

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

2024-2025 Graduate Fellowship Competition Guidelines

The Ohio State University is one of the world's best public research universities, offering about 280 graduate study programs in all. The Ohio State University Graduate School, the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES), and other entities at Ohio State offer various types of graduate funding to support graduate programs across the university. This document provides an overview of the college-managed fellowships (including those administered by the Graduate School, but allocated through the college) and major university-managed competitions.

College-Level Competitions

Director's Fellowship

This award is offered to recruit the very best graduate students studying food, agricultural, or environmental research. We anticipate awarding up to 6 Director's Fellowships this cycle.

Access Fellowship

This award is designed to help CFAES graduate programs recruit highly qualified students who have encountered or overcome challenges to access graduate school. We anticipate awarding up to 6 Access Fellowships from the college.

TOP International Fellowship

The Ohio Program (TOP) is an international exchange program under College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences founded in 1979. TOP promotes global opportunities for international students and young farmers to obtain practical on-the-job training in the U.S. TOP provides over 430 internships per year.

The TOP International Fellowship is offered to recruit current or previous interns of TOP. We anticipate awarding up to 1 TOP International Fellowship. Note that current or previous TOP interns who apply for graduate studies in CFAES can be nominated for any of the other CFAES fellowships.

I. Eligibility

Awards are open to new students seeking to start an M.S. or Ph.D. program at The Ohio State University, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. All fellowship competitions are open to students studying within any CFAES-affiliated department (including domestic and international students). The prospective faculty advisor must hold either a CFAES or OARDC appointment and this should be specified in the letter of nomination. As a requirement for eligibility, programs must clearly justify why the nominee is being put forward for the respective college-level competition category.

Program or faculty must also commit to remaining years of funding (up to 2 years for a MS or up to 5 years for a PhD). The remaining years can be covered by a GRA or GTA at the department's discretion.

II. Duration of Appointment

Fellowships will be limited to one-year of funding. Appointments for M.S. and Ph.D. students will typically be for 9-months, however 12-month appointments may be made at the department's discretion. Funds to support the awards will be available on July 1, 2024. Note that if a University Fellowship is received, college-level awards can be deferred until the following year (for a maximum of 3 years). If a department award is received, the college award is to be used first and the department award deferred until the following year.

III. Stipend

The stipend for the college fellowships will total \$30,420 per award, regardless of appointment type, and includes a standardized payment to cover tuition and fee costs. For a 12-month appointment, students should expect to receive at least \$2,535/ month (less deductions for certain fees such as Student Activity, Recreational, Student Union Facility, COTA Bus Service, Student Legal Services, and Program Fees).

IV. Nomination Procedures

Each department/ program will be permitted to submit up to 3 nominations for the Director's and TOP International competitions, and a total of 4 nominations to the CFAES Access/Graduate Access Fellowship competitions. Due to the limited number of awards, programs are only eligible to receive a maximum of 2 awards for the Director's competition, 3 awards for the CFAES Access/Graduate Access Fellowship competition, and 1 TOP Fellowship.

Though programs can nominate the same student for multiple competitions, a student will only be awarded one college-level Fellowship from the Director's or CFAES Access competitions. For this reason, we strongly encourage you to nominate your student(s) for the category that fits best, rather than nominating them to multiple competitions (between Director's and Access).

Graduate Program Coordinators for each program should nominate students by electronic submission at <https://researchforum.cfaes.osu.edu/competitions/> **on or before 5:00pm Friday, February 2, 2024**. Note that programs are permitted to submit nomination packets to CFAES in the order required by the OSU Graduate School Fellowships.

The nomination packet must include:

- a. Nomination **cover page**.
- b. A signed **letter of support** from the prospective faculty advisor or graduate studies chair. The statement should describe the nominee's credentials, including previous graduate work (if relevant) and describe why the nominee represents the highest quality for their program. This letter should also:
 - i. Confirm that the prospective faculty advisor holds a CFAES or OARDC appointment.
 - ii. Include the level of enthusiasm of the program for the applicant (Outstanding, Excellent, Very Good), student interactions with the department (such as research internships or campus visits), how the nominee fits into the program's research emphases, and/or how the applicant can promote programmatic goals or fill existing gaps.

- iii. For the Director's and CFAES Access Fellowships, please explain why the nominee is considered outstanding within the particular fellowship competition category. Categories are to be interpreted broadly. It is the responsibility of the nominating graduate program to demonstrate how the nominee fits into the specified category.
 - Director's – How does the nominee's research contribute to the advancement of the college's mission, specifically with relation to food or agricultural sciences?
 - Access – How does the nominee demonstrate they have overcome educational, economic, or personal challenges to access graduate school?
- iv. For the TOP International Fellowship, please include the year that the student participated in TOP. We will need to verify participation for nominees to be eligible.
- v. For the Graduate Access Fellowship, see page 5 for more details. Nominees will be reviewed according to [the rubric provided by the graduate school](#).
- c. A **curriculum vitae** outlining the applicant's educational training, relevant work experiences, honors, and other evidence of scholarly productivity and performance (e.g. publications) is recommended.
- d. A **personal statement** from the nominee describing their research and professional goals (up to three-pages, typed, single spaced). Any text over 3 pages will be removed during the administrative review, prior to committee review of nominations.
- e. Three **letters of recommendation**.
- f. Note: Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are optional. If they are included, they will not factor into the review.

V. Review Procedures

Nominations will be evaluated by a faculty review committee overseen by the CFAES Office for Research and Graduate Education. The target date for a final announcement of the awards is approximately February 23, 2024.

VI. Strategy

Fellowships managed by the Office of Research and Graduate Education will generally be used to recruit the strongest students, taking into account the challenges students have encountered in their path to graduate school. To ensure that students can complete their graduate degrees, program or faculty must commit to the remaining years of funding as cited under nomination procedures. Awardees will be selected based on how well their proposed studies align with the fellowship competition they are nominated for, the academic merit of the nominee, notable skills and experiences, qualities that are associated with success in graduate school (such as resilience and motivation), and the likelihood the student will enroll at Ohio State.

It is important to note that our top choices for these Fellowships will often evaluate opportunities elsewhere. This fellowship program must be coupled with an aggressive recruitment strategy for top candidates. For this reason, we ask that you please nominate students for Fellowships who are likely to accept an offer of admission. For example, students who have a strong connection with a department or faculty member. We strongly encourage programs to interact regularly with prospective recruits, as this will increase the likelihood of them accepting an offer.

Questions? Please contact Kayla Arnold (arnold.1065@osu.edu) or Gary Pierzynski (pierzynski.3@osu.edu).

College-Managed University Competitions

Early Offer Eminent Scholar Fellowship (EOES)

These fellowships were created using a subset of the Graduate School's College Allotted Fellowship (CAF) pool. CFAES will receive 1 EOES Fellowship for 2024-2025.

Eligibility requirements:

- GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- Seeking a PhD.
- International and domestic students are eligible.
- Nominees must be admitted into the graduate program by January 11, 2024 (note, students still have until April 15, 2024 to accept their offers).

Fellowship duration and funding package details:

- Fellowship duration is 3-years (1st, 2nd, and dissertation year).
- Each fellow will receive a stipend in the amount of \$2,535/month, tuition and fees and 100% health insurance subsidy.

Additional details:

- EOES awards can be combined with UF, GAF, EA-F, CAF, and college-level awards.
- Programs may nominate early offer students to the University Fellowship Competition at their discretion.
- Award cannot be reallocated.

Nomination procedure:

Each graduate program is permitted to nominate one student who you would consider to be the best candidate to your program. To nominate a student for the EOES, please send a subset of your nominee's admission materials (i.e. program justification statement, personal statement, and nominee's CV) to the Graduate Education Program Manager, Kayla Arnold (arnold.1065@osu.edu) by 5pm on December 15, 2023. **Awardees must be admitted into your graduate program by January 11, 2024.**

Our office aided by a select group of graduate faculty will review nomination materials and decide the recipient. In our review, we will look at academic achievements, experiences, characteristics associated with success in graduate school (such as resiliency), and likelihood of offer acceptance. The Office for Research and Graduate Education will provide the recipient's information to the Graduate School prior to their January 11, 2024 deadline. After notification, the graduate program coordinator will need to enter the student into the [Graduate School Nomination system](#).

Nomination deadline: December 15, 2023

Award announcements: On or before January 5, 2024

Graduate Access Fellowships (GAF)

This competition was created using the previous Graduate Enrichment Fellowship pool to recruit students who have overcome educational, economic, or personal challenges to access graduate school. The number of total awards given to each college is determined by the Graduate School. CFAES will receive 6 GAF awards to allocate this cycle.

Note that the University Graduate Access Fellowship (GAF) pilot will be administered through the same review process as these college-level fellowship awards. Eligibility criteria for the GAF competition is slightly different than the college-level awards (for example the GAF is not open to international students while the CFAES Access Fellowship is). All eligibility criteria are summarized in the 2024-2025 Fellowship Overview Table at the end of this document.

Eligibility requirements:

- GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Seeking an MS or PhD.
- Domestic and DACA students are eligible.
- Nominees must comply with the requirements outlined in the [Graduate School's current Fellowship Guidelines](#).

Fellowship duration and funding package details:

- Fellowship duration is 1-year.
- Each fellow will receive a stipend in the amount of \$2,535/month, tuition and fees and 100% health insurance subsidy.

Additional details:

- Students may be nominated for more than one type of award through the Graduate School fellowship competition and/or the College-Allotted Fellowship process. Read more on [the Graduate School website](#).
- Awards can be combined with EOES, UF, GAF, EA-F, CAF, and college-level awards.

Nomination procedure:

Each graduate program is permitted to nominate a total of 4 students to the GAF and CFAES Access competitions. For administrative purposes, nominations for the GAF will follow the same procedure as the CFAES college-level awards (Director's, CFAES Access, and TOP International Fellowships). Nominations will be submitted to the college nomination system at <https://researchforum.cfaes.osu.edu/competitions/>.

Nominees will be reviewed according to [the rubric provided by the graduate school](#). If your program is awarded a GAF through the competitive review process, you will be informed on or before February 23, 2024. The college will notify the graduate school which students are awarded GAFs and you will have until April 18 to nominate that student in the [Graduate School Awards system](#).

Internal nomination deadline: February 2, 2024 (same as college-level competitions)

College Allotted Fellowship (CAF)

These fellowships are funded by the Graduate School to allow programs the flexibility to make early offers to help recruit top students. The Graduate School determines the number of College-Allotted Fellowship awards that each college will receive. This number is based on the average number of University Fellowships (UF) and General Enrichment (GE) fellowship awards won by the college's graduate programs during the last five-year period. Fellowships are then distributed to CFAES graduate programs based on a college formula, and ensuring that each program receives at least 1 CAF. Program allotments for 2024 are provided in the table below.

Eligibility requirements: Nominees must comply with the CAF requirements in the [Graduate School's current Fellowship Guidelines](#).

Fellowship details:

- Fellowship duration is 1-year
- See [Graduate School's current Fellowship Guidelines](#) for additional fellowship details.

Additional details:

- CAF awards can be combined with UF, EOES, GAF, EA-F, or college-level awards.
- Awards can be reallocated 1:1 to others who meet eligibility criteria.

Nomination Deadline: April 18, 2024

Table 1. CAF Program Allotments 2024-25

ACEL	1
AEDE	2
AS	1
Ent	1
SENR	3
FST	1
HCS	2
PP	1
Total CFAES allocation	12

University-Managed Competitions

University Fellowship (UF)

University Fellowships are designed to recruit academically strong candidates for admission into graduate programs. The spirit of these awards is to nominate the program's strongest academic candidates in an equitable manner. University Fellowships are reviewed at the University level by a faculty review committee. Full guidelines for review can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Eligibility requirements: Nominees must comply with the requirements outlined in the [Graduate School's current Fellowship Guidelines](#).

Additional details:

- Fellowship duration can be 1, 2, or 3 years for the UF, DUF, and DDUF, respectively.
- Awards can be combined with EOES, UF, GAF, EA-F, CAF, and college-level awards.
- Awards can be reallocated 1:1 up to 3 years for the DDUF to any other student nominated for a UF. If the program does not have any eligible students to reallocate an award, the ability to reallocate will revert to the college.

Nomination Deadline: January 31, 2024

Nomination cap allotments

Nomination caps for the University Fellowship Competition are shown in the table below. These calculations were determined based on each program getting at least one nomination, with bonuses depending on the previous year's nomination caps and graduate enrollment.

ACEL	2
AEDE	2
AS	2
Ent	1
SENR	6
FST	2
HCS	2
PP	1
Total CFAES cap	18

ENGIE-Axium Fellowships (EA-F)

The EAF is a one-year award designed to recruit academically strong candidates for admission into Ohio State's graduate programs with a particular focus in the research areas of Sustainability. Each EAF awarded funds one student stipend and tuition & fee authorization. The EAF can be combined with other Graduate School Fellowships to offer multi-year fellowship packages, provided the recipient satisfies the criteria required for each individual fellowship.

Multi-year packages through Graduate School Fellowships will be restricted to a total of 3 years, but EAF can add an additional year. EAF can also be combined with College Allocated Fellowships (CAF), to increase the total support, in accordance with the Graduate School Fellowship guidelines. Unaccepted EAFs default to the Graduate School. There is no cap to the number of nominations that programs may submit to the ENGIE-Axium competition.

Full guidelines can be found on the Graduate School website: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/faculty-and-staff/fellowship-program/engie-axium-graduate-fellowship-and-scholarship-guidelines>

Eligibility requirements:

- GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Students of all nationalities are eligible
- Students must be studying within the area of sustainability

Nomination deadline: January 31, 2024

*Additional information about ENGIE-Axium Scholarships (the EA-IRS and EA-CPT) may be forthcoming.

2024-2025 Fellowship Overview

	Allotment	Stipend (annual/ monthly 12mo) [†]	Citizenship	GPA	Fellowship Years	Eligible Programs	Deadline
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Fellowships							
Director's Fellowship (DF)	6	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.5	1	MS or PhD	Feb 2
Access Fellowship (AF)	6	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.0	1	MS or PhD	Feb 2
The Ohio Program International Fellowship (TOP)	1	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.5	1	MS or PhD	Feb 2
Graduate School Fellowships (managed by CFAES)							
Early Offer Eminent Scholar (EOES)	1	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.5	3	PhD	Dec 15
Graduate Access Fellowship (GAF)	6*	\$30,420/ \$2,535	U.S. citizen or DACA status	3.0	1	MS or PhD	Feb 2
College Allotted Fellowship (CAF)	12*	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.0	1-2	MS or PhD	Apr 18
University Fellowships (managed by Graduate School)							
University Fellowship	NA	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.5	1-3	PhD	Jan 31
ENGIE-Axium Fellowship (EA-F)	NA	\$30,420/ \$2,535	all	3.5	1	MS or PhD	Jan 31

Note: Early Offer Inclusive Excellence Fellowship (EOIE) and the Patrick S. Osmer Fellowship is paused for the 2024 fellowship cycle.

*Number of CAFs and GAFs per college is determined by the graduate school. The number allocated per program is determined at the college level. Table 1 shows the CAF allocations for the current cycle, while GAFs are allocated through a competitive review process along with the college-level fellowships.

[†]Monthly stipend amounts indicated do not include deductions for other student fees (Student Activity, Recreational, Student Union Facility, COTA Bus Service, Student Legal Services, and Program Fees). For detailed information about fees, see the Specific Program Tuition and Fee Locator on the [Registrar's](#) website.

Fellowship Competition Calendar

2023	
Early-October	Fellowship announcement and nomination window opens for EOES
November 1	Nomination system opens for CAF and GAF awards
November 27	Nomination system opens for UF/ENGIE-Axium
December 15	EOES nomination internal deadline
2024	
January 5	Award announcement for EOES (college will notify graduate school of winner by January 11, 2024 deadline and program will enter awardee into university nomination system)
January 31	University competition deadline: UF and EA-F
February 2	College competition deadline
February 23	Anticipated announcement of CFAES awards and GAF awards (college will notify graduate school of GAF winners and program will enter awardees into university nomination system)
March 1	Award recipients available to view in nomination system UF, GE, and CAF Awardees announced for college-level fellowships
April 15	Nationally agreed upon acceptance deadline for students
April 18	CAF, GAF, and reallocation requests due
April 30	CAF, GAF, and reallocations must be accepted

Graduate School fellowship stipend rates: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh/fellowship-guidelines-fg/graduate-school-fellowship-stipends>

University fellowship full calendar: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh/fellowship-guidelines-fg/fellowship-calendar>

University fellowship guidelines: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/all/fellowship-guidelines-fg>