

# ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

A Talk Presented at the:

## **NEST-FUNAI Pre-Conference Seminar**

By:

**Johnson Ozoemenam Urama**

**Dept. of Physics & Astronomy  
University of Nigeria Nsukka**



***NOV. 24, 2016***

# OUTLINE

## ✦ Introduction

- Graduate-Level Fellowships
- Early Career/Established Researchers
- Summary

# Introduction

**Research Fellowship is a form of financial grant intended to help early career and established researchers to:**

- conduct a defined project**
- familiarise themselves with new research methods**
- bring a large project to a conclusion**

# Introduction

**It may also indicate an individual recipient of a graduate-level form of funding**

- **Scholarship**
- **Graduate Assistant**
- **Teaching Assistant/Fellow**
- **Research Fellow**
- **etc.**

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Application success rates

These figures have been calculated from all research grant applications considered by BBSRC Research Committees and Strategy Advisory Panels.

### Summary of research grant applications and success rates

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of applications	1,865	1,832	1,469	1,507	1,865	1,964	1,778
Success rate by number (%)	22	28	30	29	27	26	25
Equivalent success rate by value (%)	23	26	29	28	27	26	25

**Source: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), UK**

( <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/post-application/success-rates/> )

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

**A scholarship is given to a student because of a reason:**

the student has qualified for or won it by academic, artistic or athletic ability,

or by agreeing to follow a particular career,

or has some special ethnic or other characteristic.

**SCHOLARSHIPS ARE NOT GIVEN FOR FINANCIAL NEED ALONE!**

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

**Some of the major assessment criteria are:**

- **Academic performance; grades, awards, etc.**
- **Prior accomplishments and future plans**
- **Graduate Research plan**
- **Research/professional experience**
- **Potential benefit(s) to society**
- **Reference letters**

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Personal, relevant Background and Future Goals Statement

Describe your personal, educational and/or professional experiences that motivate your decision to pursue advanced study.

Include examples of research and/or professional activities in which you have participated.



# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Personal, relevant Background and Future Goals Statement

Describe the contributions to advancing knowledge in the field and the potential for broader societal impacts

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Graduate Research Plan Statement

Present an original research topic that you would like to pursue in graduate school. Describe the research idea, your general approach

Address the potential of the research to advance knowledge and understanding within the field as well as the potential for broader impacts on society

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## General Advice for Applicants:

- **Start early**
- **Read Solicitation, and read it again**
- **Pay attention to requirements/details**
- **Identify several colleagues and have them comment on multiple statement drafts**
- **Select and confirm reference letter writers**
- **Monitor receipt of reference letters**

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Peek at the US NSF

([http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf).)

### Your Chance of Success

- Award
  - 10% (same for all disciplines)
- Honorable Mention
  - 17% (same for all disciplines)

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Peek at the US NSF

([http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf).)

### You *will* Automatically Fail

- IF you don't follow *every rule* in the 14 page *Program Solicitation* and the 83 page *Applicant User Guide*

- [http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=6201](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6201) (NSF)
- <http://www.nsfgrfp.org/> (ASEE)

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Peek at the US NSF

([http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf).)

### You *will* Automatically Fail

- With a 10% success rate NSF looks for any excuse to reject an application
- Read *every* (relevant) word and follow *every* (relevant) instruction

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Peek at the US NSF

([http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf).)

### Essays: Rewrite, Rewrite, ...

- Turn on (and attend to) your spell and grammar checker, please
- Eschew passivity!
- Have your essays critiqued by a *competent* reader -- don't take it personally

# Graduate-Level Fellowships

## Peek at the US NSF

([http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf).)

### Essays: Don't be Foofy!

- *Foofy* -- Vague, evasive, betraying lack of mastery and confidence; exaggerated claim without evidence
- *Foofy example*: “Nanotechnology promises enormous economic benefits.”
- *Less foofy*: “Smith, writing in the Wall Street Journal, estimates that nanotechnology will have a \$100 billion impact on the world economy in five years [ref].”



# Early Career/Established Researchers

**These fellowships typically offer a one-month to one-year period of research to applicants who already have a significant publishing record and are working on a subsequent research, publishing or curatorial project.**

**Applicants will be expected to provide details of the proposed outcomes of their research in their application.**

# Early Career/Established Researchers

The period/fellowship may be used to:

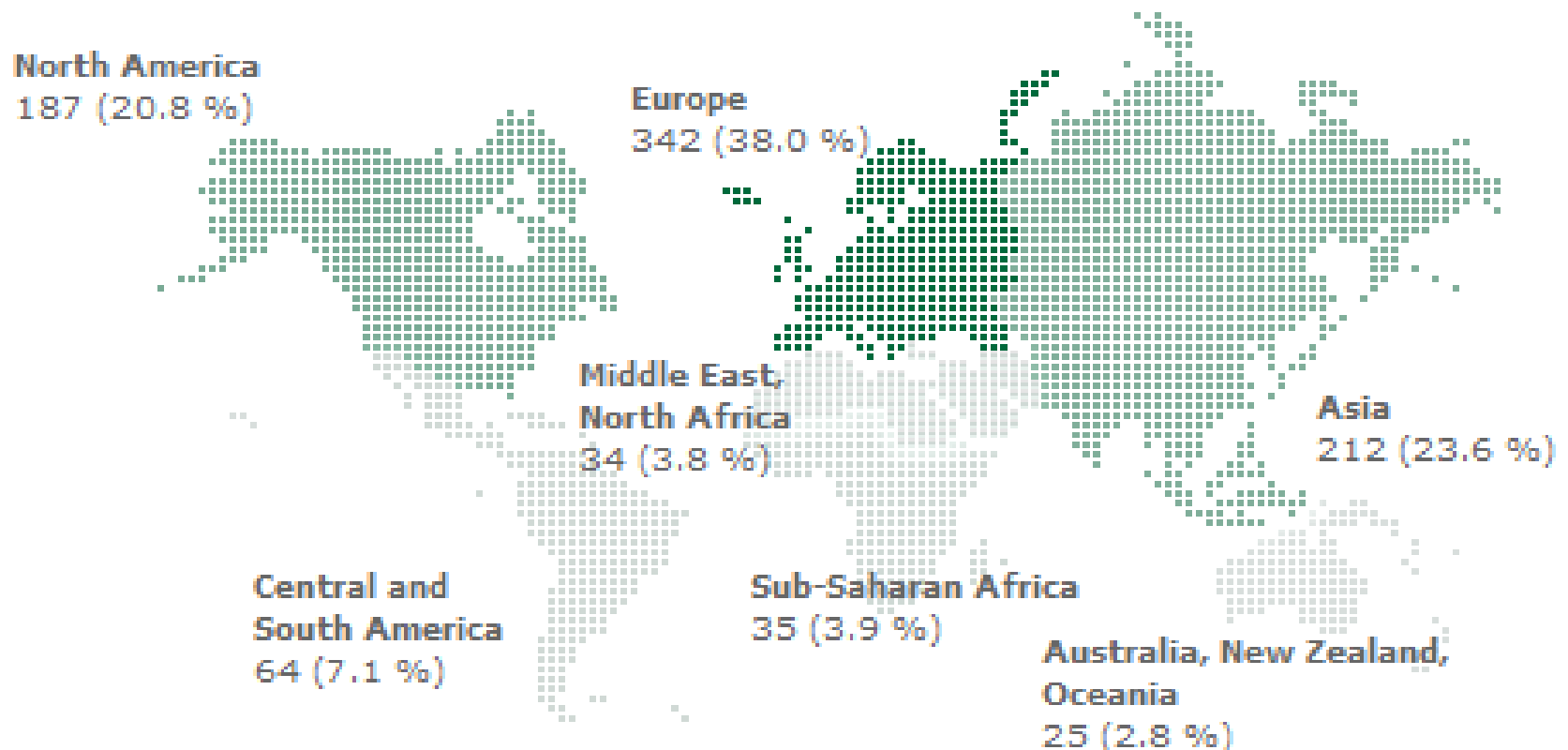
- undertake research for an article, book, exhibition or catalogue
- conduct a defined project
- familiarise oneself with new research method(s)
- bring a large project to a conclusion

# Early Career/Established Researchers

Alexander von Humboldt  
Stiftung/Foundation

## Fellowships and Awards Granted in 2015

According to region



# Early Career/Established Researchers

- **Competition is very stiff**

**Therefore, one needs to:**

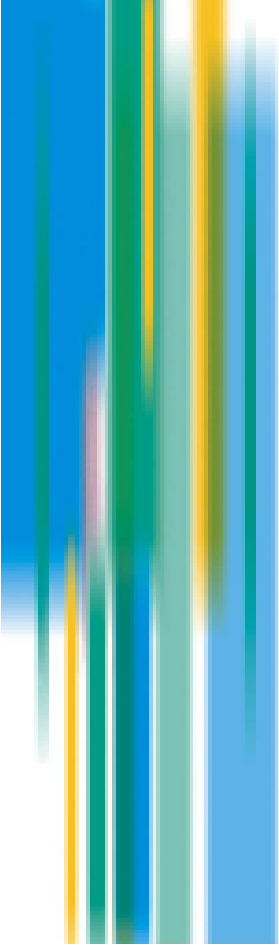
- **Pay attention to **Instructions****
- **Do quality research**
- **Publish in reputable Journals**
- **Collaborate**
- **Attend International Conferences**

# Some Recurrent Grant/Fellowship Deadlines

<https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/grant-deadlines>

<http://www.k-state.edu/research/faculty/funding/search/>

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/linguistics/assets/documents/RecurringGrantDeadlines-12.03.15.xlsx>



***“There is no grantsmanship that will turn a bad idea into a good one, but...***

***... there are many ways to disguise a good one.”***

William Raub, Past Deputy Director, NIH

**EPSRC**

# GOOD LUCK

- No pain, no gain
- The reward is worth it

# References/Resources

[www.nsfgrfp.org/file\\_server/ckeditor/attachment\\_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP\\_Outreach\\_PowerPoint\\_NSF\\_Aug\\_2015.pdf](http://www.nsfgrfp.org/file_server/ckeditor/attachment_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP_Outreach_PowerPoint_NSF_Aug_2015.pdf)

[www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp\\_for\\_nsf.pdf](http://www.physics.usu.edu/peak/personal/comp_for_nsf.pdf)

[www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/post-application/success-rates/](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/post-application/success-rates/)

[www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/post-application/success-rates/](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/post-application/success-rates/)

[www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/statistics.html](http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/statistics.html)

[https://www.nsfgrfp.org/file\\_server/ckeditor/attachment\\_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP\\_Outreach\\_PowerPoint\\_NSF\\_Aug\\_2015.pdf](https://www.nsfgrfp.org/file_server/ckeditor/attachment_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP_Outreach_PowerPoint_NSF_Aug_2015.pdf)

[https://www.nsfgrfp.org/file\\_server/ckeditor/attachment\\_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP\\_Outreach\\_PowerPoint\\_NSF\\_Aug\\_2015.pdf](https://www.nsfgrfp.org/file_server/ckeditor/attachment_file/data/0000/0005/GRFP_Outreach_PowerPoint_NSF_Aug_2015.pdf)