MARGINS Post-doctoral Fellowship Program

GENERAL INFORMATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) aims to ensure the vitality of the human resource base of science, mathematics, and engineering and to reinforce its diversity by dedicating funds to postdoctoral training. A postdoctoral appointment is a unique opportunity for a first-rate early-career scientist to solidify research skills, build a track record, establish peer relationships, and acquire professional self-confidence. Accordingly, the NSF-MARGINS program provides support for postdoctoral researchers to conduct multi-disciplinary research with MARGINS research groups or individuals based at United States institutions by applying their expertise to problems related to the MARGINS initiatives. However, our intent is to encourage individuals to diversify their expertise relative to that used in their thesis research. The Fellowships are designed so that recipients can choose the research environment most beneficial for their scientific development and that of the MARGINS program. Selection of candidates and research projects will be made by NSF Program Managers after an appropriate review process. Applicants should establish a relationship with a proposed advisor well in advance of proposal submission. Advisors must be committed to the success of the program and should submit a statement of support with the proposal. The applicant’s proposal will need to be submitted through the advisor as an NSF Fastlane submission.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- Fellowships are awarded for post-doctoral study in fields supported by the four MARGINS initiatives (SEIZE, SubFac, Source-to-Sink and Rupturing Continental Lithosphere).
- All awards must be held at U.S. institutions, although there is no citizenship requirement.
- MARGINS particularly wishes to encourage applications from nationals of countries involved in the NSF-MARGINS program, namely Costa Rica, Egypt, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, The Sudan and the USA.
- Fellowships are intended for individuals in the early stages of their professional career, typically within 5 years of being awarded their Ph.D.
AWARD INFORMATION

• One or two awards may be made each year.

• Fellows may choose any appropriate, accredited, non-profit United States institution of higher education to conduct their research where MARGINS or MARGINS-related research has already been established. Fellows are required to engage in full-time multi-disciplinary research in disciplines pertinent to the MARGINS program.

• Fellowships provide up to two years of support. Fellows will be expected to devote full time to appropriate scientific research and training during the tenure of the Fellowship and to pursue the program for which the Fellowship was awarded. Major changes in the plan of scientific research, in tenure, or in Fellowship institution require prior NSF approval. Funding in the second year is contingent upon a progress report submitted through Fastlane indicating satisfactory academic progress as represented by meeting presentations, research publications, and/or submitted papers.

• The MARGINS Fellowship award during 2002-2003 will be $40,000 for a 12-month tenure, $5,000 for research costs per year (to be used for scientific equipment and supplies, travel, publication expenses, other research-related costs, and may be used for medical insurance), and an annual contribution of $5,000 as partial reimbursement for expenses incurred in support of the research (such as space, equipment, secretarial assistance, and general purpose supplies). There is no dependent’s allowance. A one-time travel allowance of up to $2,000 is available for Fellows to travel to an appropriate United States university or research institution, depending on the country or state of travel of the applicant.

• Institutions may supplement Fellowship stipends without prior permission from the Foundation provided that such is done in accordance with established institutional policies. Supplementation may not be conditioned on any requirement for duties in addition to normal Fellowship activities and may involve teaching only to the extent of conducting or participating in seminars directly related to the Fellow’s research program.

• The award will be made to the host institution, normally to the sponsor of the successful applicant. Fellowships may be taken up at the chosen institution not more than 6 months after the award offer, but not before completion of all Ph.D. requirements.
APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Required Application Materials

To be eligible for consideration, applications for the Fellowship Program must be complete and submitted to the NSF at the normal MARGINS proposal deadline dates. Requirements for proposal format cited in the Grant Proposal Guide (NSF 01-2) generally apply. The following items should be submitted as part of the application.

1) Completed application form.

2) Letter from your proposed mentor and/or your proposed host institution stating that your proposed mentor and institution are willing to host you and accept the MARGINS fellowship award, and provide details of the facilities that will be provided or made available to you.

3) Four (4) letters of reference by faculty members or researchers whose knowledge of your academic and/or professional experience and ability is current. It is anticipated that one of your referees will be your Ph.D. thesis adviser and another the sponsoring/collaborating scientist at the proposed host institution.

4) Statement of proposed MARGINS multi-disciplinary research (Guidelines below).

Application Deadline

Application materials must submitted to NSF via Fastlane submission by the deadline for the MARGINS Program, the next being 1 November, 2002. The U.S. based sponsoring/collaborating scientist will be responsible for submitting the applicant's proposal. Supporting letters should be sent to the Program Manager who is the point of contact for the MARGINS program (Dr. Bilal Haq, MARGINS Fellowship References, National Science Foundation, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230). Successful candidates will be announced by March 1st in the subsequent year.
GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING YOUR FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

Selection of candidates and research projects will be made by the MARGINS Steering committee in consultation with NSF program managers.

Proposed Research Plan

In a clear, concise, and original statement in English, describe the research project that you will be pursuing during the term of the fellowship, indicating clearly the multi-disciplinary nature of the research and how the proposed research will interface with ongoing MARGINS research in the institution selected for employment. Your statement should demonstrate your understanding of MARGINS program and initiatives. Present your plan with a clear hypothesis or questions to be addressed by the research. Type single-spaced using 12-point font size or larger. There is a 10-page proposal limit, including figures, references and the application form (described below).

Award Criteria

Academic excellence of you and of the proposed MARGINS science will be the fundamental criteria used to assess your proposal. In addition, preference will be given to multi-disciplinary proposals (such proposals may identify two mentors, if appropriate at two institutions, though a single institution must be named as the host institution). NSF Program Managers and the MARGINS sub-committee will consider the appropriateness of the proposed institution and mentor(s) in reviewing your application. A further preference will be given to applicants who propose to hold the award at an institution other than their Ph.D.-granting institution.
Proposal must include:

- Complete name.
- Complete permanent address.
- One telephone number (daytime) and one e-mail address. The e-mail address will be used to notify you of application materials received, of eligibility concerns, and for other correspondence.
- Title of proposed MARGINS multi-disciplinary research.
- Proposed research institution and mentor: Indicate your choice of research institution (department within the institution, the city and state where the institution is located) and the individual or group with whom you intend to work.
- Degrees held with year of completion, name of institution that granted degree, the city where the institution is located, and the state or country.
- Name of your major field of specialization. If your program is multidisciplinary, indicate your primary field of study and indicate your other or secondary fields of study.
- Supply a short abstract of your dissertation research and planned publications (not to exceed one single-spaced page)
- List all fellowships, scholarships, teaching, and other positions relevant to your field held since entering college/university. Begin with the most recent position/scholarship.
- List all academic honors you have received relevant to your major field of study.
- Citizenship.
- List your native language and fluency in other languages.
- List names and email addresses of four (4) referees providing letters.
- State your long-term career goals and (particularly for International fellowship candidates), the ways the MARGINS Fellowship will lead to development of long-term collaborative activities in MARGINS science.

MARGINS Program: http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu
National Science Foundation: http://www.nsf.gov