ND EPSCoR
Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

Doctoral Dissertation Assistantship Program

Issued: January 7, 2016
Due: 4:00 P.M., May 5, 2016
Award Start Date: August 16, 2016

www.ndepscor.ndus.edu

TO: **Faculty in the Sciences, Engineering, and Mathematics**
FROM: **Mark R. Hoffmann, ND EPSCoR Associate Project Director**
RE: **Doctoral Dissertation Assistantship (DDA) Program Announcement**

ND EPSCoR's DDA program is designed to (1) increase the completion rate of Ph.D. students enrolled in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines at North Dakota's two research-intensive universities; and (2) increase the number of competitive proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation.

Description of the Program:
Support will be available for up to 24 months to enable students to dedicate their time exclusively to dissertation research. The ND EPSCoR monthly stipend is $1,620/month for up to a 24-month period. The host department may augment the ND EPSCoR award with a one-quarter (1/4)- time GRA or one-quarter (1/4)-time GTA for one semester per year. However, the annual rate of support must equal the greater of a one-half (1/2)-time GRA or one-half (1/2)-time GTA for the year as set by the Graduate School at UND. Use of the assistantship through the summer is also expected. Additionally, a UND awardee is expected to be enrolled in six credit hours. Up to $2,000 may be awarded for research supplies and to support student travel (presentations at national/international meetings). It is anticipated that up to three (3) Doctoral Dissertation Assistantships will be awarded at UND. A committee at UND consisting of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, the Dean of the Graduate School, the ND EPSCoR Associate Project Director, and additional disciplinary experts, as necessary, will evaluate the applications.

Applications must be made by the students with supplemental information provided by their advisors, along with endorsement from their department graduate program director or department chair. Successful applicants will have research programs that are eligible for funding from the science, engineering, and mathematics research directorates at the National Science Foundation. **The faculty advisor is required to submit a proposal to one of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) research directorates at the National Science Foundation during the term of the assistantship.**

Student Eligibility Requirements:
Students whose dissertation topics are in areas eligible for funding from the science, engineering, and mathematics research directorates in the National Science Foundation and ***have passed the Doctoral Comprehensive Exams at the time of application*** are eligible.

Primary Evaluation Criteria:
- Quality of the Research Narrative and Credentials of the Ph.D. Student
- Potential for the PI to submit a competitive proposal to the National Science Foundation
- Quality of the Mentoring Plan
- Potential for increasing the number of Ph.D.s awarded in the applicant's department

Checklist Requirements (*Submit only an electronic version in a single PDF file to cathy.lerud@research.und.edu via email attachment).*
Submit items in the following order as a PDF submission to ND EPSCoR:

1. *Cover Page*. Click on this link for the Cover Page
2. *Copy* of the Graduate School Student Status Sheet showing successful completion of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exams.
3. *Departmental Endorsement Letter* from the Graduate Program Director or Chair, including an explanation of how this award aligns with the department's strategic plan and how it will increase the number of Ph.D. students in the department. The letter needs to address any provisions made for tuition waivers.
4. *Research Narrative*. No more than five (5) double-spaced pages, font no smaller than 10. **Must be written by the student** and presented in the following order: a) Research Topic Title. b) Abstract– 500 word limit. c) Research Description explaining the impact of the research in terms that a broadly educated scientist, not in the proposer's discipline, will understand the importance of the research and the approach taken to test hypotheses. Bibliography and any appendices are counted in the five page limit. N.B. Bibliography can be single-spaced.
5. *Mentoring Plan* describing how the graduate student will be supervised and consisting of no more than three (3) double-spaced pages. The plan, written by the advisor, must include details regarding the research environment and specific resources (including funds), beyond those provided by the DDA award, available for completing the proposed research as well as a timeline for completion. The mentoring plan should address plans for training students in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR).

6. *Description* of the student's credentials, including copies of undergraduate and graduate transcripts and a list of any previous scholarly activity related to the proposed research project.
7. *NSF style budget*: (a) cumulative budget for stipend, fringe benefits, travel to meetings, and research supplies; (b) budget justification that includes a statement indicating the department's stipend level on record in the UND Graduate School. Click on this link for the NSF style budget
8. *Biosketch* (two page limit) and Current and Pending Support forms for the Ph.D. advisor (please use NSF Fastlane proposal style).
9. *Anticipated NSF Proposal Title*, estimated budget, and NSF research program to which the faculty advisor will submit a proposal (must identify the NSF directorate and the target date for submission).

NOTICE: ND EPSCoR may refuse to review any proposal that does not comply with the checklist.

Award Announcements and Additional Information:
Proposals are due prior to the close of business on May 5, 2016. Awards will be announced on or about June 2, 2016, and funds are expected to be available on August 16, 2016.

Awards are contingent upon availability of funds from the National Science Foundation and the State of North Dakota.

Please direct questions to Mark R. Hoffmann at 701-777-2492 or mark.hoffmann@und.edu