. Each award of a McNair Fellowship to a program, accordingly, will carry up to \$1,000 for reimbursement of expenses associated with recruitment of a nominee. Reimbursement requests are to be sent to the Director of Finance and Administration in the Graduate School, Patricia Woodwell at paw@umd.edu.

Status of Recruitment of the McNair Fellow

The program awarded a McNair Doctoral Fellowship is expected to report on the status of its recruitment of the student in a timely fashion. In the event that the recruitment is not successful, the Graduate School can then offer the Fellowship to an alternate nominee, who may or may not be an applicant to the same program.

McNair Doctoral Fellowships are awarded to programs for specific students and are not transferable to other students. Should the awarded student decline the Fellowship, the Graduate School will return unused funds to the McNair Graduate Fellowship pool.

Contact

Please direct any questions to Program Director Robyn Kotzker, Graduate School Office of Funding Opportunities, at rkotzker@umd.edu or 301.405.0281.