2024-2025 UNIVERSITY GRADUATE LAURELS BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PROPOSAL DEADLINE November 6, 2023

Overview

The purpose of Laurels funding is to provide financial support to academic units so they may diversify and strengthen their graduate programs. This is achieved by providing tuition support *to assist with the recruitment of new degree-seeking graduate students to OSU.*

Laurels funding is a one-year block grant awarded directly to programs in the form of tuition waivers and/or tuition remissions.

Graduate Program Eligibility

Programs offering master's and/or doctoral degrees are eligible for funding under the Laurels program.

The intent of the Laurels program is to provide support to individual graduate programs. Academic units may submit only one proposal per graduate program (as defined by university major code). On occasion, departments, schools, or colleges with more than one program may wish to combine graduate majors within one proposal. The Graduate School recommends this approach only when there is a strong rationale for doing so and expects authors to provide clear justification for their combined request. Joint proposals from multiple majors must still meet the one-per-major code limitation.

Funding Formats

University Graduate Laurels Block Grant funding is available to programs in two formats: (1) tuition waiver (funding *not* tied to a graduate assistant [GA] appointment) and (2) tuition remission (funding that *must be* tied to a GA appointment).

(1) Tuition waiver funding
- Tuition support in the form of waivers may be used to fund tuition in any amount equal to or less than the recipient's actual tuition charges. Allocated award amounts that exceed actual tuition charges will be reduced accordingly.
- Programs may use Laurels waiver funding to cover tuition costs for a single academic term or an entire academic year, or to fund different students throughout an academic year.
- Laurels waiver recipients must be enrolled for a minimum of three graduate credits (site-based or Ecampus) for the entirety of each term in which they receive funding, though financial aid funding may have additional requirements. Audit registrations and enrollment in INTO-OSU courses may not be used to satisfy enrollment requirements.
- Costs associated with waivers are billed in accordance with each recipient's residential status (i.e. in-state, out-of-state) and academic unit.

(2) Tuition remission funding
- Tuition support in the form of remissions must be used for supporting an academic year or 12-month GA appointment, with the academic unit responsible for all costs associated with the stipend, fees, and other associated charges. All appointments must comply with institutional graduate tuition remission policies and the Coalition of Graduate Employees most recent Collective Bargaining Agreement.

- All Laurels tuition remission recipients must be enrolled for a minimum of twelve credits (site-based or Ecampus, though units may determine the appropriateness and feasibility of particular course enrollment) for the entirety of each term in which they receive funding. Audit registrations and enrollment in INTO-OSU courses may not be used to satisfy enrollment requirements. Other standard OSU GA rules and policies apply to funds awarded in this format.
- Tuition remission awards are awarded for the academic year (fall, winter, spring) for the equivalent of 12 credits of enrollment each term at the academic unit's resident tuition rate. Funding associated with this award will be transferred to an E&G index to offset tuition charged for the respective GA appointment.

Units must indicate the format(s) in which they would like to receive funding when submitting their proposals. The total award request may include a combination of waiver and remission funding. Once awarded, the funding must be used in the format awarded (i.e., waiver awards can only be allocated as tuition waivers and remission awards can only be allocated for qualifying GA appointments).

Per OSU policy, E&G tuition remissions may not be used as cost share on grant indexes, unless cost share is standard on the grant index. Units may not use Laurels funding as cash awards or for any other purpose other than tuition.

Recipient Criteria

The purpose of Laurels funding is to provide financial support to academic units so they may diversify and strengthen their graduate programs. This is achieved by providing tuition support **to assist with the recruitment of new degree-seeking graduate students to OSU.**

Eligible recipients must:

- Be degree-seeking, regularly-admitted, and accepted through OSU's electronic DAF system.

- Be newly admitted for the 2024-2025 academic year. Students who successfully completed a previous degree at OSU are eligible *if their continuation to another/new degree meets with the spirit and intent of recruiting new graduate students*. In these cases, the student must have submitted a new application for admission or a Change of Degree to add the new degree. These documents must indicate an official start date of summer 2024 or fall 2024. Please note that a student who has been readmitted to the same degree within the same degree program is not considered a newly admitted student for purposes of this award.

- Be admitted through a comprehensive holistic admissions process that augments traditional measures of academic achievement (e.g., GRE, GPA) with rigorous consideration of an applicant's unique experiences and non-cognitive factors associated with success in graduate school. More information about graduate holistic admissions is available at the Graduate School's website here.

- Diversify and strengthen the graduate program to which they have been recruited and admitted.
Eligible recipients must show evidence of (a) academic success; (b) scholarly potential; (c) commitment, persistence, and leadership; and (d) rich and diverse life experiences and backgrounds. See the Graduate School's Holistic Admissions Guide for sample indicators for each of these areas.

Laurels Award Details

Laurels funds are intended to supplement existing funding in an academic unit and should not be considered a primary or sustainable funding stream.

- Authors are strongly encouraged to make reasonable requests that align with unit's needs, enrollment trends, and past utilization of Laurels funds, if applicable. The Graduate School will consider requests to fund at least one student from each program, but no more than 10% of a program's newly matriculated students annually, based on the previous year's enrollment numbers. New graduate programs without previous enrollment data should submit proposals based on anticipated enrollment.

- Programs may not offer or imply the availability of multi-year Laurels funding. Laurels funding is for one year only.

- The Graduate School will disburse funds at the beginning of the academic award year. Programs are responsible for developing their own internal processes for awarding Laurels funds to their students, managing term-to-term distribution, and working in accordance with their allocations. Additionally, programs are expected to monitor the status of recipients to ensure their continued eligibility.

- Programs receiving Laurels funds may not transfer these resources to any other graduate program. If a waiver or remission awardee is no longer eligible (e.g. on a leave of absence, dismissed) or transfers to another OSU graduate degree program, the award to that student must be terminated.

- To optimize the impact of Laurels funding, units must offer at last 50% of allocated resources to graduate student recipients during the nationally-recognized graduate student recruiting cycle (i.e. on or before April 15). As OSU is a signatory of the Council of Graduate School's Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants, programs cannot require awardees to accept or decline award offers prior April 15.

- To maximize limited tuition scholarship funding for graduate students, 100% of the allocated resources must be committed to recipients in full by June 30, 2024. Adjustments may be made to individual recipients or amounts, but any remaining resources not committed by July 1, 2024 will be reallocated to support other tuition support programs offered by the Graduate School.

- Laurels waiver funds may be utilized to support students in the summer term preceding the academic year if the graduate program has a summer term matriculation.

Laurels Funding Proposal Submission Procedures

To apply for a Laurels block grant, department heads, chairs and/or graduate program directors must submit grant proposals online at the Graduate School Awards website. Authors must submit the following materials as part of that online application:

1. **Contact information and request details (all are required)**
   - Name and title of the department head, chair, and/or graduate program director submitting the proposal
   - Graduate program(s) for which funding is being sought
   - A Laurels Funding Request Worksheet (Appendix A)
   - A Laurel's Graduate Program Profile Worksheet (Appendix B)

2. **Supporting narrative and data (all are required)**

   - Evidence the program needs Laurels funding to provide financial assistance to its newly admitted graduate students, including the reasonability of its specific request and the likelihood it will use the requested funds

in the manner proposed given the program's enrollment data and other metrics.

- Evidence of a comprehensive holistic admissions process including, but not limited to (a) recruitment and application processes that have been carefully designed to attract diverse students and elicit valuable information about their strengths in a variety of dimensions, and (b) specific tools used by evaluators to assess those strengths in relevant areas. Authors <u>must provide</u> documentation (e.g., recruitment materials, website narrative, application form, applicant interview questions, rubrics/scoring guides used in the evaluation of applicants) to demonstrate their commitment to holistic admissions.

- A **systematic and transparent process** that guides the program's decision making for awarding Laurels funds to individual students (e.g. Laurels award criteria, Laurels scoring guides etc.). Programs' decision-making processes in determining Laurels awardees *must* be distinct from general admissions processes and should include a plan for alternate awardees should initial awardees decline the offer. Any alternate awardees must meet award eligibility requirements and, as such, plans cannot include the intent to offer Laurels funding to continuing students in the unit.

Proposal Review and Selection

The Graduate School will appoint a Laurels Selection Committee that will include faculty and staff largely beyond the Graduate School. Authors of Laurels proposals, or personnel in those programs/units directly impacted by the potential award of Laurels funds (i.e., a specific major professor), must disclose this potential conflict of interest and may not serve on the Selection Committee.

Committee members will review proposals independently using the criteria outlined in the requested narrative discussion points stated earlier.

Evaluation Criteria

- Quality of the case made for financial need, including the reasonability of its specific request and the likelihood it will use the requested funds in the manner proposed given the program's enrollment data and other metrics.

- Quality and comprehensiveness of the program's holistic admission process including documentation that clearly demonstrates the effective use of (a) recruitment and application processes that have been carefully designed to attract diverse students and elicit valuable information about their strengths in a variety of dimensions, and (b) specific tools used by evaluators to assess those strengths in relevant areas.

- Quality and thoughtfulness of the program's distinct decision-making process for awarding Laurels funding to individual and eligible students (e.g. Laurels award criteria, Laurels scoring guides etc.).

Scholarship Processing and Monitoring

Graduate programs receiving University Graduate Laurels Block Grants will be responsible for adhering to the *Guidelines for Administering University Graduate Laurels Block Grants,* including:

- Developing transparent selection and award procedures under which graduate students are considered for Laurels funding within the program

- Selecting Laurels funding recipients

- Issuing award letters to recipients. Waiver award letters require use of the approved scholarship template which will be provided upon notice of a successful Laurel tuition waiver award. Remission award letters are not required, since the tuition remission is provided as part of the GA appointment.

- Monitoring the status of Laurels recipients and ensuring continued student eligibility for funding

- Disbursing and reconciling funds through OSU's Foundation Scholarship System, through the Institutional Analytics and Reporting web page, ensuring funds are managed within limits of grant budget

Assessment

Recipients of Laurels funds are required to provide the Graduate School with clear evidence and details as to how funds have been utilized during the award cycle.

At the end of each Laurels funding period, program recipients must complete a final utilization report via a Qualtrics Survey that details the impact of the Laurels funds and how closely the distribution of the funds aligned with the initial proposal.

The survey will prompt you for the following:

- How did your Laurels funding assist with the recruitment of new graduate students to OSU?

- What plans are in place to support awarded students financially and academically through degree completion?

Timing

Deadline for Proposal Submission: **November 6, 2023**

Anticipated Graduate Program Award Notification: **December 15, 2023**

Graduate Program Scholarship Offers Made: **50% or greater recommended by April 16, 2024**

Graduate Program Laurels Waiver Awards Submitted to the Foundation Reimbursement System (GRRS): **100% by July 1, 2024**

Graduate Program Laurels Remission Awards – Awarded Student Information and E&G Index for JV Transfer: **July 15, 2024**

FY24-25 Year-End Assessment Report Deadline: **September 1, 2025**

APPENDIX A – FUNDING REQUEST WORKSHEET

Part 1: Remission Requests*

Remission Requests	Number of new graduate students (master's and doctoral combined) that matriculated to your program for the 2023-24 academic year	Total number of remissions requested

*1 remission=3 academic terms @ 12 credits each term. If requesting remissions that will be used on a quarterly basis for multiple students, please report only the total number of 3-term/36-credit remissions (i.e., this may include remissions for multiple students, but would count as 1 remission for purposes of calculations here).

Part 2: Waiver Requests**

Waiver Requests	Number of new graduate students (master's and doctoral combined) that matriculated to your program for the 2023-24 academic year	Number of waivers requested
Resident		
Nonresident		
Total waivers requested		

**1 waiver=3 academic terms @ 12 credits each term, or 36 credit total. If requesting waivers that will be used on a quarterly basis for multiple students, please report only the total number of annual/36-credit waivers (i.e., this may include waivers for multiple students, but would count as 1 waiver for purposes of calculations here).

Part 3: Total Request** – total of each part above

Remission and Waiver Requests	Part 1: Total	Part 2: Total	Total Number of Remission and Waiver Requests

***This number should align with Item #3 in Appendix B. The Graduate School will consider requests to fund at least one student from each program, but no more than 10% of a program's newly matriculated students annually, based on the previous year's enrollment numbers.

APPENDIX B: GRADUATE PROGRAM PROFILE

Each program must submit a Graduate Program Profile Worksheet. In the case of combined proposals, each program represented in the proposal must submit its own Graduate Program Profile worksheet.

Please provide the following information about the graduate program(s) applying for these Laurels funds

1. Number of students (master's and doctoral combined) that applied to your program for the 2023-24 academic year	
2. Number of graduate students (master's and doctoral combined) to whom you offered admission to your program for the 2023-24 academic year	
3. Number of new graduate students (master's and doctoral combined) that matriculated to your program for the 2023-24 academic year	
4. Total number of graduate students enrolled in your program for the 2023-24 academic year, including those newly matriculated students in #3	
5. Total number of students (master's and doctoral) in your program on Graduate Assistantships (GRA and GTA) for the 2023-2024 academic year	
6. Total number of students (master's and doctoral) in your program that received fellowships for the 2023-2024 academic year	
7. Number of new students (master's and doctoral) your program anticipates enrolling for the 2024-25 academic year	