

National Defense Science & Engineering Graduate Fellowship Program



NDSEG

current a/o Oct 2026



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History

The DoD NDSEG Fellowship Program is awarded to U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, and U.S. dual citizens who intend to pursue a Doctoral degree aligned to the DoD services Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs) in research and development at a U.S. institution of their choice.

Since the program's inception, over 4,400 fellowships have been awarded from over 70,000 applications received.

The three-year Fellowship program, will award between 150-350 fellowships annually, and is designed to encourage baccalaureate, masters, and current PhD candidates early in their course of study recipients to enter graduate school and ultimately gain doctorates that align to the DoD services Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs) and other strategy documents in research and development.

Evaluation

NDSEG fellowships will be awarded on a **merit basis**. This merit-based evaluation of applicants will rely on the applicant's application, including academic records, CV, Essays and research proposals.

Each application will be evaluated by a panel of academic experts who have **doctoral degrees from the science and engineering discipline** of the applicant's proposed advanced degree program.

Participating DoD agencies will select **final awardees from the top-ranked applicants**. Final selection of fellows will be made by AFRL, ARO, ONR, and other sponsoring DoD agencies.

Systems Plus will notify successful and unsuccessful applicants **within 14 days** of the official award.

Fellows must provide their acceptance soon after receiving their award notification. **Notifications will be sent via email**. If an official letter is required by your Institution, notify the DoD NDSEG Program Office at NDSEG.PMO@syplus.com.

Selection



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To be eligible for the NDSEG Fellowship, you must meet 5 basic criteria:

Be a U.S. Citizen, U.S. Dual Citizen, or U.S. National

Have completed your undergraduate studies prior to the commencement of the fellowship in September of the fellowship year.

Be applying to, accepted to, or currently enrolled at an accredited graduate-level institution within the United States. *If enrolled, you must be or near the beginning (within first 2 years) of your Graduate study in Science or Engineering.*

Have at *least* THREE remaining years in your graduate degree program as of September 2026

Be pursuing research in alignment with one or more specific topics identified in the Department of Defense's BAAs

Required Research Area Disciplines

The broad research area disciplines include, but are not limited to:

Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering
Astrodynamics
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
Biomedical Engineering
Biosciences (includes toxicology)
Biotechnology (separate from Biosciences)
Chemical Engineering
Chemistry
Civil Engineering
Cognitive, Neural, And Behavioral Sciences
Computer and Computational Sciences
Cyber Sciences (to include “hard” networks, cybersecurity, disinformation)
Electrical Engineering
Materials Science and Engineering
Mathematics
Mechanical Engineering
Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering (Includes Undersea Systems)
Oceanography (Includes Ocean Acoustics, Remote Sensing, And Marine Meteorology)
Physics (Including Optics)
Political, Economic, and Sociocultural Sciences
Space Physics
Quantum Science

Important to Note

DoD NDSEG Fellows must meet the following requirements as a condition of their appointment:

- Enrolled in full-time programs leading to graduate degrees in fields specified in the DoD services Strategy Documents
- Attending an accredited U.S. institution of higher education
- Has made satisfactory academic progress toward an advanced degree in one of the science or engineering fields
- Mandatory attendance to the DoD National NDSEG Fellows Conference within their award term



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NDSEG GENERAL

<https://ndseg.org>



The image is a screenshot of the NDSEG application portal. At the top left is the "Systems Plus" logo. Next to it is a collage of images showing students in a lab, mathematical formulas, and graduates. The main header area contains the "NDSEG" logo in large white letters on a purple background, followed by the text "National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship Program". To the right of this is a section for "Fellowship Classes" listing FY2019, FY2020, FY2023, and FY2024. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: About, Applicant, Fellow, Panelist, Awardees, News, Conference, Mentor, FAQ, Contact Us, and Log-in. Below the navigation bar is a banner image featuring the Air Force Research Laboratory logo and a fighter jet. The main content area has a light blue background and contains the following text: "The FY2025 NDSEG Fellowship Program Application Period begins August 1st through November 1st. CLICK HERE TO CHECK YOUR ELIGIBILITY & TO REGISTER". It then provides a link for more information: "https://ndseg.sysplus.com/NDSEG/FAQ/Application." and a contact email: "NDSEG.PMO@sysplus.com.". A paragraph follows, stating that over 4,700 fellowships have been awarded and over 70,000 applications received, and that the DoD plans to award new three-year graduate fellowships each fiscal year. It concludes with an encouragement to explore the site. On the right side of the main content area is a sidebar titled "Explore NDSEG" with a list of links: About, Eligibility, How to Apply, Stipends & Travel, Tuition, Fees, Benefits, Fellow Forms, Become a Panelist, News & Events, and FAQs. At the bottom left of the page is a section titled "Program Objectives" with a lightning bolt icon.

NDSEG APPLICATION PORTAL

<https://ndseg.sysplus.com>



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About the BAAs

The Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs) linked on the site are **informational only**. You will use the BAAs only to determine research topics relevant to DoD interests. You will obtain the BAA # - **often referred to as the Funding Opportunity Number**- and the BAA Title (the specific topic relevant to your research).

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE PROGRAM MANAGERS listed in the BAAs for any reason. They are not able to assist you in any way with the NDSEG application or the proposal you are to submit for the NDSEG application.

Find the BAAs



**National Defense Science and Engineering
Graduate Fellowship Program**

Fellowship Classes
FY2019
FY2020
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[NDSEG Home](#) > [DoD Supporting Agencies](#)

DoD Supporting Agencies

The Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs) linked below are informational only. You will use the BAAs only to determine research topics relevant to DoD interests. You will obtain the BAA # - often referred to as the Funding Opportunity Number- and the BAA Title (the specific topic relevant to your research). You will not need to adhere to any requirements set forth by the BAA at all.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE PROGRAM MANAGERS listed in the BAAs for any reason. They are not able to assist you in any way with the NDSEG application or the proposal you are to submit for the NDSEG application. If you require assistance, please work with your advisor(s).

Further information about the proposal can be found at
<https://ndseg.sysplus.com/NDSEG/Applicants/Application-Evaluation-Award>.

		
Department of the Air Force (including Air Force Research Laboratory and U.S. Space Force)	Army Research Office (ARO)	Office of Naval Research (ONR)
The AFOSR plans, coordinates, and executes the Air Force Research Laboratory's (AFRL) basic research program in response to technical guidance from AFRL and requirements of the Air Force. It's primary mission is to support the Air Force goals of control and maximum utilization of air, space, and cyberspace.	The U.S. Army Research Laboratory's ARO mission is to serve as the Army's principal extramural basic research agency in the engineering, physical, information and life sciences; developing and exploiting innovative advances to insure the Nation's technological superiority.	The ONR coordinates, executes, and promotes the science and technology programs of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

Relevant Research Areas – DoD Strategy Documents

- Department of Defense
[National Defense Science and Technology Strategy 2023](#)
[Strategic Vision and Critical Technology Areas](#)
[2023 Cyber Strategy](#)
- Department of the Air Force
[AF 2030 Study](#)
[AF Operational Imperatives](#)
Air Force Research Laboratory
[AFOSR BAA](#)
[AFOSR Technical Strategic Plan](#)
- Department of the Army
[MRDC \(Army Medical\) BAA](#)
[ERDC \(Army Corps of Engineers\) BAA](#)
[ARL BAA](#)
- Department of the Navy
[ONR Funding Opportunities including BAAs](#)

<https://ndseg.sysplus.com/NDSEG/About/DoD-Agencies>

Additional Information About DoD Strategy Document (BAA)

Applicants must find the DoD Strategy Document that list research areas that relate to your discipline/area of research. *The Research Proposal should reflect your field of study as well as connect with one of the DoD Strategy Document's.*

In the application, there is a section to list the DoD Strategy Document number (**not the name** of the DoD Strategy Document), and the name of the research area you select. The general rule is that if it's listed under one of the DoD Strategy Documents and it is an open and current DoD Strategy Document, applicants can write their proposal in that area.

List the title of the research area your proposal will support. This is to ensure you are responding to one of the DoD Strategy Documents. Additionally, in the application is a field to incorporate a title for your proposal.



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Application Status

Application for next year's fellowship beginning Fall semester (September 1, 2025) opens from August 1 through ***October 30, 2026 (5pm Eastern)***.

1 - Check your eligibility here: [Eligibility - NDSEG \(sysplus.com\)](#)

2 - Check Application requirements here:

<https://ndseg.sysplus.com/NDSEG/Applicants/Application-Evaluation-Award>

3 - Check Application FAQs here:

<https://ndseg.sysplus.com/NDSEG/FAQ/application>

4 - APPLY HERE: <https://applyndseg.sysplus.com/>

Questions related to applications should be directed to
NDSEG.PMO@sysplus.com.

Personal Essay

The personal essay consists of two text fields (500 words max each, no special formatting):

- Answer the following: What are your short and long-term professional goals? How did these goals develop? How have you already begun to lay the foundation for these goals? How does this fellowship fit into these goals?
- Personal story statement to describe the Fellows personal journey to get where they are today (e.g., 1st to receive PHD, 1st to go to college, worked multiple position while achieving degree, what it took personally to get to where they are, etc...)

Research Proposal

Proposed DoD sponsoring agency, information, and research technical discipline area. See details under research proposal and DoD Strategy Document on this page.

This submission tab requires you provide the following:

- **Redacted and Original** versions of your proposal
- List the DoD Strategy Document title that relates to your research proposal.
- List the title of your project (This can be unique to you - it does not need to be a title from the BAAs provided.)
- Research Proposal Abstract (Please enter in a Publicly Releasable Abstract of your Research Proposal being submitted with your application)

Additional Application Categories

Resume/CV [Redacted and Original Versions] – Upload a PDF of your most up-to-date Resumes/CV

Up to 3 References [Highly Recommended but not required to submit application] – References should be provided by an Academic Advisor, Research Advisor, or Internship Supervisor. References can complete a reference form via a systems link sent by a Fellow via their online application. Letters on letterhead will NOT be accepted. The Reference Evaluation Forms link includes a space for additional comments. Reference should capture professional assessment of the applicant, a testimony to your scholarly excellence.

If for any reason an application does not contain all of the required elements, it will not be reviewed. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the completeness of the application.

Additional Application Categories - cont'd

A note about references:

If you choose to add references, you must wait until the recommendations are submitted before submitting your application; otherwise, your references will be unable to submit their recommendations.

Once you submit your application you will not be able to update your references or application. Please fill the reference information and send a notification email to each reference by clicking the “Email Reference” button on the form.

Reach out to your recommenders and update/replace reference information as needed to ensure you can include a reference with your application package.

Your references writers will **NOT submit a reference letter**, they will complete a **reference form** (see following slide).

Additional Application Categories - cont'd

Reference Evaluation Form prompts:

- Applicant information
- Reference information
- Applicant personal characteristics ratings*
- Applicant scientific capabilities ratings
- Additional comments

**Rating directions: Please rate the applicant on a scale of 1-5 (1-lowest, and 5-the highest), based on students with the same/similar education and experience in the following categories.*

Application Tips

Have an Advisor review your Proposal, Personal Statement/Application

Log into the system periodically to ensure references have been submitted

Keep in mind the actual proposal is no more than 3 pages, the 4th page is for the cited work only.

Be sure to visit the DoD Strategy Document links [here](#), as your proposal needs to be aligned to current research and development interests aligned within the DoD Strategy Document listed.

All Files must be uploaded as PDFs ONLY



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General Info

- The submission deadline is **30 Oct 2026 at 5 PM, Eastern.**
- It is recommended you use a personal email address for your online application account.
- All of your responses can be changed prior to your submission. Once you submit you will not be able to make changes to your application—it is considered final.

Resources

FASA Office

Open M - F, 8:30am - noon & 1 - 4 pm

- fall term walk-in hours
- library

NDSEG site (application tips, FAQs, etc.)



Questions?