

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The project titled: "US NRC Graduate Fellowship Program to Promote Diversity in Nuclear Education at the University of Tennessee" will be administered by Dr. G. Ivan Maldonado (PI) and Dr. H. Lee Dodds (co-PI), Department of Nuclear Engineering, University of Tennessee. The total dollar funding request for this fellowship program is \$400,000. Through this solicitation, UT NE seeks to award up to ten (10) 1-year fellowships directly targeted to increase its program's diversity. The goal of this fellowship program is explicitly increase the number of graduate students who have been traditionally underrepresented in the nuclear engineering field; including African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and female students. Currently, the UT NE pool of 230 students includes ~5% minorities and ~18% females. Therefore, this fellowship program has the potential of attracting as many as 10 new students, which would effectively increase the number of underrepresented ethnic minorities and females at UT NE by approximately 18%.

The goal of this fellowship program is not to subsidize students; instead, it is intended to be a recruiting tool to help diversify the pool of talented graduate students available to UT NE faculty. The success of this program, in fact, will be measured by how efficiently these students move into funded cutting-edge research projects. Another unique component of the proposed fellowship program will be its availability to students pursuing an MS in nuclear engineering via UT NE's distance education program, which will enable UT NE to tap into a significantly larger pool of candidates, including professionals within the US government or nuclear industry; such as the US NRC, US DOE, fuel vendors, utilities, and national laboratories. In other words, some of the students recruited for this program don't have to be physically at UT, but they can take advantage of the successful distance education infrastructure available at UT NE.