

Institute for Accessible Science (IAS) Graduate Fellowship

Fellowship Description

The **Institute for Accessible Science (IAS)** was established at Purdue University through an NIH Director's Pathfinder Award in 2010 with a mission to promote the inclusion and retention of persons with physical disabilities in biomedical science careers through practical laboratory experiences, assistive technology development, student and educator support services and research.

The IAS Graduate Fellowship is an award to enhance the inclusiveness of the graduate student body through the recruitment of students with disabilities as a result of their unique background, views and experiences. The fellowship will be awarded to a student with a medically documented mobility or visual impairment interested in pursuing a career in biomedical research. This award is intended to provide seed funds for the student as he/she begins their graduate career. The package includes an annual stipend and will also cover the student's tuition and most associated fees. The chosen candidates must have an admit date of Fall 2012.

Application and Selection Process

Students do not apply directly to the IAS for fellowship consideration, but **must complete the diversity essay**, which is part of the Graduate School admission application. Select graduate programs will forward student nominees, who meet the eligibility criteria, electronically to the Institute for Accessible Science. The application must include:

- the student's curriculum vitae (use as the cover sheet for the application)
- statement of purpose
- diversity essay
- letters of recommendation
- transcripts

Please note the significance of the diversity essay of the Graduate School application with respect to this fellowship. The essay should be 500 words or less, responding to the following statement with an emphasis on the role/influence your disability has played in your development and experiences:

"Describe your leadership, work experience, service experience, or other significant involvement with racial, ethnic, socio-economic, or educational communities that have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education, and how these experiences would promote a diversity of views, experiences, and ideas in the pursuit of research, scholarship, and creative excellence."

Selection of the IAS Fellows will be conducted by members of the IAS Internal Advisory Board. At a minimum, the selection committee will consider each student's academic and scholarly achievements and abilities while evaluating the students' ability to contribute to the diversity of the graduate student body, based upon the Graduate School admission application materials, including the diversity essay. In addition, the IAS may require an interview as part of the application process to further evaluate and refine candidate selection.

Student Eligibility

Recipients of the IAS Fellowship must be permanent residents of the United States of America and have graduated from an accredited post secondary institution with a Bachelors' Degree. The student must have an admit date of Fall 2012. Most importantly, the student must have a medically documented mobility or visual impairment limiting one or more major life activities.

Preference will be given to incoming graduate students or those within the first two years of Graduate School. Candidates must be accepted as a full-time graduate student in any Purdue School or College pursuing a Masters or Ph.D. in a field related to biomedical science.

Award Provisions

The IAS Graduate Fellowship provides a one year award. Two awards will be given in 2012. This fellowship award is to begin at the start of the Fall term (August 2012) and terminate at the end of the Summer term (July 2013). Since the tenure of the IAS Fellowship is one calendar year, each student will need to obtain additional funding to continue in their programs following July 2013.

The IAS Fellowship provides:

- a stipend of \$18,000 (before income taxes which must be paid separately by the student)
- payment of tuition and most fees
- medical insurance supplement

Additionally, IAS Fellows may apply for funds to:

- attend one National conference
- acquire assistive technology support

Award Terms and Conditions

Recipients must:

- be enrolled and maintain status in a degree-granting graduate program at Purdue
- register for at least eight credits in both the fall and the spring sessions and for at least six credits during the summer session (Fellows who are not registered during the summer session will not receive a stipend in June and July)
- maintain satisfactory academic and scholarly performance as well as satisfactory progress and work performance
- participate in IAS research activities (up to 80 hours total) throughout the one year tenure of the fellowship, such as:
 - aiding in the evaluation of laboratory assistive technology and accessibility
 - maintaining an online monthly journal of experiences specifically barriers encountered
 - participating in an interview(s)
- maintain a valid e-mail address with the IAS and Graduate Fellowship Offices
- submit an Academic Progress Report each semester to the IAS and Graduate Fellowship Offices
- adhere to Graduate School Fellowship guidelines

Contact Information

Although the Institute for Accessible Science Fellowship is administered by the Graduate School, we would appreciate knowing of your interest in applying for this fellowship. Please contact us directly at ias@purdue.edu or (765) 494-48430.

Consult the Graduate School Fellowship Manual at <http://www.gradschool.purdue.edu/funding> for complete details regarding this and any other Graduate School Fellowships. Questions may be addressed to the Fellowship Office, Graduate School, at 4-2598 or fellowships@purdue.edu.