

GRADUATE DIVERSITY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM (GDEP)

Proposal deadline:

July 7, 2025 (3:00 pm EST)

BURROUGHS
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KEY DATES

Grant application portal available	May 2025
Application deadline	July 7, 2025
Notice of award	September 15, 2025
Award start date	November 1, 2025
Award end date	August 30, 2027

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund is committed to supporting the next generation of biomedical scientists and researchers. A significant portion of its grant programming includes the career development of young scientists. The existing Postdoctoral Enrichment Program Award (PDEP) was established to address the lack of equal access to advancement opportunities by certain underrepresented scientists, including first-generation college students and those from disadvantages socioeconomic backgrounds, and to position awardees to be more competitive in their pursuit of securing academic and research positions. Enrichment support for underrepresented postdocs has proven to be effective in their career progression. More than 200 awards have been made to early career scientists since the establishment of the Postdoctoral Enrichment Program Award in 2013.

Students with strong SAT scores, high grades and success in high school honors math and science courses often leave the undergraduate college STEM pipeline, and the loss is disproportionate among underrepresented students. BWF seeks to support those underrepresented students who go on to become graduate doctoral students in STEM fields and thus increase the diversity of individuals completing degree requirements and entering postdoctoral programs.

Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program (GDEP)

To address access to enrichment opportunities and supporting resources, BWF is committed to funding the next generation of scientists and researchers and

seeks to support PhD students in efforts to increase diversity in science. The primary goal of the Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program (GDEP) is to enhance the graduate student experience and provide early exposure to various professional environments and networks for which future research and/or professoriate opportunities might manifest.

Funds will support the following:

1. Activities for the graduate student to travel and participate in or present at conferences, workshops, courses and training.
2. Costs associated with the purchase of equipment, materials and supplies related to their research, presentation, short course enrollment, workshops and training.
3. Participation in a peer network system of diverse graduate students.

The Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program provides a total of \$5,000 over two years to provide underrepresented PhD students (enrolled in NC Institutions of Higher Education) with opportunities for greater science and research enrichment experiences. Up to ten awards will be granted for the 2025-2027 period.

The GDEP award cannot be used to support indirect costs. (Refer to “Terms of Grant” for information on indirect costs and use of funds.)

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for the Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program Award:

- Must be a graduate PhD student enrolled at a North Carolina Institution of Higher Education (public or private) and within their 2nd to 5th year of studies at the time of application.
- Must be post preliminary/qualifying exams at the time of application
- Must be nominated by a graduate advisor at the nominating institution. Applications must be approved by an official responsible for sponsored programs (generally from the grants office, office of research, or office of sponsored programs) at the degree-granting institution.
- Must have demonstrated a commitment to promoting equal access and opportunity through their activities, background and life experiences, which may be informed by someone's membership in groups that have been historically underrepresented in science, including, as examples, those from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, women, first-generation college students, those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, those from rural areas, and persons with disabilities.
- Must be a citizen of the United States or Canada (at the time of application)
- Must be a full time graduate student

The program is appropriate for PhD candidates who are STEM majors.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The GDEP award can only be made to degree-granting institutions in North Carolina. Institutional Internal Revenue Service determination letter of non-profit status may be requested by BWF staff if said letter is not on file in our database.
- An advisor's support letter is required for GDEP. Advisors of GDEP awardees may be requested to attend and/or participate in webinars and workshops related to equal access. The advisor must explicitly state how the grant award would support enrichment for the graduate student.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of award recipients will be made by an administrative and scientific advisory committee with final approval by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund Board of Directors. Up to ten Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program (GDEP) awards will be made in 2025. The committee will use the following criteria to select GDEP applications for funding:

- Applicant's stated goals and ambitions through submission of a personal statement.
- Articulation of planned fund use that includes how the GDEP Award will support goals and ambitions shared in a personal statement.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT A COMPLETE PROPOSAL

Application Process

Interested candidates who meet the eligibility criteria will need to submit one online proposal through BWF's online application portal by July 7, 2025 at 3 pm EST.

Application items: (see *Proposal Elements in the adjacent column for descriptions of each item below*)

- 1) Applicant Information (within the online portal)
- 2) PDF uploaded online with the following elements in this order:
 - Personal statement
 - CV of doctoral student
 - Project Plan
- 3) Letter of nomination by a graduate advisor (confidential, uploaded by advisor)

All communications will be made through email.

BWF does not provide critiques or written comments of unfunded proposals.

How to Submit a Proposal

To begin a proposal submission, use this link: [proposal](#)

It is recommended that applicants bookmark this page to return to a proposal in progress.

Proposal Elements

(uploaded as a single combined PDF)

The following proposal elements are required and must be uploaded in a single PDF in the order indicated. (All documents must have a minimum of 11 point font with one-inch margins.)

Personal Statement (one page):

Describes who you are, your long-term career goals, and how this award will support those goals. Include any explanation of your demonstrated commitment to promoting equal access through your life activities, background, or life experiences.

Curriculum Vitae of doctoral student (up to five pages)

Project Plan (up to three pages):

There is no set template for the project plan. The plan should describe:

- Overview of planned expenditures related to conference attendance, short courses, preparation of presentation materials, workshop attendance and any other professional activities in support of stated goals.
- Any formal training activities related to career goals
- Leveraging Capacity: How the award grant might be leveraged with other activities and support provided by the degree-seeking institution.

Nominating Letter from Advisor

Confidential Nomination Letter from Advisor

(confidential blind letter, no more than two pages):

The letter should describe the impact that the GDEP award would have on the student and the intended support to the applicant in determining appropriate enrichment activities and events. The advisor must include how the student's goals will be supported.

The letter is to remain confidential and should not be viewed by the applicant. From within the application system, applicants can send advisor's a link to upload the letter. Letters must be uploaded as a PDF file prior to 3 p.m., July 7, 2025 deadline (EST).

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure the letter is submitted on time.

Applicant instructions to obtain confidential advisor letter:

1. From within the application, access the Request Recommendation Letter Section to send an email to the graduate advisor. Enter the email address of the individual, confirm the email, and click the "+" button. A pop-up screen will appear. Verify the information and click the "Send Email" button.
2. The email to the advisor will contain a link that the individual must use to upload the letter to the proposal. Letters are confidential and cannot be viewed by the candidate.
3. Once the letter has been uploaded by the recommender, the letter will be listed in the Attached Documents section in the list of uploaded documents.
4. Letters are confidential and should not be viewed by the applicant. You will only be able to see that the letter has or has not been uploaded to your application.

Note: Advisor letters sent separately or after the application due date will not be accepted.

Advisor instructions to submit confidential letter:

Complete your letter offline using any standard word-processing software. The letter should describe the impact that the GDEP award would have on the student and the intended support to the applicant in determining appropriate enrichment activities and events. The advisor must include how the student's goals will be supported.

- The letter is limited to two pages. Please include the letter on official university letterhead, including a signature block.
- Convert the document to a PDF file. Save the letter as a .pdf on your system.
- Return to the applicant's email request and click on the web link which will take you to a page where you can upload the recommendation letter.
- Click the "Upload" button.
- Click the "Save" button.
- Once your letter has been uploaded, the applicant will be able to see whether or not your letter has been submitted, but cannot view the content of the letter.
- An application CANNOT BE SUBMITTED until the advisor letter has been uploaded and attached to the application by the grant deadline.

Submission Process

Submission Process Upload the requested files on the “Attachments” tab of the online application. Click the “Validation” tab to see if any errors are identified in your application. All information must be provided before the “SUBMIT” button is available. Click the “SUBMIT” button to transmit the application. An automated message will confirm that the application was successfully submitted.

Proposals will not be accepted after 3 p.m. EST on July 7, 2025. The online application system shuts down automatically at the deadline and the SUBMIT button will no longer be available. Plan to submit your application well in advance of the grant deadline to allow adequate time to troubleshoot any issues. NO EXCEPTIONS OR EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED.

After the deadline, applicants with incomplete proposals and those not adhering to instructions will be disqualified without prior notice. Only proposals submitted through BWF online application website will be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the confidential advisor letter has been uploaded to their application and submitted by the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Questions?

Eligibility inquiries should be directed in advance to BWF program staff by contacting:

Alfred Mays, Senior Program Officer
amays@bwfund.org

Samantha Moore, Program Associate
smoore@bwfund.org

TERMS OF THE GRANT/USE OF FUNDS

Awards are made to the degree-granting institutions on behalf of the award recipients. The Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program (GDEP) award provides a total of \$5,000 over two years as outlined below to support the development of a GDEP awardee at a North Carolina degree-granting institution.

The institutions are responsible for disbursing the funds and for maintaining adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditures. Indirect costs may not be charged against the awards.

Award recipients must provide BWF with an annual progress report detailing their progress. Institutions must provide an annual financial report. Both reports must be submitted (on forms that will be provided) by January 1st of each grant year. Continued funding will depend on both the timely submission of these reports and their favorable review by BWF and its program advisory committee.

Award recipients may obtain funds from other sources for research in the same or similar areas as conducted under these grants, so long as there is not conflict with meeting the terms of BWF's award.

The award is under the control of the award recipient and may be used flexibly for development activities as outlined below.

- **Year one:** \$2,500 will be granted to support enrichment activities of the doctoral student.
- **Year two:** \$2,500 will be granted to support enrichment activities of the doctoral student.

The primary goal of the Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program is to enhance the graduate student experience and provide early exposure to various professional environments and networks for which future research and/or professoriate opportunities might manifest.

Funds will support the following:

1. Activities for the graduate student to travel and participate in or present at conferences, workshops, courses and training.
2. Costs associated with the purchase of equipment, materials and supplies related to their research, presentation, short course enrollment, workshops and training.
3. Participation in peer network system of graduate students.

In the event an awardee discontinues his/her doctoral studies or has a change in the status of enrollment, notification must be made to BWF immediately. BWF will determine continued eligibility and provide guidance and instructions to the institution on reporting and final disposition of any remaining funds.

Presentations that may result from these awards must acknowledge the awardee's receipt of a Burroughs Wellcome Fund Graduate Diversity Enrichment Program.

Awardees should follow their institutions' patent, copyright, and intellectual property policies regarding discoveries that result from research conducted under these awards. BWF expects the appropriate federal, state and local guidelines with regard to scientific misconduct are in place and enforced at all institutions with which BWF awardees are affiliated.

Awardees should share scientific findings in a timely manner via the standard means of scientific communication, including publications and /or presentations in scientific forums. BWF will not retain any rights to published results or patents that result from the research.

The awards will begin on November 1, 2025 .

The awards will end on August 30, 2027.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I determine if I am eligible to submit an application; what is the first step?

Please see the eligibility requirements on page 4 or contact Alfred Mays or Samantha Moore with eligibility questions.

How do I determine if I am within the criteria of being within an underrepresented group?

The GDEP program prioritizes candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to promoting equal access and opportunity through their activities, background and life experiences, which may be informed by someone's membership in groups that have been historically underrepresented in the profession, including, as examples, those from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, women, first-generation college students, those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, those from rural areas, and persons with disabilities.

Do I need to be nominated by my institution?

You must be nominated by an advisor at a degree-granting institution in North Carolina where you are enrolled full-time as a doctoral student.

Can I apply if I am in my first year as a doctoral student?

No. At a minimum, applicants should be within the last semester of their 2nd year as a doctoral student at the time of the application and should not be within any more than their 4th year of study.

Are permanent residents of the United States eligible to apply?

Applicants must be citizens of the United States or Canada at the time of the application deadline.

What role does the advisor play in my application?

The advisor provides a nomination for the applicant and shares how the award would be instrumental for the applicant's enrichment experiences. The advisor and applicant may be requested to participate in a workshop that addresses equal access and opportunity.

Is the BWF application deadline firm?

Yes. An application can be started and remain active up to the date and time of the stated deadline.

Can I submit a paper application?

No. BWF requires that all applications for this program be submitted electronically by the application deadline. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Can I change my application once submitted?

No. Once your application has been submitted, it cannot be changed.

To whom should my advisor letter be addressed?

The letter from the advisor should be addressed to the GDEP Review and Selection Committee. The letter must be submitted by the mentor prior to the application deadline. Faxed letters will not be accepted.

Are there format requirements for the project plan?

Yes. Use standard 11- or 12- point type for the text. Text must be single-spaced with one-inch or larger margins on all sides. The font-size requirement is strictly enforced.