

**BOARD OF REGENTS SUPPORT FUND
GRADUATE FELLOWS PROGRAM**

**BOARD OF REGENTS/SREB GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS
TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY SUBPROGRAM**

Guidelines for the Submission of Proposals

FY 2015-16 Competition for Awards to Begin in FY 2016-17

Request for Proposals, Number 2015-11

**Proposal Submission Deadline: Monday, November 16, 2015,
4:30 p.m. Central Time**

P. O. Box 3677

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-3677

(225) 342-4253

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, NUMBER 2015-11

Important Notices

1. **Inquiries about this RFP**

In accordance with R.S. 39:1503, written and oral inquiries about this request for proposals (RFP) will be accepted until 4:30 p.m., October 15, 2015, or until 4:30 p.m. of the first working weekday following this date. No inquiry--whether written or oral--will be accepted after that date to ensure that all interested parties receive the same information.

2. **Suggestions for Improvements in this RFP**

The Board of Regents actively solicits constructive suggestions about ways in which this RFP can be improved. All such suggestions must be received no later than October 15 to be considered prior to the issuance of the next RFP.

3. **Board of Regents' Commitment to Reform-Based Undergraduate Education and Teacher Preparation**

At its May 22, 1997, meeting, the Board of Regents reaffirmed its commitment to the reform of undergraduate education and teacher preparation and encouraged all Support Fund program applicants to consider these priorities as they develop proposals. Further, Board staff will make all external reviewers aware of the Board's commitment to undergraduate reform and teacher preparation. Reviewers will be instructed that, when all else is equal, preference should be given to those proposals which emphasize, in a meaningful manner, reform-based undergraduate education and teacher preparation.

4. **Availability of the RFP on the Internet**

This RFP is available on the Internet: <https://web.laregents.org/downloads/rfps-policies-forms/>.

**BOARD OF REGENTS/SREB GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS TO
PROMOTE DIVERSITY SUBPROGRAM**

I. INTRODUCTION

For a ten-year period beginning in 1995, the settlement of the desegregation suit provided \$600,000 per year to Louisiana State University and A&M College for scholarships to support underrepresented minority students seeking doctoral degrees. Working with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), LSU through its Huel D. Perkins Doctoral Fellowship Program, which concluded in fiscal year 2005-06, made available to students both academic-year support and membership in SREB’s Doctoral Scholars Program, including participation in its annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. To continue and broaden the impact of the LSU fellowships, the Board of Regents has established a similar subprogram in partnership with SREB. Through this subprogram, a maximum of ten (10) new fellowships may be made available, and each fellowship is four (4) years in duration. Ten (10) new fellowships are anticipated to be available for distribution in the FY 2015-16 competition. Should the Board of Regents Support Fund receive less revenue than is estimated in its FY 2015-16 Plan and Budget, the number of fellowship slots available to the BoR/SREB subprogram may be reduced. Available fellowships are awarded through a competitive process, which is open to all accredited Louisiana institutions of higher education offering doctoral degrees.

Awards of doctoral fellowships are made to graduate schools or governing units at eligible institutions, which then determine the distribution of individual slots among qualified departments and/or students. A panel of impartial out-of-state experts considers all applications and makes funding recommendations to the Board. The Board contributes \$20,000 per student per year for four (4) years, as well as financial support to provide fellows with membership in the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program, enabling them to attend its annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. Information on these SREB initiatives is available at www.sreb.org/page/1074/doctoral_scholars.html.

II. FUNDING AND INSTITUTIONAL MATCHING

The Board contributes a total of \$25,000 per student per year for three (3) years, and \$20,000 per student for the fourth year of study. Board of Regents support is provided in the following categories and amounts:

| Expense Category | Duration | Amount per Annum |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Fellowship Stipend | 4 years | \$20,000 |
| SREB Student Membership/Administrative Services | 3 years | \$ 5,000 |

Students may receive a maximum of four years of support through this subprogram, and each fellowship must be awarded to a single student for the full four-year term. A fellowship slot may not be shared among multiple students either by dividing the annual award or by rotating students through the fellowship in successive years. Board permission must be obtained to replace fellowship recipients who become ineligible to hold the award.

In years in which SREB membership and fees are to be paid by the Board of Regents, the full \$25,000 award for each fellowship will be paid to the institution, which will then remit the appropriate fees to SREB in the name(s) of the student(s) receiving support. The institution is responsible for making appropriate arrangements with SREB to ensure student participation in the Doctoral Scholars Program.

Institutions receiving awards are required to provide full tuition support for each fellowship recipient for the duration of the award. Other matching support, including fee waivers, recruitment costs, and professional development support, are encouraged but not required. Institutions are also urged to find means to elevate fellowship support through departmental and/or university supplements, to enable departments to recruit and retain truly superior candidates through these awards.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PROJECTS

A. Institutional Eligibility

All public and private institutions in Louisiana offering doctoral degrees are eligible to seek support through this subprogram. Each institution may submit a maximum of one (1) proposal requesting up to ten fellowships, and should base the request on its history of minority enrollment and realistic, specific plans for future recruitment. The application must be submitted by the governing unit for graduate education or graduate school at the eligible institution. The governing unit granted an award will be responsible for selecting departments and/or students to receive the fellowships and providing biannual reports to the Board of Regents indicating each fellowship recipient's academic standing, enrollment status, and progress toward program completion. The Board of Regents does not accept applications from or make awards to individual students or academic departments or colleges.

B. Discipline Eligibility

All academic departments offering the Ph.D. are eligible for support through this subprogram, though applications must be made through the institution's governing unit for graduate education or graduate school. Preference is given to applicants presenting plans to provide fellowships to science, technology, mathematics and engineering disciplines. The subprogram does not provide fellowship support to students pursuing professional degrees such as the Ed.D., M.D., D.D.S., J.D., or D.V.M.

C. Student Eligibility

1. These fellowships are available only to underrepresented minority students who hold or will receive a bachelor's and/or master's degree from an accredited college or university before the beginning of BoR fellowship support. Students moving directly from a bachelor's program to a doctoral program are eligible, provided they complete the bachelor's degree prior to receiving fellowship support.
2. Graduate schools must specify their academic criteria and admissions standards for fellowship recipients. As a basis for selection, the institution must at least set a minimum grade point average. Additional measures to ensure student quality are encouraged, including (but not limited to) interviews, GRE or alternate test scores, writing samples, and letters of recommendation. The institution must also identify circumstances under which it might permit exceptions to its established standards for these awards.
3. All students awarded these fellowships must be enrolled full-time in doctoral degree programs throughout the term of the fellowship. Students may retain their fellowships during unpaid leaves of absence or terms of part-time study only with the prior permission of SREB and the Board of Regents. A fellowship must be assigned to a single student for the full four years of support. If a student relinquishes the fellowship, leaves the program, or fails to meet the academic standards required, the fellowship may, under certain circumstances and with Board permission, be reassigned.

4. Students funded through this subprogram must make satisfactory progress to the degree and remain in good academic standing as defined by the institution throughout the term of the fellowship. Any student not meeting these requirements must relinquish his/her award.
5. Except in cases in which remunerated work is required as a component of the student's course of study, students funded through this subprogram are not permitted to undertake any full- or part-time employment, including teaching and/or research assistantships, without first receiving permission from SREB and the Board of Regents in years 1 through 3 of the award, and the Board of Regents in year 4.

D. Individuals Eligible to Serve as Principal Investigators

Any individual employed by an eligible Louisiana institution of higher education may serve as principal or co-principal investigator for a BoR/SREB award. Principal investigators who are delinquent in submitting contractually required reports for prior or existing Board of Regents Support Fund and/or Federal awards managed by the Board of Regents Sponsored Programs Section are precluded from submitting a proposal in response to this RFP until the required report(s) has been received and accepted by the Board.

IV. TIMELINE

If a stated deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the deadline(s) will be extended until 4:30 p.m. of the next working weekday.

| | |
|--|---|
| July 2015 | Request for Proposals issued |
| October 15, 2015 | Last day for questions about the RFP |
| November 16, 2015 4:30 p.m. Central | Deadline for receipt of proposals through LOGAN |
| November 2015 – March 2016 | Proposals transmitted to and reviewed by out-of-state experts |
| April 2016 | Report and recommendations by out-of-state experts completed and posted on the Sponsored Programs website |
| April 2016 | Final action by the Board |
| May-June 2016 | Contracts negotiated and executed |
| August 1, 2016 | Contract start date for projects approved in FY 2015-16 |

V. PROJECT ACTIVATION AND COMPLETION DATES; PROJECT EXTENSIONS

The project activation date is August 1, 2016 and the termination date July 31, 2021. The contract term includes an additional year beyond the four-year fellowship duration to allow for issues related to student recruitment and retention, such as the need for additional time to identify an appropriate fellowship recipient or for a recipient to take a limited leave of absence without penalty.

No-cost extensions may be requested to complete project activities per Louisiana R.S. 39:1514. This statute specifies that “contracts or amendments to existing contracts issued to institutions of higher education under the authority of the Board of Regents to award grants for educational purposes with funds available from the Louisiana Education Quality Support Fund, the Louisiana Fund, and the Health Excellence Fund may be entered into for periods of not more than six years. However, such contracts may be extended beyond the six year limit up to an additional two year period provided no additional costs are incurred.”

Given the need to recruit and graduate fellowship recipients in a timely manner, extensions to BoR/SREB projects are limited to one (1) year. Regardless of any contract extensions, under no circumstances may a fellowship recipient be awarded more than the full amount of support specified for a single fellowship slot awarded by the Board. Remaining unused funds or fellowship slots may not be redirected to increase a fellowship recipient’s duration of support or annual stipend.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

BoR/SREB proposals must be submitted electronically, via the Louisiana Online Grants Administration Network (LOGAN). LOGAN may be accessed at <https://web.laregents.org> by clicking “LOGAN” in the menu at the top of the page. Note that the proposal submission process includes two steps: submission by the PI to the campus, and campus approval with submission to the Board or Regents; a proposal cannot be accepted by the Board until both steps are completed. Because institutional approval is granted by the submission of the proposal to the Board through each institution’s Office of Sponsored Programs, signatures are not required and it is not necessary to submit a paper original or copy. Submission deadlines are absolute; all campus work on the proposal, including final approval and submission to the Board of Regents by the designated campus office, must be completed on or before the deadline date and time. The online submission system is programmed to close at the deadline cited in this RFP.

VII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

A. General Requirements and Stipulations

The format and requirements for proposal submission must be followed closely. Proposals not adhering to requirements will not be considered for funding in the year of submission and the applicant will be notified that the proposal has been deemed non-compliant.

NOTE: The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the proposal is complete and correct upon submission to the Board, and no changes may be made to any proposal after the submission deadline. Disqualification of a proposal and/or any reviewer misunderstandings that occur because proposal contents (including all required forms) are incomplete, out of order, or contain incorrect information are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

- 1. Number of Copies Required:** Proposals are submitted electronically. Paper originals and/or copies are not required and will not be accepted.
- 2. Addenda Submitted After Receipt of Proposal:** Proposals submitted to the Board must be complete and correct upon submission. No addenda, corrections, or revisions will be accepted after final receipt of the proposal. A proposal sent to the Board of Regents through LOGAN may be released upon request of the submitting institution if additional changes are needed, provided such request is made before the deadline for

receipt. A released proposal must be resubmitted through LOGAN prior to the deadline to be eligible for funding consideration.

3. **General Format Stipulations:** All narrative sections of the proposal must be presented in a PDF document with pages numbered, 1-inch margins at the top, bottom and on each side, and in type no smaller than 12 point. All data requested in the forms must be provided. Proposals must be submitted via LOGAN.

B. Specific Requirements and Format

Note that all forms referenced in this RFP are available in LOGAN. Each proposal must include the information specified below, which should be presented in the following sequence:

1. **Cover Page:** Each item on the cover page must be completed.
2. **Project Summary:** The summary, limited to 2,500 characters (including spaces), should provide a concise description of the project, containing a clear statement of need, measurable objectives, and the proposed contribution of the project to minority representation in doctoral programs on the submitting campus.
3. **Table 4-SREB:** Profile of Doctoral Recruitment, Admission, Retention and Support.
4. **Table 5-SREB:** Previous Awards Received Under the BoR/SREB Graduate Fellowships Subprogram
5. **Narrative:** The narrative should be comprehensive, providing requested information for all departments/units for which support is sought. All narrative sections should be compiled as a single PDF document to be uploaded to LOGAN. The total proposal narrative, which excludes qualifications of key personnel, forms, budget pages and appendices, should not exceed twenty (20) pages in length.
 - a. **Institutional history of underrepresented minority graduate student enrollment, retention, and completion of degrees:** Provide a brief narrative account of the institution's recent experience in recruiting, matriculating, retaining, and graduating underrepresented minority students in doctoral degree programs.
 - b. **Description of university-wide efforts to recruit underrepresented minority students:** Summarize efforts in place or planned at your institution to recruit underrepresented minority students to doctoral programs. If activities have been in place in previous recruitment cycles, describe and provide evidence for the success of these efforts.
 - c. **Plan for recruitment of potential fellows and distribution of fellowships among departments:** Provide a detailed plan for attracting students to these fellowship opportunities. Indicate the means by which the fellowship(s) will be assigned to qualified applicants at your institution, and how decisions might be made when a number of applicants across diverse disciplines and departments are eligible for the award(s).

- d. **Proposed academic qualifications of fellowship recipients:** Indicate baseline requirements for fellowship recipients, including, but not limited to, a minimum grade point average.
 - e. **Institutional plans for monitoring fellowship recipients and ensuring retention and success:** Describe mechanisms in place or in development to enable the institution and participating departments to monitor fellowship recipients and move them successfully through their degree programs.
6. **Qualifications of Key Personnel:** The summary of personnel qualifications will be uploaded as a single file into LOGAN and may not exceed five (5) pages. Identify key faculty and support personnel who will be available and have the needed skills to implement the project successfully. List all key faculty and support personnel by name and provide a brief description of their qualifications. Additional information may be provided in an appendix, if necessary.
7. **Budget and Budget Narrative:** Detailed budgets and justifications must be submitted for each year of the proposed project, using electronic forms supplied by the Board through LOGAN. A general description of institutional and/or other matching support also must be included, if appropriate.

The fellowship request should be aligned with the proposed program, reflect realistic institutional plans for recruitment of excellent underrepresented minority students, and include a clear justification for funds being requested. Support may be requested from the Board of Regents for up to ten (10) doctoral fellowship slots, at the following per-slot level:

| Expense Category | Duration | Amount per Annum |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Fellowship Stipend | 4 years | \$20,000 |
| SREB Student Membership/Administrative Services | 3 years | \$ 5,000 |

Fellowships must be requested at the level stipulated and no additional support may be requested from the Board of Regents. The full \$25,000 annual award for each fellowship will be paid to the institution, which will then remit the appropriate fees to SREB for the first three years of the award in the name(s) of the student(s) receiving support. Funds provided for SREB membership/administrative services may not be paid to the student as fellowship support or used for other non-SREB purposes.

Institutions are required to provide full tuition waivers for all requested fellowship slots. Additional institutional or private-sector matching, including fee waivers, recruitment costs, provision of equipment to students, and professional development support, is encouraged but not required. Institutions are also urged to supplement stipend amounts when possible, to attract the best possible students. Note that, unless the work is required as a component of the student's course of study, fellowship recipients are not permitted to undertake full- or part-time employment, including teaching and/or research assistantships, without first receiving permission from SREB and the Board of Regents in years one through three of the award, and from the Board

of Regents in year four. Students should be remunerated at a level equivalent to their peers for work required by the degree program.

Proposals should detail all commitments by collaborative partners (universities, colleges, departments, private-sector firms, etc.) to support proposed activities. Support may be in the form of in-cash or in-kind contributions.

C. REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

Board of Regents Sponsored Programs policies stipulate that all submitted proposals are subject to external review by an appropriate panel(s) of experts. Board staff will select and engage the services of a team of out-of-state experts to review proposals submitted through this RFP. The team will individually assess and collectively rank all proposals. Proposals will be rated on the extent to which they meet specified criteria (see Appendix A). Proposals that receive average ratings in the range of 70-100 points will be eligible to compete for subprogram funds. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Board fund proposals that receive an average rating of 69 or less.

APPENDIX A

Criteria for Review

**BOARD OF REGENTS SUPPORT FUND
BOARD OF REGENTS/SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD
GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY**

RATING FORM

Proposal Number: _____

Institution: _____

I. Underrepresented Minority Graduate Student Recruitment History and Plans (45 points)

_____ of 15 pts. Previous institutional success in underrepresented minority graduate student recruitment and enrollment

_____ of 20 pts. Plans for recruitment of students for BoR/SREB awards

_____ of 10 pts. Criteria for selection of student recipients and method of determining allocation of fellowships among qualified departments/units

II. Underrepresented Minority Graduate Student Retention History and Plans (45 points)

_____ of 25 pts. Plans for mentoring fellowship recipients, monitoring student progress, and encouraging completion of degrees

_____ of 20 pts. Success of previous university-wide retention efforts and degree completion rates for underrepresented minority students

III. Institutional Matching (10 points)

_____ of 10 pts. Provision of adequate cost sharing, including tuition remission (required) and fellowship supplements

_____ **RATING TOTAL**

IV. Bases of Rating

Summarize briefly the notable features of this proposal which most decisively influenced the ratings given. Views of the entire committee relative to each proposal will be summarized in the general report.

GENERAL RANKING: _____

Ratings of individual consultants will be averaged to derive a single score for each proposal. Proposals will then be ranked based on this score. The ranking of proposals will be included in the review panel's general report.

(Rev. 07/2015)