



## UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND PRESIDENT'S FELLOWSHIP (AY 2025-26)

In accordance with our core values, mission, and desire to create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable campus environment, we offer the President's Fellowship, aimed at recruiting outstanding doctoral students from differing backgrounds or with unique personal and scholarly experience. President's Fellowships are multi-year enhancement awards to be added to full assistantship and fellowship support offers normally made by graduate programs. The President's Fellowship may total up to \$40,000 per student over the duration of the award. Graduate programs must commit to sharing the cost of the President's Fellowship, as described below. At the discretion of the individual program, the \$40,000 award may be spread over four years at or five years.

We encourage nominations of applicants who would increase representation in programs where students from differing backgrounds and perspectives may be present. The Graduate School will offer several President's Fellowships this year to help graduate programs compete successfully for superlative students. The President's Fellowship program helps recruit high-performing students, advance campus diversity objectives, and contribute to increasing degree completion and decreasing time-to-degree.

UMD departments and programs must nominate eligible students for the President's Fellowship Program.

**NOMINATION DEADLINE: Noon, Wednesday, January 22, 2025.**

### Stipends and Cost Sharing

President's Fellowships are enhancement awards added to base fellowship/assistantship packages provided by programs. These base packages must provide full-time support to the candidate and must extend for the duration of the President's Fellowship. The base package must be comparable to those normally offered by the program and must meet or exceed guidelines for minimum stipends set annually by the Graduate School. (Minimum stipend levels can be found at [go.umd.edu/minimum\\_stipends](http://go.umd.edu/minimum_stipends).) **Programs must commit to providing the base package at the time of nomination for a President's Fellowship, and the Graduate School must approve any subsequent changes in the proposed base support package.**

In addition to the base funding, the program must share the cost of the President's Fellowship. The program and/or college must provide \$10,000; the Graduate School will provide the remaining \$30,000. **A nomination from a program will signify a commitment to this cost-sharing agreement.** The required \$10,000 cost-share from the program or program/college will be transferred to the Graduate School at the start of the student's first year. The Graduate School will disburse the full \$40,000 award to the student over 4 or 5 years. Details about this \$10,000 transfer and the award disbursement will be detailed by the program on the student's acceptance form.

President's Fellowships are awarded to programs for specific students and are not transferable to other students. Should the awarded candidate decline the Fellowship or should a student holding a President's Fellowship graduate or leave the program with enhancement funding outstanding, the Graduate School will return unused funds to the President's Fellowship pool.

## Eligibility

Candidates must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents entering Ph.D. programs in Fall 2025. International students are not eligible for the President's Fellowship. All candidates will have exceptional qualifications and a clear promise for outstanding performance in doctoral study and will contribute to the university's ideals for diversity in accordance with the UMD [Strategic Plan's Guiding Principles](#).

Programs must recommend their nominee(s) for admission prior to making the nomination.

Candidates who will have an assistantship as their base support must have U.S. citizenship or a valid work authorization.

## Nomination Packages

All Ph.D. programs are eligible to nominate up to two (2) candidates for the President's Fellowship. Please note that specializations or concentration areas within a degree program are not considered to be separate programs. Nomination packages must include the following:

1. **President's Fellowship cover sheet**
2. **Letter of nomination** from the program's Chair or DGS, or the student's prospective advisor, addressing the student's exceptional qualifications and promise, what contributions the student is likely to make to the program and the field, and what contribution the student would make to diversity in accordance with the program and university mission.

Letter writers should not make any reference to standardized testing scores. The letter should cite evidence of the program's commitment to successfully mentoring diverse doctoral students. This could include training in holistic admission, department actions to create a supportive student environment, past success in retaining and graduating students from various backgrounds, and/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 President's Fellowship and must meet or exceed guidelines for minimum stipends for fellowships and/or assistantships set annually by the Graduate School; it is expected that these base packages will be at least comparable to those normally offered by the program).

Candidates who will have an assistantship as their base support must have U.S. citizenship or valid work authorization.

4. **School of Public Health programs** that accept applications through SOPHAS will be required to submit the student's SOPHAS application.

Programs must prepare the above items as three (or four) individual PDF files and submit to the Graduate School Awards Portal at [terpengage.umd.edu/gsawards/s/](http://terpengage.umd.edu/gsawards/s/) by the nomination deadline. At the time of nomination, TerpEngage will prompt nominators to select the correct application (the correct APP-ID).

An applicant may be nominated for the Flagship and the President's Fellowship but may receive only one of these awards. We strongly encourage programs to nominate their most outstanding applicants for the Flagship Fellowship, and we will continue to emphasize diversity in the Flagship Fellowship selection process.

## **Fellowship Selection Process**

A faculty committee from varied backgrounds and broad disciplinary representation appointed by the Graduate School will serve as the selection committee. Selection decisions will be based on the nominee's excellence, understood as a convergence of the nominee's academic success, statement of purpose, prior research or other original scholarship, letters of recommendation, and the program's letter of nomination, and the ability of the nominee to enhance diversity in your programs.

The President's Fellowship selection committee will not consider GRE or other standardized test scores during evaluations.

Award decisions are expected in mid-February. It is expected that the cohort of awardees will reflect the University's commitment to diversity, including disciplinary diversity.

## **Recruitment Funds**

It is expected that the program will actively recruit a successful nominee, including inviting the nominee to campus. Accordingly, the Graduate School will reimburse programs up to \$1,000 for expenses associated with recruiting an awarded student. Please submit your reimbursement request to the Graduate School using this [Reimbursement Request Form](#).

## **Status of Recruitment**

The program awarded a President's Fellowship is expected to report on the status of its candidate recruitment promptly. Should the awarded candidate decline the Fellowship, the unused funds will be returned to the President's Fellowship pool.

## **Progress Reports**

Programs will submit a brief annual report to the Graduate School on the progress of their President's Fellow(s), including the support the programs have provided (e.g., dedicated training/mentoring programs for President's Fellows, "buddy" systems to provide peer mentors for President's Fellows, regular meetings with department leadership to provide support, etc.). President's Fellows will also submit a brief annual progress report. The program and the Graduate School will confer regarding any Fellow who experiences significant academic difficulty during the year and will establish benchmarks for monitoring the student's progress. Continuation of the President's Fellowship will be contingent upon the student's resumption of timely and satisfactory progress.

Because the President's Fellowships are intended for exceptional students, continuation of the Fellowship is predicated on the student maintaining full-time status and making timely and satisfactory progress to degree.

## **Contact**

Please direct any questions to Robyn Kotzker in the Office of Funding Opportunities at [rkotzker@umd.edu](mailto:rkotzker@umd.edu) or 301.405.0281.