



2025-26

SUPPORT FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS WHO ARE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Dozens of College doctoral students are employed full-time while pursuing doctoral education. This employment prevents them from holding GA positions which subsidize tuition, fees, and benefits; furthermore, full-time employment is largely incompatible with our main summer and semester support funding programs (SRDF, SRF, DCF), which are designed to “buy out” doctoral students from traditional GA appointments or other similar work. The only standard program of funding for which full-time-employed doctoral students are eligible is the “hard cost” practicum and dissertation funding.

To increase the support provided to full-time-employed doctoral students, and to provide that support in a systematic and transparent way, this year (2025-26), the Office of Academic and Student Affairs will disburse up to \$20K in fellowship funding through this program.

Eligibility:

- Students must be employed full-time and may be employed full-time at MSU.
- Students who receive funding under this program are not precluded from receiving funding under any future iterations of this program, though in the future, preference may be given to those who have not previously received funding under this program.
- Students who receive funding under this program are not precluded from receiving funding under any other programs of support, if they are or become eligible for those.
- Students must be in good standing and making progress to degree without the need for a time extension.
- If a student is receiving federal loans to finance their program, receiving funding under this program may impact that aid award. Any applicant receiving federal loans this academic year should contact John Garcia in MSU Financial Aid to discuss this (email: Garcia11@msu.edu).

Amount of funding:

- There is no minimum award per person; the maximum award is \$1500 per student per round of grant funding.

What can be funded:

- Allowable expenses include, for example:
 - o Food for a recurring or non-recurring writing/study group meeting.
 - o Transportation to attend a writing/study group/ retreat.
 - o Lodging and per diem for food for a writing or study retreat. See government per diem rates here: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>.

- Dependent care (outside of the time the student is working and commuting, ie M-F 6 am-6 pm) to enable focused time to study for comprehensive exams or engage in dissertation research or writing.
 - Purchasing books or other resources about being enrolled in graduate school while employed full-time.
- The following expenses are not permitted:
 - Tuition and fees.
 - Transportation to and from campus to attend class (or to attend another event the same day as class).
 - Other costs often covered in whole or in part by programs, departments, or the College (i.e. conference registration and travel, hard costs for practicum and dissertation research).
 - Routine costs of dependent care necessary for the applicant to maintain full-time employment.
 - Routine costs for food or wellness activities.
 - Hardware and software.
- The examples are not exhaustive.
- Small groups of students may apply for funding together. If this occurs, a group must identify a budgeted amount per person and include the names of all participants. The funding will be allocated to each person in the group equally.
- This funding will be awarded directly to students as fellowship (not as reimbursement); receipts are not required.

Application requirements:

- Fellowship proposal, including a detailed budget for proposed expenses and a discussion of how the proposed funds will assist the student. 500 words maximum.

Submission, selection, and key dates:

- Applications will open on October 13, 2025.
- Individual students can apply via this [Qualtrics link](#).
- Students submitting a group application can apply via this [Qualtrics link](#).
- Applications will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs in the order in which they are submitted.
- Applicants will be notified of decisions within 10 business days of receipt of a complete application.

The College awards funds as fellowships during the academic year. Like other fellowship and scholarship dollars, these funds may be taxable.

Selection criteria:

- How well is the funding request tailored to the need identified by the student?
- How likely is the funding to assist the student in making progress to degree?
- How does any funding received from the University, College, and program this academic year impact the student's financial situation?
- Has the student received funding via this program of support previously? If so, when and how much?