

# 2021-2022 Graduate Research Opportunity Fellowship



## Nevada NASA Space Grant Consortium NSHE STEM Graduate Students

**Announcement for students enrolled in a full-time Masters or PhD program at:**  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas; University of Nevada, Reno who are or will be engaged in a Research or Hands-on-Project with Faculty Mentor(s) at the University of Nevada, Reno; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; or Desert Research Institute.

**Submission Deadline:**  
**Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 5pm PT**  
**Tips and Q&A Meeting: Wed, Dec 9, 2020 at 12 noon**  
**PT and Tues, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:00 pm PT**



National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)  
Space Grant College and Fellowship Training Program  
Cooperative Agreement #: 80NSSC20M0043



# Nevada NASA Space Grant

## Graduate Research Opportunity Fellowship

### Who is eligible?

Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) students who are **U.S. citizens and full-time graduate students** enrolled in a STEM program will be considered for a fellowship encompassing the full annual year (Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 semesters). All participating students must be supervised by at least one NSHE faculty mentor; and maintain full-time enrollment status at their institution(s) throughout the scholarship period. Please note that renewal applications (i.e., students who received prior NV Space Grant Fellowship awards) will only be considered if funds remain after awards to new applicants are issued.

### Potential Project Areas:

Students engaged in NASA specific science technology, engineering or math (STEM) are encouraged to apply. **The NASA Office of STEM Engagement now requires that all awards/projects specifically address a Mission Directorate research priority; see file “paperclipped” to this solicitation.**

**Fellowship Amount:** \$17,000 per academic year. Please note that this Fellowship is not a Graduate Research Assistantship. As a GRA you are an employee of the institution and could have access to tuition remission/waivers and health insurance. As a Fellow you are not an employee of the institution. You can go at your own pace with input and direction from your mentor(s). As long as you meet the scope of work of the project by the end of the project period you will be successful. Your schedule may not necessarily be rigid and could vary. As a Fellow you would not receive a tuition waiver or health insurance.

**Award Period:** September 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022

**Deadline:** **Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 5 pm PT**

MS Teams 365 online Discussion (tips and Q&A) on Fellowship and Scholarship applications will be held on the following dates: **Wednesday, Dec 9, 2020 at 12 noon PT and Tuesday, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:00 pm PT.**

<a href="#">Date</a>	<a href="#">Teams Link</a>
December 9, 2020	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>
January 19, 2021	<a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The Nevada NASA Space Grant Graduate Research Opportunity Fellowships program (GROF) is designed to support independently conceived or designed **NASA-specific** research projects by graduate students. NASA fellowship opportunities are focused on innovation through projects that will generate measurable results or advancements in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math that will directly contribute to NASA's current and future science and technology goals.

**Fellowships will be awarded at \$17,000 for the academic year. Renewal applications from previously funded students will be considered if funds are available; however, priority will go to students new to the Nevada Space Grant. Note: in recent years, there were more new applications than awards available, so no renewal applications were considered for funding.**

## II. ELIGIBILITY:

Applicants must be:

- **Citizens of the United States of America;** (Citizens of Puerto Rico, Washington DC, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Northern Marianas are U.S. citizens) Permanent residence status, green card, or student visas are not accepted.  
Students selected as Space Grant Fellows must be citizens of the United States.
- Enrolled in (or admitted) as a full-time masters or doctoral degree program at UNLV or UNR. The degree program should be related to science and technology, which includes, but is not limited to, aeronautics, space science, engineering, computer science, physics, mathematics, STEM education and other related fields.

## III. DEADLINE:

The deadline for application submission is **5:00 pm PT, on Tuesday, February 16, 2021.** ONLY applications for which all materials have been received will be reviewed. Incomplete applications will NOT be reviewed. It is the obligation of each applicant to verify that all letters of recommendation from faculty have been sent and received. Students will be notified at the earliest possible date as to whether or not he/she has been selected to receive a NVSGC Fellowship. Funds will not be distributed until Congress has appropriated funds to NASA and the NASA Office of STEM Engagement has awarded the next year of funding to NV Space Grant; this typically occurs in early April. This means that there may be unexpected delays in the sub-award of funds to the successful graduate student applications and you should not plan to use these funds to cover student registration costs.

**HELPFUL NOTE:** An excellent submission will be one that 1) is responsive to the points and questions posed in this solicitation; 2) is articulate and succinct (i.e., can be understood by anyone from any science/engineering background); 3) demonstrates a strong academic record in STEM; and 4) relates directly to a NASA Mission Directorate research priority (see list paperclipped to this solicitation).

## IV. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND INSTRUCTIONS:

**Potential Project Areas:** Students engaged in any STEM area are encouraged to apply; however, the research topic (as stated above) must directly address a NASA Mission Directorate research priority.

### General Information

- The goal of the Fellowship program is to support and reward Nevada students for their achievements in academic endeavors relevant to NASA missions and science goals.
- Because acceptance of this award may impact a student's income level to a degree that could affect eligibility for other funding - including student loans, it is the students' responsibility to consult with their graduate student office and their campus financial aid advisors. **Nevada Space Grant highly encourages students to meet with their financial aid officers prior to application submission.**
- NSHE does not provide tax advice. If you have questions about possible tax liabilities, you may refer to the IRS web sites: <https://www.irs.gov/>

### Program Guidelines

1. Awardees must be US citizens and full-time students engaged in any STEM discipline major at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; University of Nevada, Reno who are or will be engaged in a Research or Hands-on-Project with Faculty Mentor(s) at the University of Nevada, Reno; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; or Desert Research Institute.
2. NASA requires longitudinal reporting once a year. This involves requesting information from past recipients to determine any and all impacts Space Grant funded opportunities have on a student's future education/career plans. All awardees must agree to provide timely information for this report. The data is used to demonstrate the success of the Space Grant program to Congress, so that funding will continue to be appropriated for future students.
3. Awardees may be invited to prepare and present an oral or poster presentation at the National, Regional or Nevada Statewide Space Grant Meetings. Information and exact dates and location will be provided to participants. Each awardee will be expected to use a portion of these funds to support travel costs to attend the Statewide Nevada NASA Programs meeting to present a poster or talk on their project. Note: the presentation should represent the project or research done over the course of the fellowship period. If sufficient funds remain in the grant, travel funding will be made available for students to attend these meetings.
4. Members of under-represented and under-served groups are encouraged to apply. NASA defines under-represented groups as African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders, persons with disabilities, women, veterans and first generation or geographically isolated college students.

## Application Instructions

It is highly recommended that before you apply, you speak to a representative of your institution's Financial Aid Office. As stated previously, depending on other awards, employment and your overall financial profile, you may or may not be eligible to receive a fellowship. Only your institution's Financial Aid Office will have access to your information; the NV Space Grant Consortium Office will not have access to this information.

Each application starts with a survey form that must be submitted electronically through the online application (a link to this survey form is provided directly below and at the end of this solicitation). At the end of the online application process you will be able to upload a single PDF file with all of the required application materials.

**If an applicant does not receive confirmation that his/her proposal was received, please contact Gibran Chavez-Gudino at [gibran@nshe.nevada.edu](mailto:gibran@nshe.nevada.edu) to verify receipt of proposal by the NSHE Sponsored Programs Office.**

1. **ONLINE APPLICATION (survey form)** - All applicants will need to complete the online application. <https://nasa.epscorspo.nevada.edu/funding/2021-2022-nvsgc-fellowship/>

### **As a single pdf, submit the following:**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL** - Provide a description of your proposed research program and its relevance to NASA's interests. The maximum page limit for the research proposal is 4 pages. References are not included in the page limit. The proposal should be single-spaced with 1" margins, in 12-pt font and must include the following sections (we suggest you use these sections as headers for your proposal):

- a. Abstract (50-100 words)
- b. Introduction (background on why the project is important and relevant to one or more NASA Mission Directorate research priority)
- c. Objectives or research hypotheses/questions
- d. Plans for research work, i.e., methods or tasks to be completed
- e. Timetable: (This must be reasonable and aligned with a one-year project.)
- f. Plans for reporting results, e.g., presentation, report, journal publication

NOTE: The research proposal should be written in a manner that anyone from any science, technology or engineering background can understand what you are proposing to research and why it is important. Please include a brief statement describing your presentation and publication plan. (Those who receive a fellowship must complete a minimum of one publication or presentation, which must be submitted, or prepared for submission by the end of the fellowship period.)

2. **TRANSCRIPTS** – Both undergraduate and graduate transcripts must be submitted. "Unofficial" pdf transcripts downloaded from the University website are acceptable. Transcripts of all course work completed, including a list of courses currently enrolled in for the upcoming semester are required. Due to time constraints, if you previously

attended a non-NSHE higher education institution - those transcripts should be scanned into the single pdf containing all of your transcripts.

4. **LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT/RECOMMENDATION (2-3)** - Letters of Recommendation are required. One letter must be from the applicant's advisor who will serve as mentor for the proposed fellowship project. The mentor should clearly define their role/involvement in the proposed project in their letter of support. The other letter may be from a professor, advisor, or university administrator who is well acquainted with you academically. These letters may be included in the application packet, **or for confidentiality reasons, these letters may be emailed - separate from the application - directly from the person writing the letter by the deadline.** Our online platform also provides a mechanism for submission of letters of recommendation by faculty in a confidential manner – see website for details.
5. **CV or BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH** A Biosketch/CV should be completed and included in the PDF file. A template is available at: <https://nasa.epscorspo.nevada.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Student-CV-Builder.pdf>
6. **STATEMENT OF INTEREST (SOI)**- This section provides the applicant with an opportunity to introduce himself/herself to the review panel. Information that describes why he/she would be a good candidate for this NASA funded opportunity. The SOI must be no more than one page. It should include education, training, and other accomplishments as they might relate to a successful aerospace or science/engineering/technology-related fields or science education fields. Make sure the applicant's full name and email address are in the header of the statement. Please be thorough but succinct in responding to each point that follows:
  - a. Describe your interest in an aerospace or STEM-related career as it relates to NASA Mission Directorate priorities in the paperclipped list.
  - b. Describe your technical and educational experiences and how these experiences have prepared you for a fellowship.
  - c. Extracurricular activities, such as clubs, scientific societies, science team activities, tutoring, volunteer, etc.
  - d. How will this fellowship impact your future goals?

## **V. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

Graduate Research Opportunity Fellowship proposals will be selected based on a statewide merit-based review. The screening and selection process will include review by a committee of NSHE faculty that will focus on the following review criteria:

1. Relevance of the proposed research to one or more NASA Mission Directorate research priorities.
2. The quality, novelty and feasibility of the proposed research and how well it meets the requirements stated in the Research Narrative section. (Remember to check your spelling and grammar and ensure that anyone from any discipline can understand what you are proposing to research and why it is important.)

3. Expressed motivation and interest in a NASA-relevant STEM career and a demonstrated level of academic preparation and excellence as reflected by his/her curriculum vita (resume) and academic records/GPA, particularly appropriate coursework that would predict success in a research experience.
4. Recommendation letters must be supportive of his/her credentials and ability to successfully complete the proposed research. The level of faculty mentor involvement should be clearly stated in their letter.
5. Clearly defined products appropriate for the fellowship period (i.e., anticipated research results, publications, conference presentations, etc. or if you are at the start of your project, only list the items you anticipate accomplishing by the end of the fellowship year.)

## **VI. REVIEW RESULTS AND AWARD/NON-AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It is anticipated that the review will be completed by March 2020 and announcements of the review results will be sent by email shortly thereafter. Scholarship funding will be sub-awarded through your NSHE Institution's Sponsored Project and/or Financial Aid Offices sometime between mid-May and early June, i.e., after NASA Headquarters sends annual funds to NV Space Grant. (Note: Unforeseen Congressional and/or NASA delays may impact the arrival date of the NV Space Grant funds and when your sub-award will be processed and available to you.)

## **VII. CONTACTS**

Applicants with questions regarding this program are strongly encouraged to contact the Nevada Space Grant Consortium team.

Nevada NASA Research Administrator  
Gibran Chavez-Gudino  
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Nevada NASA Project Director  
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More information about NV Space Grant may be found at:  
<https://nasa.epscorspo.nevada.edu/>