



# Recruiter Handbook And Information Guide

Office of Human Resources

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## The Nuclear Regulatory Commission Recruitment Program

Thank you for your commitment to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Recruitment Program. Your participation and support will ensure the NRC remains the best place to work in the Federal Government, as indicated in the 2007 rankings by the Partnership for Public Service. Our ability to attract highly skilled, culturally diverse candidates is largely attributable to our recruiters' active participation in the process.

The NRC's most significant organizational asset is its employees. Therefore, it is paramount that the NRC recruit, hire, and retain talented and gifted professionals. Recruiters identify students and experienced professionals who possess unique skills, talents, and knowledge critical to the NRC's continued success. Recruiters explain the Agency's mission, challenges, and expectations to potential employees and direct the best of the best to the NRC.

The information in this booklet will inform recruiters about the NRC Recruitment Program, our retention incentives, and other



factors key to identifying, cultivating, and retaining a superior workforce. This booklet also defines best practices in recruiting and retaining a high quality and diverse staff.

Winning the race for talent in today's job market demands forecasting future skill-set needs and developing a proactive, targeted recruitment strategy to fill them. It is important to understand that attracting new generations of workers calls for new recruiting strategies.

### **NRC Best Practices Highlighted**

- Use ALL OFFICE Agency-wide vacancy announcements for mid-level general engineers/scientists and for entry-level candidates.
- Build coalitions among Professional Associations (e.g., Society for Women Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, Society for Hispanic Professional Engineers, Asian Pacific American Conference, Service Academy Career Conference, etc.), and among colleges and universities with diverse populations including veteran groups and groups representing individuals with disabilities.
- Maximize the use of paid ads and/or free job listings in appropriate professional journals, particularly those with both engineering/physical science and minority population focuses.
- Advertise in newspapers in key labor market areas (near nuclear facilities or shipyards).
- Post vacancies on online job bulletin boards, particularly those offered by appropriate professional societies.
- Actively participate in and support the agency's recruitment efforts to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce.
- Support "University Champions" — managers who work with selected universities to strengthen and develop relationships with university faculty, deans, placement officers, and diverse student populations.

## Information and Checklist for Technical Recruiters

- Human Resources (HR) will reserve exhibit booth space with universities, job fairs, and professional organizations for the NRC's participation. The recruitment display, materials, and promotional items will be shipped in advance to the career fair/conference.
- Coordinate travel arrangements and time with the recruitment event HR representative.
- Accept résumés at the booth for the Summer Hire Program, Student Career Experience Program (Co-ops), Disabilities Employment Program, from veterans, and for jobs that are on the vacancy listing. Earmark highly recommended résumés on back.
- Explain to all interested individuals that in order to be considered for an NRC position, he or she must apply online at: <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/employment/nrcareers.html> or at <http://www.usajobs.gov>.
- Brief managers on the recruitment event upon your return, and provide top resumes to the managers for review.
- Complete the Recruiting Trip Assessment and provide the results to the HR representative.
- Contact the HR Recruitment Team if you have questions.

## Checklist

- Attend a pre-event meeting with HR representative designated for the event.
- Make travel arrangements.
- Review recruitment materials.
- View NRC vacancy listings to get familiar with the current vacancies.

- Be prepared to make a recruitment presentation at an NRC Information Session.
- In conjunction with the HR Representative, meet with the Career Services Office and with the Health Physics and Engineering departments to discuss the NRC's mission and employment opportunities.
- Discuss exceptional candidates with managers and HR.

## **Information and Checklist for Human Resources Representatives**

- Schedule a pre-event meeting with technical recruiters 2 weeks prior to the trip.
- Exchange cell phone numbers with technical recruiters.
- Discuss all logistics for the event at the pre-event meeting.
- Check with Branch Chiefs or Regional HR Offices to determine future vacancies (see vacancy listing for current job openings).
- Make travel arrangements.
- Work with Recruitment Team to schedule meetings with the Career Services Office, the Cooperative Education Coordinator, and the Health Physics and Engineering departments to discuss NRC career opportunities, including student employment opportunities.
- Work with the Recruitment Team to schedule an NRC Career Information Session.
- The Recruitment Team will assist with advertising the NRC Career Information Session prior to the visit. Student organizations will be invited to attend. Send invitations from the Recruitment Team to student organizations such as the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) campus chapter, the American Nuclear Society (ANS) campus chapter, and the Students with Disabilities campus organizations.

## Returning Recruitment Display and Materials

The day before the event ends schedule UPS pickup by calling (800) 727-5877. The return UPS label with the account number will be in the display. You will need to have at least one of the tracking numbers from the return label handy when you call. If you have any questions or concerns, call ProjectWorks at (301) 682-4800, ext. 206 (David), ext. 203 (Alex) or a Recruitment Team member.

Each recruiter will be asked to submit a completed Nuclear Regulatory Commission Recruiting Activity Assessment to the HR representative at the end of the recruitment event.

## Recruiting the Best of the Best

NRC employees should take an active role in recruiting for the Agency. Even informal recruiting is important to spread the word about NRC opportunities. If employees band together and market the Agency to the best of the best, that will ensure continued success.

Support university champions, managers who work with selected universities to strengthen and develop relationships with university faculty, deans, placement officers, and diverse student populations.

- Effectively market the NRC's status as one of the "Best Places to Work" as listed at <http://www.bestplacestowork.org>.
- Learn about referral awards, which encourage NRC staff to locate and shepherd successful candidate placements. NRC referral rewards are described at <http://www.internal.nrc.gov/announcements/yellow/2006/attachments/att1-2006-006.pdf>.
- Ensure diverse organizations know about NRC vacancies via the NRC vacancy listing at <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/employment/nrcareers.html>.
- Volunteer to participate in outreach via presentations at professional conferences. Also, participate in meet and greet sessions conducted to support recruitment efforts.

- Use the agency Strategic Workforce Planning tools to identify current, emerging, and future skill gaps at [http://papaya.nrc.gov/swp/home/home\\_frame800.cfm](http://papaya.nrc.gov/swp/home/home_frame800.cfm).

To learn about the various recruitment tools available, contact the Office of Human Resources for additional information on the following incentives:

- Approval of credit for annual leave for directly-related private sector and/or military work experience for external applicants;
- Salary exception process for recruitment of highly qualified candidates;
- Flexiplace opportunities and hours of work (for full-time employees only; relocation incentives; and
- Housing allowance, payment for travel and transportation expenses for Student Programs.

## **The NRC Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program**

### **Program Goals**

The NRC Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP) provides college graduates who have superior academic standing and a high potential for achievement with challenging professional assignments that offer both a broad and a specialized perspective of our operations.

For the Agency, the Professional Development Program is designed to:

- Recruit college graduates with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees with strong academic records in health physics, earth sciences, or engineering for entry-level positions.



- Hire, develop, deploy, and retain a high quality, diverse workforce with the skills necessary to carry out the NRC mission by providing training and developmental assignments so that these trainees become productive, full-performance-level NRC employees.

## Overview

The NSPDP is a 2-year program for a select few outstanding individuals from across the nation with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in fields such as engineering, nuclear physics, materials science, Earth science (geology, hydrology, seismology), health physics, or other academic disciplines which directly support the NRC's mission needs and requirements.

Participants work in one of five major training and development tracks: inspector certification, management and support, materials, reactors, or research. During the 2-year training program, participants obtain on-the-job training, formal classroom training, and complete at least two rotational work assignments of at least 90 days each. A participant who successfully pursues the program will be promoted each year.



The NRC generally assesses applicants for the program on the following factors: grade point average (GPA) based on a 4.0 scale, honors and awards received, extracurricular or work-related activities, interpersonal skills (written/verbal communication, listening, presentation, etc.), and candidate interviews. Other than academic qualifications, an intern must be a U.S. citizen, undergo a background investigation (as do all NRC employees), and know that the NRC is a zero-tolerance agency with regard to illegal drug usage.

Participants are hired at one of three pay levels. Although education and experience may be combined for each grade level, the usual qualifications for each grade are as follows:

- GG-7** Bachelor's degree in an appropriate engineering, scientific, or technical field, plus at least a 2.95 GPA overall on a 4.0 scale or a 3.5 GPA in the major.
- GG-9** Master's or equivalent degree.
- GG-11** Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree.

## **The NRC Student Education Employment Program**

There are two components of the Student Education Employment Program: the Student Career Experience Program and the Student Temporary Employment Program.

### **Benefits of the SEEP include:**

- Providing students with exposure to public service and enhancing their educational experience.
- Providing financial assistance to students to encourage and support their educational goals.
- Encouraging partnerships between the NRC and educational institutions in developing effective school-to-work programs.
- Assisting in the recruitment of highly qualified graduates into the NRC workforce.

## **NRC Student Transportation and Housing Subsidies**

Students who reside at least 35 miles away from the NRC workplace may receive reimbursement of their transportation expenses if they work full-time for at least 30 days.

Reimbursement covers the cost of traveling from the student's place of residence or study to the area in which he/she will work; and back to the student's place of residence or study at the end of the full-time employment period.

Students may also receive up to \$750.00 per month for actual lodging expenses during temporary periods of at least 30 days of full-time employment with the NRC. To be eligible, students must perform scientific, professional, administrative, or technical work related to the student's field of study.

## **SEEP Pay Levels**

(See annual salary table for annual pay rates)

Students are paid according to the number of earned college credit hours.

### **Undergraduate Programs (engineering and scientific disciplines):**

**GG-4 step 5:** sophomore (30 through 59)

**GG-5 step 6:** junior (60 through 89)

### **Graduate Programs (engineering and scientific disciplines):**

**GG-5 step 10:** under graduate GPA 2.95 and below

**GG-7 step 10:** under graduate GPA 2.95 and above

### **Undergraduate students (administrative, management, and IT disciplines):**

**GG-4 step 1:** sophomore or junior (30 through 89)

**GG-5 step 1:** senior (90 or more semester credit hours)

## Graduate students:

**GG-5 step 1:** under graduate GPA 2.95 and below

**GG-7 step 1:** under graduate GPA 2.95 and above

## High School students pay range:

**GG-01** - High school student

**GG-02** - High school graduate

**GG-03** - High school graduate with 6 months of work experience

Or 1 year of college credits (1-29)

**GG-04** - High school graduate with 1 year of work experience

Or 2 years of college credits (30-60)

## Schedules

Students may work full-time or part-time schedules. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work per week, but the work schedule should not interfere with the student's academic schedule.

## The NRC Student Career Experience Program

The NRC Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) is designed to recruit and train degree-seeking students for permanent placement in professional and technical positions throughout the NRC. Students have the opportunity to combine their studies with practical work experience. The work experience must be related to the student's educational program and career goals. Because the student gains a year or more of professional career-related on-the-job experience during this cooperative education curriculum, the program assumes the student will require more time to attain a degree.

Students may be appointed to the program if they are pursuing the following:

- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate degree
- Professional degree

Students must be accepted in a qualifying educational institution's cooperative education (co-op) program. The student must enter into an agreement between the educational institution and the NRC. The SCEP is a formally structured program with class attendance combined with periods of career-related work. The student must provide official transcripts at the beginning of each work period. Students may be noncompetitively converted to a full-time permanent appointment when they have:

- Completed, within the preceding 120 days, the requirements conferring a degree.
- Completed at least 640 hours of career-related work and met the qualification standards for the targeted position to which the student is to be appointed.

Work experience is supervised and evaluated under the NRC's performance appraisal system. Students may alternate periods of work experience with periods of full-time classroom study, or they may participate in a parallel work/study by attending school part-time and working part-time. The supervisor and student can agree on the work schedule; however, the work schedule cannot interfere with the student's academic studies.

Students are expected at all times either to be working at the agency (as scheduled), enrolled in classes, or both. However, the agency can approve or deny a break in the program (a break is defined as a period of time when the student is neither attending classes nor working at the agency).

The NRC is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified candidates will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

To qualify for the SCEP, students must be attending a 4-year college or university. The NRC has agreements with 4-year colleges and universities and with graduate schools across the country. The agreement is a formal written document between the NRC, the school and the student.

Graduate degree students must have a bachelor's degree or master's degree and are hired at the GG-5, GG-7, or GG-9 level. A student must have a college major related to the position for which the student is applying and must have at least a 2.85 GPA overall on a 4.0 scale, or 3.5 GPA in the major, to be considered for this program.

The NRC SCEP Coordinator is available to provide assistance throughout the duration of the program. SCEP students are eligible for benefits such as health and life insurance, annual and sick leave, and retirement coverage. Students who perform well while participating in the SCEP may be non-competitively converted to an NRC permanent position after completion of their academic study.

To be considered, e-mail a resume and a current transcript to [co-ops@nrc.gov](mailto:co-ops@nrc.gov).



# NRC Undergraduate Scholarship Program Information

## Eligibility Requirements

- Participation in the NRC SCEP.
- Completion of 2 work periods or 640 work hours in order to fulfill the pre-scholarship work period requirements.
- Completion of 90 credit hours (all or part of the senior year remaining).
- Enrollment in an engineering, scientific, or technical field related to the mission of the NRC.
- 2.95 GPA or better.
- High probability that participant will be hired by the NRC.

## Application Procedure

Each year the SCEP coordinator will inform Program Offices and Regions about the Undergraduate Scholarship Program. SCEP participants may request the Undergraduate Scholarship Program by submitting a training request with a service agreement, the latest performance appraisal, a request for payment for college credit hours, the number of work hours completed, and the most recent transcript. Applicants must also submit a written statement of interest in employment at the NRC (limited to one page).

## Employment Obligation

The scholarship recipient must sign an agreement stipulating that for every college credit hour subsidized, the scholar is expected to work for the NRC for one month. The typical 30 credit-hour scholarship program requires a 30 month (2 ½ years) period of service. Failure to fulfill this obligation will require the individual to pay back all tuition and fees paid by the government, prorated according to the amount of time actually served with the NRC after completion of the scholarship.

## **Selection**

Program offices approve selections for the Undergraduate Scholarship Program.

## **Placement**

- Scholars will be assigned to an NRC position to be determined by the sponsoring Office Director/ Regional Administrator.
- Upon successful completion of the Undergraduate Scholarship Program, the NRC scholar will be converted to a career-conditional position and will receive a starting salary of GG-7, in accordance with the Special Salary Schedule for NRC Entry-Level Engineering and Scientific positions (per Exhibit 8, Management Directive 10.41). This position will have a full performance level of GG-13.
- The Undergraduate Scholarship Program will help feed the NSPDP, but an employee's conversion to full-time employment will not be strictly limited to entry into the NSPDP.

## **What the NRC Pays**

- The NRC will pay tuition and books. These costs are considered directly-related training expenses, allowable in Management Directive 10.13.
- The recipient must submit a transcript as proof that he or she completed the courses with a passing grade.
- Recipients of the Undergraduate Scholarship will not receive a recruitment bonus.

## **The NRC Student Temporary Employment Program**

The NRC Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) offers temporary employment to students as well as experience and information about career opportunities. STEP participants must be enrolled in a high school, vocational, technical school,



or university and must be taking at least a half-time academic course load.

The STEP offers temporary employment to students while enabling them to continue their studies. The length of the program varies from 89 days in the summer to as long as the participant is a student. STEP duties do not have to be related to the student's academic major or career goals.

STEP participants are appointed to a position not to exceed 1 year. Appointments may be extended in 1-year increments as long as the appointee meets the definition of a student. (A student is an individual enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree-seeking student and is taking at least a half-time academic course load in an accredited school.)

STEP participants may be non-competitively converted to the SCEP. Work experience hours related to the student's academic program and career goals gained while under the STEP may be credited towards the 640-hour work experience necessary for the noncompetitive conversion to an NRC Regular (Excepted) appointment.

The Summer Employment Program is administered under STEP.

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Summer Employment Program**

### **What is the Summer Employment Program?**

The Summer Employment Program provides exposure to career opportunities, people, places, and situations at the NRC. The jobs in this program offer temporary employment for up to 89 days between May and September. The jobs may or may not be directly related to your academic field.

### **Where is the duty location?**

Most of the job opportunities are at the NRC Headquarters in Rockville, MD. Limited opportunities exist in NRC regional offices in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and Arlington, TX.

## What are the duties of the position?

The incumbent will be assigned to a supervisor and will serve as a Student Trainee with the NRC. The supervisor will assign a journey-level employee to provide technical direction and mentoring.

**ADMINISTRATIVE** - accounting, auditing, business administration, communications, criminal justice, technical writing, finance, human resources management, international relations, law enforcement, and security.

**ENGINEERING** - chemical, civil, electrical, electronics, environmental, fire protection, geotechnical, industrial (human factors), materials, mechanical, metallurgical, nuclear, and structural.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** - information technology, information management, computer engineer, and computer science.

**PHYSICAL SCIENCE** - chemistry, environmental, fire safety technology, geology, geophysics, health physics, hydrology, materials, metallurgy, nuclear chemistry, nuclear physics, physics, radiochemistry, and radiological science.



## Is this a permanent position?

No.

## How do I qualify for this position?

Minimum requirements for this position include:

- Attend an accredited high school technical or vocational school, a two year or four year college or university.
- Meet the definition of a student (student is an individual enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree-seeking student and is taking at least a half-time academic course load in an accredited school).
- Personal computer skills.
- Typing skills (minimum 40 words per minute).
- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from their school.

## What is the basis for the evaluation of my application?

Evaluation criteria include the GPA, academic honors (e.g., Dean's List), awards (e.g., scholarships), and/or extracurricular activities (e.g., student associations).

To be considered, e-mail a resume and current transcript to [summer-emp@nrc.gov](mailto:summer-emp@nrc.gov).

## **Retention – Keeping the Right People in the Right Places**

Human capital is the most valuable resource of any organization. As a result, the departure of an experienced employee is expensive in terms of recruiting, screening, hiring, and training a replacement. Loss of an employee is even more costly in terms of the loss of experience, stability, and continuity. These losses are less tangible, but they deplete critical resources. Knowing why employees leave is critical to reducing turnover, but just as important is finding out why others stay, which not only provides

valuable information but also alerts employees that the NRC is concerned about their well-being as well as with their career development.

Succession planning is critical and is a comprehensive process that involves marketing promotional opportunities, coaching, and other career-development techniques designed to produce a qualified pool of candidates who are well-prepared to compete for upcoming supervisory, managerial, or leadership vacancies. Based on the concept that job satisfaction (and therefore, employee retention) goes hand-in-hand with career development (and therefore, succession), emphasis is placed on assuring that employees are continually growing, stretching, learning, and being challenged.

Also, workplace diversity (including multigenerational diversity) promotes job satisfaction because the contributions of all employees are recognized and valued.

### **Supervisors should:**

- Ensure new employees are given meaningful work. They must consider assigning new employees into a work group and monitor the progress of new employees towards meeting inspector qualifications. Supervisors must ensure the group meets regularly with the new employees to discuss their progress through the qualifications program, and identify any issues, problems, or concerns of the employees.
- Ensure new employees are cared for and encouraged, not abandoned. New employees should be assigned a peer sponsor by their supervisor. The peer sponsor assists the new employee in making the transition into the NRC; connecting with the correct contacts; and enrolling in training. In addition, supervisors must ensure that new engineers complete the requirements of inspector qualification and appropriate administrative programs.
- Encourage employees to seek out rotational assignments and details internal or external to the region and at headquarters to enhance their knowledge and skills.

- Seek out training and assistance to enhance their supervisory skills and build a teaming environment. It is well noted from many studies and books that a key reason people leave organizations is because of their relationship with their supervisor.
- Hold regular meetings with new staff to get to know them, provide for open discussion, learn about the staff, encourage them to share their perspectives, and solicit feedback on their experiences as a new NRC employee.
- Encourage employee details. Technical and administrative staff both gain a better appreciation of the way they can work together when they are detailed to another part of the organization and serve on a variety of task groups and teams addressing the many issues currently facing the NRC.
- Promote and support continuing education for employees in both technical and administrative positions at various grade levels from associate degrees to masters' degrees.



# Employee Benefits

## Competitive Compensation

The NRC offers pay rates that are competitive with the private sector and include annual pay increases, longevity raises, and the possibility of cash awards and incentives. Salary for new employees depends on the grade and geographic area of the position as well as any prior Federal or private sector experience.

## Annual Leave

All full-time employees earn from 2.5 to 5 weeks of paid vacation per year depending upon years of Federal service. Part-time employees accrue leave hours depending on their work schedule.

## Sick Leave

All full-time employees earn 13 paid sick days per year, which can be used for personal illness, care of sick family members, adoption, and medical appointments.

## Family and Medical Leave Act

The NRC has implemented requirements contained in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 whereby eligible employees may use up to 12 weeks of leave for certain family and medical reasons. Under this Family Friendly Leave Act, employees may use sick leave to care for sick family members or to arrange for or attend funerals for family members. Other paid and non-paid leave opportunities may be offered for various reasons.

## Holidays

All full-time employees enjoy 10 paid holidays per year.

## Retirement Plans

The NRC has two retirement plans. The first is for NRC employees who were Federal employees before December 31, 1983 and is called the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The CSRS is a defined benefit system with no portability outside the Federal sector and with no benefits for employees who do not stay until retirement.

The second retirement plan and the only system available to new employees is the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). FERS recognizes that not all Federal employees stay long enough to qualify for retirement, so it is a three-tiered design with portable benefits. The basic components of FERS are (1) a defined benefit (Basic Annuity) element based on years of service, pay level, and age at retirement; (2) Social Security; and (3) automatic enrollment in the Thrift Savings Plan.

## Thrift Savings Plan

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal employees. The purpose of the TSP is to provide retirement income. It offers Federal civilian employees the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. The TSP is a defined contribution plan. The retirement income that you receive from your TSP account will depend on how much you (and your agency, if you are a FERS employee) have contributed to your account during your working years and the earnings on these contributions. The contributions that you make to your TSP account are voluntary and are separate from your contributions to your FERS Basic Annuity or CSRS annuity.

## Insurance Benefits

As a new/newly eligible Federal employee, you may be able to enroll in health insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, flexible spending accounts, life insurance, and/or apply for long

term care insurance. OPM provides a snapshot of insurance benefits with basic information about each program. You can find more comprehensive information at OPM's Insurance Programs page (<http://www.opm.gov/insure/>) or at the Guide to Federal Benefits page (<http://www.opm.gov/insure/08/guides/>).

### **Employee Assistance Program**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides professional counseling services for NRC employees who are experiencing personal problems that may be affecting their ability to perform on the job. The program offers assessment, referral, short-term counseling, and follow-up for employees dealing with family and marital problems, substance abuse, stress, depression, and many other personal challenges.

All employees of the NRC may use the program at any time. Employees are encouraged to contact an EAP professional whenever they are experiencing personal problems. In many situations, family members of NRC employees are also eligible for the services of the program. Supervisors and managers may also seek the guidance of the EAP to help determine the appropriateness of referring employees who may be experiencing work performance and conduct changes due to personal problems.

### **Recruitment Bonus**

The NRC may provide a one-time recruitment incentive for entry level engineers and scientists and certain other hard-to-fill positions. Employees receiving a recruitment incentive incur a service obligation.

### **Relocation Expenses for New Employees**

Some relocation expenses may be authorized for certain hard-to-fill positions. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. Employees receiving relocation expenses incur a service obligation.



## **Union Representation**

The National Treasury Employees Union is the exclusive representative for many employees at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Those employees may contact NTEU (<http://www.nteu208.org/>) for further information on their services.

## **Flexible Spending Account (FSA)**

The FSA is a program that helps Federal employees save on the cost of health and dependent care. An FSA allows you to set money aside before taxes to pay for a wide range of common expenses. You save by reducing your taxes while still paying for the care you need. The FSA Program offers two types of flexible spending accounts: The Health Care Flexible Spending Account (HCFSA) is used to pay for health care expenses not covered by FEHB or any other insurance. The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) is used to pay for dependent care expenses that allow you, and your spouse if you are married, to work, look for work, or attend school full-time.

## **Long-Term Care Insurance Program**

This insurance helps you pay for long-term care services such as home care or care in a nursing home or assisted living facility. Long-term care is the kind of care that you would need to help you perform daily activities if you had an ongoing illness or disability.

Long-term care also includes the kind of care you would need if you had a severe cognitive problem like Alzheimer's disease. Long-term care provides help with eating, bathing, dressing, transferring from a bed to a chair, toileting, continence, etc. This type of care is not received in a hospital and is not intended to cure you. It is not acute care. It is chronic care that you might need for the rest of your life. You can receive it in your own home, at a nursing home, or at another long-term care facility.

## **Group Life Insurance**

You may purchase group life insurance to provide life and accidental death and dismemberment coverage. There are two kinds of insurance available, basic coverage and optional coverage.

### **Basic Coverage**

The amount of basic insurance available is directly related to your basic salary. Coverage for the basic is automatic unless you sign a waiver of coverage. The Government contributes approximately 20 percent of the cost for basic coverage.

### **Optional Coverage**

If you are covered by basic insurance, you may elect one or more optional insurance plans depending upon your personal and family needs. Two options provide additional coverage on your life while another offers coverage for your spouse and/or eligible children. You are responsible for the full cost of any optional insurance elected.

## **Work Schedule**

Generally, employees work a full-time schedule of 5 days a week, 8 hours a day. However, some employees work a part-time schedule from 16 to 32 hours a week.

### **Alternative Work Schedule**

The NRC has alternatives to a fixed work schedule. These alternatives take two forms, with some variations: flextime with credit hours and compressed work schedules. Flextime refers to a variety of arrangements in which fixed times of arrival and departure are replaced by a working day composed of two different types of time: core time and flexible time. Core time is the designated period during which all employees must be present. Flexible time is designated as part of the schedule of working hours within which employees may choose their time of arrival and departure from the work site.

Flextime with Credit Hours allows employees to work additional time after completing their normal workday provided they have advance approval from their supervisor. The additional time will be accrued for employees to use sometime in the future. Compressed Work Schedule allows employees to work eight 9-hour days, one 8-hour day, and then take one day off each biweekly pay period. Check with the Office of Human Resources to determine the alternatives available.

### **Injury Compensation Plan**

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act provides pay, medical care and assistance, vocational rehabilitation, and re-employment rights if you sustain a disabling injury while performing your official duties.

### **Training**

On-the-job training is provided NRC-wide. It covers needed clerical, technical, professional, supervisory, and managerial knowledge and skills in accordance with established management priorities and availability of funds.

### **Awards**

You are eligible for honorary, monetary, and time-off awards that are granted to recognize superior accomplishments and beneficial suggestions.

### **Counseling Services/Employee Assistance Program**

Depending on where you work, counseling services are provided to assist employees with their career-related concerns and personal situations. The Employee Assistance Program also provides direct counseling and referral, management consultation, supervisory training, employee education, and outreach.

## **Adult Dependent Care Resource and Referral Program**

The NRC offers an Adult Dependent Care Resource and Referral Program that provides advice and support to assist employees in obtaining community services for an older person or family member who is incapacitated. This program is offered in conjunction with the NRC Employee Assistance Program.

## **Child Care Services**

Depending on your work location, child care services may be available to meet the needs of working parents. Child Care Centers are designed with the children in mind and equipped with child-size furniture and facilities along with carefully selected playthings.

## **Georgetown Hill Early Childhood Center at Headquarters**

The NRC Child Development Center provides full and part-time care for 100 children from 6 weeks to 6 years old. The program, which incorporates play, learning, the arts, mentoring, and a traditional early childhood component, includes all-day Kindergarten.

## **Fitness/Wellness Centers**

Depending on your work location, a fitness/wellness center may be available to assist employees in maintaining and improving their overall health. It emphasizes health education and encourages employees to develop positive health attitudes and personal lifestyle changes that can prevent future health problems. The NRC Fitness Center offers a comprehensive wellness/fitness program to assist employees in achieving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The NRC's Health Center offers screenings, immunizations, and health education programs to NRC employees.

## **Credit Union**

As an NRC employee, you and your family may enjoy the financial benefits of banking at our Credit Union. You may secure comparatively low-rate loans and conduct other banking transactions at conveniently located offices.

## **Employee Welfare and Recreation Association (EWRA)**

The EWRA plays an important part in the everyday life of NRC employees. This includes operating a small store at Headquarters where employees may purchase such items as coffee mugs, t-shirts, and baseball caps with the NRC logo. Employees may also rent videos, have film developed, have dry cleaning done, and obtain a variety of entertainment discounts through the store. In addition, EWRA sponsors an annual free picnic for all Headquarters employees, noontime outdoor concerts, sports teams, golf outings, and holiday socials.

## **Leave Transfer Program**

The Leave Transfer Program provides income protection to employees who are affected by a medical emergency. This is accomplished through the voluntary donation of annual leave by other employees. An employee becomes eligible for the Leave Transfer Program when he or she is absent for a prolonged period because of sickness or to care for a family member and would otherwise experience substantial loss of income because of the unavailability of paid leave.

## **Part-time Career Employment Program**

The NRC Part-Time Career Employment Program was designed to provide part-time career opportunities for employees who choose to work a regularly scheduled tour of duty from 16 to 32 hours per week. Currently, approximately 120 employees work part-time. NRC includes a job sharing component in its Part-Time Career Employment Program. This flexible aspect of the part-time program allows two (or more) employees to arrange their tours of duty to cover a single full-time position.

## Flexiplace Program

The NRC's work-at-home policy permits an employee to work at home during a period of personal incapacitation such as during recovery from medical treatment or the birth of a child, or during periods of personal hardships such as caring for a family member who is ill. Furthermore, the NRC has a pilot program to allow other employees to work at home on a case by case basis.

## The NRC Grants Program

### Questions and Answers about Grant Opportunities, Undergraduate Scholarships, and Graduate Fellowships

**The solicitation states that the scholarship program is for students enrolled in nuclear science and engineering. Would students enrolled in radiochemistry courses or with a minor in nuclear engineering but enrolled in other engineering or science disciplines qualify for a scholarship award?**

The intent of the solicitation was to focus on nuclear science and engineering. Radiochemistry certainly fits that definition and students with a nuclear minor but majoring in another engineering or science discipline would also be eligible.

**How is the \$400,000 per institution for fellowships distributed? Is it for 1 year or does it cover multiple years?**

For fiscal year 2008, up to \$400,000 will be awarded per institution. This level was arrived at by calculating the cost of two fellows at up to \$50,000 per fellow times a maximum of 4 years. Therefore, two fellows times \$50,000 times 4 years equals \$400,000. All awards for fellows in fiscal year 2008 will be fully funded in the first year for up to 4 years. A maximum of \$50,000 per fellow per year will be awarded as long as the \$50,000 represents the cost of attendance as outlined in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

**If the cost of the fellows is below the threshold of \$50,000 each, can an institution submit more than two as long as the total of \$400,000 per institution is not exceeded?**

Yes, the determining factor is the \$400,000 per institution per year and not the number of fellowship applicants within that amount.

**Can the scholarships be requested by an institution pursuing nuclear engineering and science education and used to sponsor a student from a minority or other educational institution not engaged in the disciplines enabling those students to take courses in nuclear engineering and science from the proposing institution?**

This would be permitted as long as the sponsored students not enrolled at the proposing institution pursued coursework of 15 credits or more in nuclear science and engineering.

**What happens if a scholarship student goes on to graduate school? Is this a violation of the conditions of the grant, or is the service requirement postponed to the end of his/her graduate degree or is “employment” as a graduate research or teaching assistant recognized as placement in industry?**

If a scholarship student goes on to graduate school, the service requirement is postponed until after graduate studies cease. The “employment” requirement is not satisfied by serving as a graduate research or teaching assistant even if in a nuclear field of study. Six months of service for every year or partial year of support from the NRC will still be required once undergraduate and/or graduate studies end.

**Does this funding opportunity (scholarships and fellowships) include consideration of a proposal that includes a nuclear energy policy component as part of the support of education in nuclear science and engineering?**

This question is difficult to answer given the limited information provided but eligibility is restricted to students pursuing

an education in nuclear science and engineering. A policy component can be part of that process but a nuclear course of study must be pursued.

**Please confirm that we are to request in this proposal the full amount for all 4 years of a fellowship. That means that if we are going to give \$50,000 per year for 4 years, we request \$200,000 in this proposal.**

NRC will support up to \$400,000 per institution per year for fellowships. No single fellowship can exceed \$50,000 per year and all years of the fellowship, up to four, should be requested in the proposal.

**Can we request funds for fellowships for both MS and Ph.D students?**

Yes, funds can be requested for candidates seeking either degree.

**In the proposal, are we required to name the students who will receive the fellowships or simply give the criteria we will use to select the fellows?**

It is not necessary to identify the recipients of the fellowships. However, institutions who receive an award must agree to provide the NRC with a list of recipients that meet the criteria outlined in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

**Must the recipients of the fellowships be enrolled in our graduate program at the time the fellowship is offered? If that is the case, we will not be able to use the fellowships to recruit students for our program.**

While the Funding Opportunity Announcement states that applicants for fellowships must “be matriculated in a graduate degree program in a nuclear-related area, preferably, in the fields of nuclear engineering, health physics, and radiochemistry,” NRC realizes that for students applying to



graduate programs while completing their undergraduate education, they will not have matriculated in a graduate program. These undergraduate applicants (rising graduate students) are eligible as long as they meet the other criteria, including course of study.

**If we are allowed to offer fellowships to students who are planning to enter our graduate program in the fall but are currently undergraduates (at our school or elsewhere), do we use their undergraduate GPA to determine whether they meet the 3.6 criterion?**

The 3.6 GPA applies when the fellowship recipient is a graduate student. Undergraduates applying for the program should be evaluated on the criteria established by the university for graduate school applicants with the knowledge that these students, if awarded a fellowship, must be capable of achieving at least a 3.6 GPA during their graduate program.

**If a student who is on a fellowship fails to maintain a 3.6 GPA, is his or her fellowship taken away immediately or does the student have one semester to bring the cumulative GPA back to 3.6?**

The fellowship recipient must have achieved at least a 3.6 GPA at the conclusion of each academic year. If the GPA falls below a 3.6 during the academic year, the recipient has until the conclusion of the academic year to achieve the required minimum GPA.

**May co-principal investigators be listed on the proposal?**

Yes, two principal investigators or co-PI's may be listed.

**May a fellowship be award to a Ph.D student in public policy emphasizing nuclear energy policy?**

No, the intent is to develop a nuclear science and engineering trained workforce.

**What are the “NRC-developed guidelines” for the student selection process?**

The guidelines immediately follow the phrase “NRC-developed guidelines” in Section III.A.2.b.

**For the scholarships and fellowships programs can staff be charged for their participation in recruiting new students?**

No. The funding is to be used for “...tuition, books, fees, and lab expenses.”

**How do we ensure that the student’s employer will be accepted by the NRC? Do they need to request NRC approval before accepting employment?**

The employment obligation can be achieved through service with many entities including academia, NRC, other Federal agencies, state agencies, or nuclear-related industry in the recipient’s field of study and can be waived under the appropriate circumstances. There is no need to request NRC approval before accepting employment.



## University Faculty Development Grants

### Can there be more than two (2) funded principal investigators for the one proposal from each institution?

There can be up to two principal investigator recipients funded from each institution. The base amount funded by the NRC will be \$100,000 per year with up to an additional \$50,000 per year of NRC funding if matched by university funding. It will be at the discretion of the individual institutions whether they have additional junior faculty participate but funding from this grant is intended to adequately support two junior faculty PI's.

### Is the solicitation intended for only new hires or existing faculty members?

The solicitation is intended to support new faculty in nuclear engineering, health physics, and radiochemistry. These grants target probationary tenure-track faculty in these academic areas during the first 6 years of their careers. Therefore, both new and existing faculty members in the first 6 years of their careers are eligible.

### The maximum per institution per year is listed as \$900,000. How is this calculated with regard to the number of junior faculty that can be supported?

The \$900,000 is the maximum amount NRC will contribute to support up to two junior faculty over a 3-year period. Each of up to two faculty will be supported at a maximum NRC contribution of up to \$150,000 per year times 3 years – all awarded in the first year (in this case fiscal year 2008). Therefore, \$150,000 times 3 years equals \$450,000 and if a second faculty member is also supported, this would equal \$900,000 per institution in the first year covering 3 years for two faculty members. The \$150,000 would only become available if the university matched the NRC amount with \$50,000 per year per faculty member. Otherwise, the NRC base amount is \$100,000 per year per applicant with additional matches up to the \$50,000 on a dollar for dollar match with the contribution of the university.

**The solicitation states that the faculty development grants are for the fields of nuclear engineering, health physics, and radiochemistry. If faculty in these subject areas were to develop curriculum for students not enrolled in these subject fields, would that be permissible?**

Since the grant is directed at faculty in the three subject fields and not the students being instructed at any particular point, and the solicitation specifically addresses and allows course (curriculum) development, this would be permissible.

**Can I as principal investigator apply for the grant?**

No, your institution must apply and designate the individual faculty members who they are supporting for this award.

**Can more than two (2) principal investigators be listed on the proposal?**

Up to two principal investigators can be listed on the proposal. This number was arrived at to ensure that adequate funds were available to properly support the individual PI's.

**If an individual at a qualified institution has an existing faculty development grant from another source, is this individual eligible for this solicitation?**

There is no provision in the solicitation that would prevent that individual from being included in the faculty development grant.

**Am I as a tenured-track assistant professor in nuclear physics, not nuclear engineering, health physics, nor radiochemistry, eligible for a faculty development grant?**

No. The faculty development grant is specifically intended to support nuclear engineering, health physics and radiochemistry.

**In the Faculty Development Funding Opportunity Announcement, is it expected or required that the proposal contain the actual names of the junior faculty member(s) that are proposed for support?**

It is not required that the proposal contain the names of the junior faculty member(s) to be supported but that level of detail would be welcomed by the NRC.

**The announcement states: Grants could include support for developing proposals for research and small amounts for initiating or continuing research projects in their areas of expertise. Other areas might include course development equipment stipends, participation in professional society meetings, preparation of papers, travel, and associated expenses.” Specifically not mentioned is course delivery (i.e. classroom instruction), and university service. Is it intended that these latter two classes of activity are not to be included in the proposal?**

The “other areas” listed were meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Those activities that add to the attraction and retention of junior faculty, which may include classroom instruction (what is meant by university service would have to be further defined), could be included in the proposal.

**The announcement states that “awards are for \$100,000 per year plus up to an additional \$50,000 per year that is awarded to the extent matched by the institution...” Are there restrictions on the source of the institution’s matching funds? Specifically, is it permissible to use funds from grants and contracts from non-NRC sources, for example from the Department of Energy or its contractors, to meet the matching requirement?**

It is not permissible to use Department of Energy, its contractors or other Federal grants as the institutional match.

**Curriculum Vitae are mentioned under III.A.2.b on page 5 of the announcement, but there is no other indication about which individuals should submit Vitae. Please clarify.**

The Principal investigator, not the junior faculty being proposed for support, must have a Vitae.

**In the project description, would you like to see current research interests and activities of junior faculty that would be funded through this faculty development program (in addition to a description of the faculty development program itself)?**

While a discussion of the current research interests and activities of junior faculty funded by this program is not required, to the extent that it will help describe the faculty development program itself, it may prove useful.

**To improve the success of receiving an award, would you like to see the proposal come (or be entirely endorsed) at the institution level, college level, or department level? Same question in regard to administering and evaluating the program.**

The Funding Opportunity Announcement speaks to the institution submitting proposals and being responsible for monitoring and reporting the effectiveness of the individual development plan. To the extent that the college or department speaks for the institution (and has the authority to submit the proposal on behalf of the institution) then it does not matter which level in the institution submits the proposal.

**To improve the success of receiving an award, would multiple programs or departments fair better than single units? In the case of our institution, we have both health physics and nuclear engineering programs, in separate departments and colleges.**

There would be no advantage to having multiple departments submit a single proposal versus one department.

**Please comment on the use of this award for faculty recruitment.**

The purpose of the award is to attract and retain highly qualified junior faculty in tenured-track positions during the first 6 years of their careers. This award can be used to recruit faculty to the university or used to support faculty already at the university.

**According to the RFP, funding from the grant can be used for “...course development, equipment stipends, participation in professional society meetings...” What are “equipment stipends”? Is there suppose to be a comma between those two words, and if so, does that mean the faculty member can use funds from the grant to pay the stipend for a graduate student?**

An equipment stipend is funding that may be required to support equipment purchases for the new junior faculty position.

**If a junior faculty member is already at a university and has a startup package (funding from the university for support of graduate students, purchase of equipment, travel to conferences, etc.), can that startup package be used as matching money for the NRC grant?**

No, the matching funds must be funds triggered specifically by the NRC junior faculty Funding Opportunity Announcement.

**May the funds for faculty development be used for any faculty member who has been in his or her position for fewer than 6 years?**

Yes, if the grant is for probationary tenured-track faculty in the academic areas described in the Funding Opportunity Announcement during their first 6 years of their career.

**Since graduate students may be included on applications, may we budget for graduate student research assistants on the Faculty Development Grant Program to fund their participation? The research assistant is distinguished from a fellowship recipient.**

There is no mention in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) that speaks to funding or including graduate students or research assistants. The FOA does state that “small amounts

(could be used) for initiating or continuing research projects in their areas of expertise.” It also states that “the program intends to provide support to enable new faculty to enhance their careers as professors and researchers in the university department where employed.” Therefore, budgeting for graduate student research assistants was not envisioned by the FOA unless perhaps it can be demonstrated that it helps the “new faculty to enhance their careers as professors and researchers....”

**Can any funding be included for administration of the program?**

One of the areas permitted is “associated expenses” that would allow reasonable administration costs.

**Is an itemized budget reflecting different activities needed?**

Yes, to the extent that the detail requested in the SF 424A is met.

**If two faculty members are proposed for support and the institutional maximum match of \$100,000 per year is made (\$50,000 X 2), can the institutional match be weighted more heavily toward one faculty member than another given that an experimental junior faculty member entails more costs than a computational junior faculty member?**

No, the funding cannot be weighted toward one versus the other faculty member, since if two are requested and only one is found meritorious by the peer review panel, only up to \$50,000 could be awarded even if more than \$50,000 was requested for that particular faculty member.

**Does the term of the award begin with the recruitment period or start with the faculty member’s first term?**

The term of the award begins when funds are made available to the institution regardless of whether the funds are being used for recruitment of junior faculty or existing junior faculty.



**May the NRC funding include graduate student support (tuition and salary) and summer salary of the PI recipients for both course development and some research activities?**

While the NRC funding can be used by the junior faculty recipient for course development, summer salary, and small amounts for initiating or continuing research, the funds are not intended to support graduate student tuition and salary unless this funding enables the junior faculty recipient to enhance his/her career as a professor and researcher in the department where employed.

**Is it permissible for the institutional match to be in the form of support for a graduate(s) student (\$50,000+)?**

Yes, as long as that graduate student is in direct support of the junior faculty member receiving the award.

**Would the NRC like one proposal for each faculty member being nominated or one proposal per institution for both nominations?**

If an institution decides to nominate two candidates, one proposal for the two nominations should be submitted with justification, as outlined in the Funding Opportunity Announcement, for each junior faculty candidate nominated.

**The announcement states that “grants could include support for developing proposals for research and small amounts for initiating or continuing research projects in their areas of expertise...Can this mean use of the NRC funding to support a graduate assistant?**

The Funding Opportunity Notice is intended to support junior faculty in enhancing their careers as professors and researchers. To the extent that a graduate student promotes that objective, some funding for that purpose would be permitted. However, the primary purpose is junior faculty development, not graduate assistant support, and the applications will be evaluated on how well that is addressed in the proposal.

**May a small amount of funding be allocated for management of the project (junior faculty grants)?**

One of the areas permitted is “associated expenses” that would allow reasonable administration of management costs.

**Are pre-award negotiations conducted after the selection of the recommended applications? Can the pre-award negotiations influence the selection process for awards?**

Yes, pre-award negotiations are conducted after selection and, based on those negotiations, the awards may be affected.

**Exactly what is meant by “institutional capacity”?**

It is in the interest of the NRC to know how these faculty development grants will assist the institution in furthering the growth of the specific educational area with regard to attracting and retaining highly qualified junior faculty.

**Who are considered the individuals “administering the project”?” Does this refer to the department head submitting the proposal?**

It can refer to the department head or anyone else responsible for project administration.

**To whom does “current and pending Federal support” refer (III.A.2.c?)**

It applies to both the applying department and the junior faculty candidates under consideration for an award.

**Do “faculty development plans” refer to the applying department as a whole or specifically to the development plans of the identified/selected faculty candidates?**

It refers to the institutions/departments faculty development plans and not the individual identified/selected candidates.

**Are the 3 year awards applicable exclusively to the 2 specific faculty members identified at the start of the grant, or are they applicable to the department as a whole? In other words, can the department shift support to other faculty in the course of the 3 year award period?**

Yes, they are specific to the identified faculty members. Support can be shifted if some unanticipated event occurs, but only after consultation with and approval by NRC.

**Is there a bias against the department based on the other funded NRC (or other Federal agencies) projects in the department? What is considered “duplication” in the context of enumerated selection factors (V.G?)**

No, each application will be considered on its individual merits. Duplication refers to whether NRC is already funding work in this area or plans to do so outside of this grant.

**Are the grants multi-year and do recipient institutions re-apply every year to have a grant continue for multiple years?**

These are multi-year grants and there is not a requirement to re-apply each year.

**If a grant is received in the first year, may the receiving institution apply for a new grant from the same program in subsequent years?**

Yes. Receiving a grant one year does not preclude an institution applying for the same grant in subsequent years.

**If a faculty member has less than 2 years experience at the current faculty position in an appropriate field, but has previous experience at a different institution, does the previous experience count toward the 6 years?**

“The grants specifically target probationary tenure-track faculty ....during the first 6 years of their career.” If “career” were interpreted to refer to any aspect of a professional career, the

junior faculty applicant would be ineligible if he was a professor elsewhere or worked at another profession related to nuclear. However, for purposes of this Funding Opportunity Notice, career refers to the current position.

### **Trade School Scholarships**

**If we are in a partnership with another trade school or community college, and the coursework is predominantly in one institution but many of the credit hours occur at the other institution which grants the degree, which institution is eligible to apply for the scholarship.**

The degree granting institution must apply for the scholarship(s).

#### **What is the funding history of community colleges?**

Community colleges have participated and received funding from prior NRC solicitations.

#### **Is there a required matching amount?**

There is no cost share required for any of the grants but the grants in the junior faculty program encourage cost sharing.



## Is a letter of intent required for these grants?

No.

## Can a private state corporation which publishes a Nuclear Publication (newspaper/journal) and offers an internet-based course on nuclear-related topics apply for awards?

No, the scholarships and fellowships are intended for educational institutions that offer a curriculum in nuclear-related subjects and recipients must “be matriculated in a baccalaureate degree program....”.

## Recruitment Team Contact Information

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