Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Applicant User Guide

December 15, 2007

Version 2.8

Document Change Record

Version Number	Date	Description
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2.7	October 20, 2007	Updated Sections: 12.3, 12.4 Updated Figures: 7, 10, 52, 54
2.8	December 15, 2007	Updated document formatting

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1   CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS GUIDE

The first time they are introduced, names of on-screen features appear in bold.

> EXAMPLE: Click on the **Search** tab.

Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) are in bold characters and are underlined.

> EXAMPLE: Type the following address in your browser's address bar:
> http://fastlane.nsf.gov.

Many software features and some business processes are explained in a reference table format. An on-screen term appears in the left column and a description of the term appears in the right column.

> EXAMPLE:

Feature	Description
Applicant ID	The Applicant ID is the number assigned to you when you become an applicant.

The following three conventions serve as both examples and descriptions:

> WARNING: Warnings provide information designed to prevent critical errors from occurring. If you see a warning, stop and read it before continuing.

> NOTE: While Notes do not describe critical information, we suggest that you stop and read them, too. The information in a note can prevent minor errors from occurring. Other notes simply provide information designed to deepen your understanding of a software feature.

> TIP: Tips provide information designed to increase your productivity.

2   GETTING ACCESS

2.1   Registration (First-time users only)

1. Access the GRFP application by typing the following address into your browser address bar: http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov. Click on the **Graduate Research Fellowship Program** link at the top of the page. This will take you to the GRFP application within FastLane. Once on the GRFP site, click on the **Register Here** link (pictured below) to begin the Fellowship Application.

Figure 1: Registration Link

The Rules of Behavior page will be displayed. This page is used to ensure that you understand the rules of behavior involved with interacting with a government computer system. You are required to read and accept the rules of behavior before continuing through the Registration Process. Click the "**I have read and accept the Rules of Behavior"**, and click the **Accept** button (pictured below).

Figure 2: Rules of Behavior Screen

The Applicant Information page will be displayed. This page will be used to create your user profile. All required information (indicated by an asterisk) must be completed in order to save the data and submit the registration form.

Figure 3: Applicant Information

2. Type your first name in the **First Name** field.

3. Type your last name in the **Last Name** field.

4. Type your middle initial in the **Middle Initial** field (optional).

5. Type your suffix in the **Suffix** field (optional).

6. Type your email address in the **Email Address** field.

NOTE:	Emails are the primary source of communication used by the GRFP Administrators. It is important for you to use an active email address and to update the email address if it changes.

NOTE:	You can view NSF's Privacy Policy by selecting the Privacy Act link at the top of the Register User screen, and on every application section.

7. Select a username and type it in the **Username** field.

NOTE:	Username must be between 6 and 12 characters (e.g., jbrown). It is recommended that you use the first letter of your first name and your last name.

8. Choose a password and type it in the **Password** field.

NOTE:	Password length must be between 6 and 20 characters. The password must contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character. Passwords are not case sensitive. You cannot reuse the last three passwords you have used. Passwords expire every 365 days. Passwords for users with Financial Functions permissions expire.

9. Re-type your password in the **Confirm Password** field.

10. Click **Submit** to save the information and proceed to the next step.

2.2 Logging In (only after Registration)

Access the GRFP application by typing the following address into your browser address bar: http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov. Click on the **Graduate Research Fellowship Program** link at the top of the page. This will take you to the GRFP application within FastLane. Once on the GRFP site, enter your login information in the log in box on the top right side of the screen.

Figure 4: Log In

1. Type your user name in the **User Name** field.

2. Type your password in the **Password** field.

3. Click **the Log In** button.

The GRFP Application home page appears with your Application Task List and current Applicant Data.

Figure 5: Welcome Applicants

2.2.1   Resetting a Password

1. Click on the **Forgot Password?** link found under the Login button.

The retrieve password screen is displayed.

Figure 6: Forgot Password Screen

2. Type your User Name in the **User Name** field.

3. Type your email address in the **Email Address** field.

4. Click on the **Submit** button.

A confirmation screen will be displayed and the system will email you a temporary password to the email address you provided. Once you log back into the system with the temporary password, you will be asked to change your temporary password to a new password of your choice.

2.2.2 **Changing Your Password**

1. Select the **Change Password** link from the upper-right navigation bar.

NSF Home | News | Site Map | Contact Us | FastLane Help | Grants.gov Help |
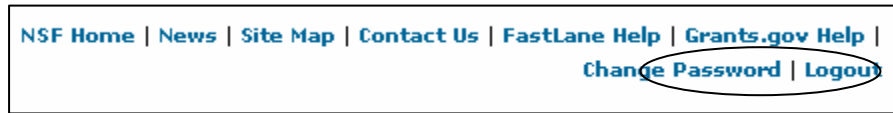Change Password | Logout

Figure 7: Change Password Link

2. The Rules of Behavior page will be displayed. This page is used to ensure that you understand the rules of behavior involved with interacting with a government computer system. You are required to read and accept the rules of behavior before continuing through to change your password. Click the **"I have read and accept the Rules of Behavior"** checkbox, and click the **Accept** button (pictured below).
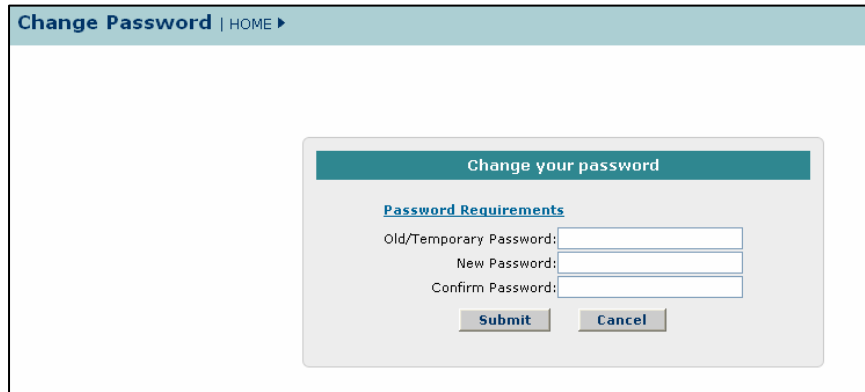
RULES OF BEHAVIOR
Version#: 1.0 | Last Modified Date: 9/10/2005

To continue, you must accept the Rules of Behavior.
Please read the rules below, check the box and click the "Accept" button. Clicking the "Decline" button will take you to the Log In screen.

This Government Computer System is provided as a public service by the National Science Foundation. It is intended for use by the public for viewing, submission and retrieval of authorized information only. All usage of information retrieved from this Computer System should follow the guidelines in Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986. Unauthorized attempts to upload information, change or access information on this service are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986. Usage may be monitored.

☐ I have read and accept the Rules of Behavior.

[Accept]   [Decline]

Figure 8: Rules of Behavior Screen

The Change Password screen is displayed.

3. Enter your Old/Temporary Password, your New Password, and Confirm your New Password.

NOTE:	Password length must be between 6 and 20 characters. The password must contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character. Passwords are not case sensitive. You cannot reuse the last three passwords you have used. Passwords expire every 365 days. Passwords for users with Financial Functions permissions expire.

Figure 9: Change Password Screen

4. Click the **Submit** button.

A confirmation screen is displayed indicating you have successfully changed your password. You may select the **Applicant Home Page** link to return to your Application task list.

Password length must be between 6 and 20 characters. The password must contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character. Passwords are not case sensitive. You cannot reuse the last three passwords you have used. Passwords expire every 365 days.

2.3   Logging Out

Once you have logged into the GRFP application, a **Logout** link is available in the upper-right navigation bar.
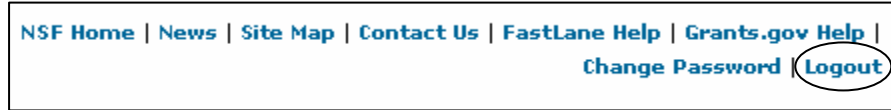
Figure 10: Logout Link

To exit the application at any time, click the **Logout** link. The web browser returns to the GRFP login page.

2.4   Understanding Your Application Package Task List

Your application package task list provides links to resources that allow you to prepare and manage your application. The task list is divided into two parts: Application Package Task List and Application Package Optional Task List. The application and the required form are located under the Application Package Task List. Additional resources that you may need to manage your application package are located under the Application Package Optional Task List.

Figure 11: Application Package Task List Screen

The list below describes the various tasks to prepare and manage your application.

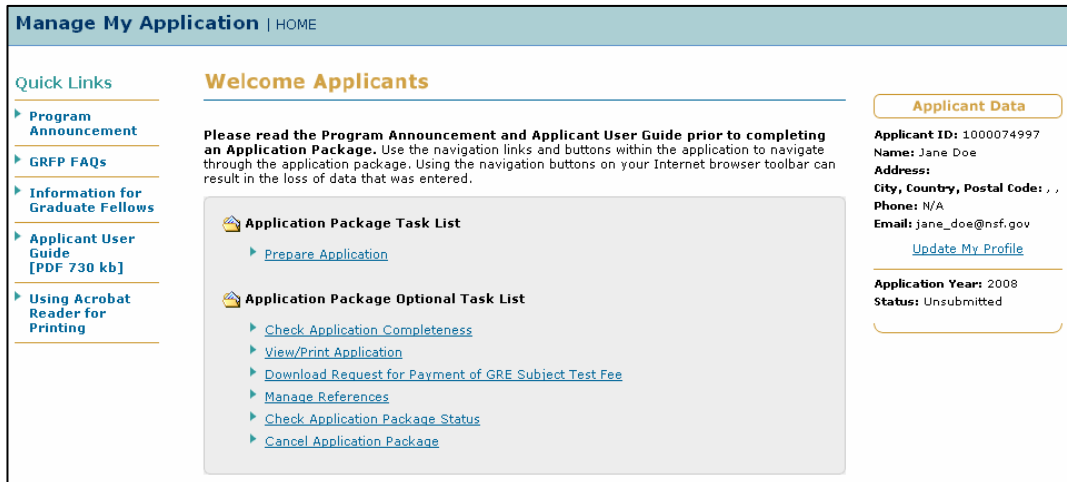| Feature	Description
Prepare Application	The Prepare Application task is a required task that needs to be completed and submitted for award consideration. It is available once the user has registered and logs in with a valid username and password. The link will be removed either when the application has been submitted or when the submission deadline has passed, whichever comes first.
Check Application Completeness	The Check Application Completeness task is an optional task that can be performed at any time while preparing your application to display the readiness of your application for submission. When you perform this task to check your application, the system returns a list of both required and optional fields that have not been completed and the section of the application that the field is contained.
View/ Print Application	The View/Print Application task is an optional task that displays a printable Adobe PDF version of the application for you to view and/or print. This feature is available both prior to and after application submission.
Download Request for Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee	The Download Request for Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee task is an optional task that allows you to download the form for requesting payment by NSF of your GRE Subject Test registration fee. Send the form with your GRE Subject Test registration form for the December GRE Subject Test to ETS. Refer to the passage on "Graduate Record Examinations" in the Guidelines.
Manage References	The Manage References task is an optional task that allows you to manage your references. You may add references for your application package even after you have submitted your application using this task link. When you add a reference name to the system and click "send email", an email is sent to the reference person with the reference request. The email will contain a link that the reference person can use to access and submit his/her reference letter.
Check Application Package Status	The Check Application Package Status task is an optional task that allows you to check the status of each of the elements of your Applications (GRFP Application, Official Transcripts, References, and GRE Test Scores).

Feature	Description
Cancel Application Package	The Cancel Application Package task is an optional task that allows you to cancel your application package before submitting it to the NSF. Once an application is canceled, it cannot be edited or submitted to NSF for review.

2.5 Understanding Your Applicant Data and Application Status

Your applicant data area details your current user profile information and your current application status.   The applicant data area also contains a link to allow you to update your profile information. The list below describes each feature in your applicant data area.

Feature	Description
Applicant ID	The Applicant ID is the number assigned to you when you become an applicant through the self-application process.
User Profile (Name, Address, Phone, and Email)	The User Profile area contains your current name, mailing address, phone number, and email address. This contact information is used for all correspondence that is sent to you through the GRFP system and by the NSF GRFP office. It is very important that you keep this information up-to-date.
Update My Profile	The Update My Profile link allows you to update your personal profile information including, name, mailing contact information, and permanent contact information.
Application Year	The Application Year refers to the year in which your fellowship application is being submitted.
Status	Indicates the current status of your application: Submitted, Unsubmitted, or Withdrawn.

3   PREPARE APPLICATION

Once you have registered and chosen a username and password, the **Prepare Application** link will be available in your Application Package Task List. Click on this link to begin a new application or continue with an existing application that has not yet been submitted. The task link will remain until you have either submitted the application or the deadline for application submission has passed, whichever comes first.
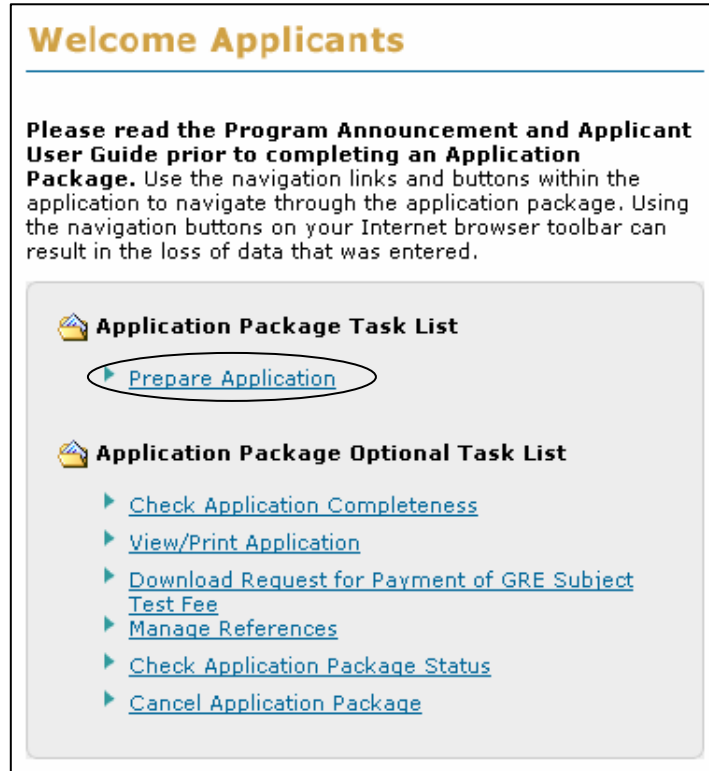

Figure 12: Prepare Application Link

The GRFP application is divided into sections with separate headings. Instructions are provided for completing each section. The required fields are indicated by an asterisk (*). You may complete the sections in any order that you choose. Navigate through the application using the links in the title for each section. You may save your application information as you go and complete it at a later time. Click **"Save and Continue"** to save your data and advance to the next step. Caution: Using the buttons on your Internet browser toolbar can result in the loss of data. Once you have completed all sections, click "Continue" in the SUBMIT APPLICATION section. The system will then check for application completeness. If all required fields are complete, you will be able to submit your application by providing an electronic signature. Otherwise, you will be prompted to complete the missing data. You can check for application completeness at any time while preparing your application by clicking the **"Check Application Completeness"** link on the right of the page.

3.1 Personal Profile

The Personal Profile section of the application package contains fields for applicants to enter general profile information such as name, contact information, and demographic information.

To Submit Personal Profile Information:

1. Click the **Personal Profile** link on the Prepare Application Package screen.

The Personal Profile screen is displayed.

Figure 13: Personal Profile Section

2. Enter your personal profile information. The table below describes all the fields in the Personal Profile Section.

Feature	Description
First Name	Type your first name (required).
Prefix	Type your prefix.
MI	Type your middle initial.
Suffix	Type your suffix, if applicable.
Last Name	Type your last name (required).
Previous Last Name 1	Type your previous last name 1, if applicable.
Previous Last Name 2	Type your previous last name 2, if applicable.
Mailing Address	Type your mailing address (required). You are responsible for updating FastLane immediately in the event of an address change.

Feature	Description
Mailing Email	Type your primary email address.
Mailing Phone Number	Type your primary phone number.
Mailing Ext	Type your primary phone number extension.
Same as Mailing Address	Check this box if your permanent address is the same as your mailing address.
Permanent Address	Type your permanent address if it is different from your mailing address.
Permanent Email	Type your secondary email address.
Permanent Phone Number	Type your secondary phone number.
Permanent Ext	Type your secondary phone number extension.
Date of Birth	Type the month, day, and year of your birth (MM/DD/YYYY format).
Date of Birth State	Type the state in which you were born.
Date of Birth Country	Select the country where you were born.
Native Language	Type your native language.
Citizenship	Select your citizenship status. All applicants must be citizens or nationals of the United States, or permanent resident aliens of the United States at the time of the final application deadline date (required).
Permanent Resident Alien Date	If you are a permanent resident alien, type the date your permanent resident status was granted (MM/DD/YYYY format). If your permanent resident alien date is after the final application deadline date, your application will be invalid and will not be accepted (Required if "Permanent resident alien of the United States" is selected.)
High School City	Type the city where you attended high school.
High School State	Type the state where you attended high school.
High School Country	Type the country where you attended high school.
Gender	Select your gender or select "Do Not Wish to Provide" (required).
Race	Select your race or select "Do not wish to provide race". You may select one or more fields. To obtain the definition of Race, click the Race and Ethnicity Definitions link (required).
Ethnicity	Select your ethnicity or select "Do not wish to provide ethnicity". To obtain the definition of Ethnicity, click the Race and Ethnicity Definitions link (required).

Feature	Description
Disability	Select if you have a disability or select "Do not wish to provide handicap status". You may select one or more fields (required). If your disability is not in the list, select "Other Disability". Once you select "Other Disability", type a description of your disability. Your description must be less than 255 characters.

WARNING: You must provide data for all required fields (indicated by an asterisk on the screen) before your personal profile information is saved. If you exit the Application Module before you have completed and submitted the personal profile, you will need to re-enter the data you previously entered.

NOTE: You may select one or more fields when selecting race and disability.

3. Click the **Save and Continue** button.

Your Personal Profile information is saved and the GRE Test Scores screen is displayed.

3.2 GRE Test Scores

The GRE Test Scores section of the application allows applicants to enter information for GRE General and Subject tests that they want reported to NSF. All applicants are recommended to provide GRE General Test Scores to support the review of their application. Applicants are also encouraged to submit scores from the GRE Subject Test in their proposed field of graduate study, if a test is offered.

To Submit GRE Test Scores Information:

1. Click the **GRE Test Scores** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The GRE Test Scores screen is displayed.

Figure 14: GRE Test Score Header

3.2.1   GRE General Test Scores

In order to include GRE General Test Scores in the application, you must select the checkbox to indicate **"Yes, I would like the Education Testing Service (ETS) to provide GRE Test Scores."** If you choose not to check this box, you will not be able to add GRE General Test Scores to the application.

When the checkbox is selected, you must enter your GRE General Test information for each test that was taken to assist ETS in reporting your scores.

To Add a GRE General Test Score:

a. Click the **Add New General Test Score** button.

The Add GRE General Test Score screen is displayed.

Figure 15: Add GRE General Test Score screen

b. Enter your GRE General Test information. The table below describes all the fields.

Feature	Description
Test Date	Type the date (MM/DD/YYYY format) the GRE test was taken (required).
Registration Number	Type your 7-digit registration number provided on the score report for the computer-based General Test (required). Or enter '0' (zero) for Registration Number if you plan to take the GRE test after you submit your application. For information regarding your registration number, please refer to the Graduate Record Examinations Information and Registration Bulletin. The Graduate Record Examinations Information and Registration Bulletin can be found at http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/GRE/pdf/0708_gre_bulletin.pdf.
First Name	Type the first name you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test (required).
Last Name	Type the last name you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test (required).
MI (optional)	Type the middle initial you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test.

c. Click the **Save** button.

The GRE Test Scores screen is displayed and the GRE General Test information entered is displayed is on the list.

3.2.2   GRE Subject Test Scores

Figure 16: GRE Subject Test Scores Section

In order to include GRE Subject Test Scores in the application, you must select the checkbox to indicate "**Yes, I would like the Education Testing Service (ETS) to provide GRE Test Scores**." If you choose not to check this box, you will not be able to add Subject GRE Test Scores to the application.

When the checkbox is selected, you must enter your GRE Subject Test information for each test that was taken to assist ETS in reporting your scores.

To Add a GRE Subject Test Score:

    a.   Click the **Add New Subject Test Score** button.

The Add GRE Subject Test Score screen is displayed.

Figure 17: Add GRE Subject Test Score screen

b. Enter your GRE Subject Test information. The table below describes all the fields.

Feature	Description
Subject Code	Type the subject code of the test: Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology - B22; Biology - B24; Chemistry - C27; Computer Science - C29; Mathematics (Rescaled) - M68; Physics - P77; Psychology - P81 (required).
Test Date	Type the date (MM/DD/YYYY format) the GRE test was taken (required).
Registration Number	Type your 7-digit registration number provided on the score report for the computer-based General Test (required). Or enter '0' (zero) for Registration Number if you plan to take the GRE test after you submit your application. For information regarding your registration number, please refer to the Graduate Record Examinations Information and Registration Bulletin. The Graduate Record Examinations Information and Registration Bulletin can be found at http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/GRE/pdf/0708_gre_bulletin.pdf.
First Name	Type the first name you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test (required).
Last Name	Type the last name you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test (required).
MI (optional)	Type the middle initial you provided to ETS when taking the GRE test.

c. Click the **Save** button.

The GRE Test Scores screen is displayed and the GRE Subject Test information entered is displayed is on the list.

2. Click the **Save and Continue** button.

Your GRE Test Scores information is saved and the Education and Work Experience screen is displayed.

3.3 Education and Work Experience

The Education and Work Experience section allows the applicant to enter the following information: Education, Other Experience, and Additional Graduate School Information.

To Submit Education and Work Experience Information:

1. Click the **Education and Work Experience** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Education and Work Experience screen is displayed.

Figure 18: Education and Work Experience Section

3.3.1 Education

3. List all Colleges or Universities that you are currently attending or have attended and their details. List most recent enrollment first. If you have multiple degrees or majors, you will have to list each separately. Colleges or universities can include baccalaureate organizations (where you received your bachelor's degree) and any completed graduate courses in any field since receipt of your bachelor's degree.

To Add a College or University:

a. Click the **Add New** button

The Add College/University screen is displayed.

Figure 19: Add College/University Screen

    b.   Enter your college or universities information. The table below describes all the fields.

Feature	Description
College/University	Select your College or University using the Find Organization link. Once you have selected this link, you will be permitted to type in the name of the College or University and click the search button. Once the search results displays your College or University, click the select link (required).
	If you were unable to find your college or university, you are able to enter it in manually by clicking on the enter it manually link and entering the following information:
	Name
	City
	State
	Country
	Once you have entered the information click the submit link.
Start Date	Type the date (MM/YYYY format) of when you began your studies (required).
Completion Date	Type the date (MM/YYYY format) of when you completed your studies, or when you plan to complete your studies (required).
Award date	Type the date (MM/YYYY format) you received a degree or when you plan to receive your degree.
Degree	Select the degree type you received.
Major Field	Select your previous major field of study. If you cannot find your major field of study from the list, type your major field of study in the input box (required).
Other Major Field	Enter a description of your Major Field, if you cannot find your Major Field in the list or have selected Major, Other (example: Chemistry - Other (specify)) (required if major field contains "Other (specify)").
Cumulative GPA	Enter your cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) attained while at this university. If this is your first semester at the university, and you do not yet have a GPA at this university, leave this field blank.
GPA Basis	Enter the basis or scale that your cumulative Grade Point Average is based upon (e.g., 4.0; 4.33; 5.0). If this is your first semester at the university, and you do not yet have a GPA at this university, leave this field blank.
Enrollment Information	Select your enrollment status at the college or university (required).

Feature	Description
Graduate Course Information	Select whether you have completed any graduate courses at this institution (required).
Department	Type the name of the graduate department. (Required if you selected "Yes" for the Graduate Course Information question)
Semester Hours	Type the semester hours earned, enter zero if you do not have any to report. (Required if you selected "Yes" for the Graduate Course Information question). For information regarding semester hours, please visit the GRFP FAQ's located in your Quick Links.
Quarter Hours	Type the semester hours earned, enter zero if you do not have any to report. (Required if you selected "Yes" for the Graduate Course Information question). For information regarding quarter hours, please visit the GRFP FAQ's located in your Quick Links.

    c.   Click the **Save** button.

The Education screen is displayed and the college or university information entered is displayed in the list.

NOTE:	Once a transcript has been received for an institution, the delete option will not be available for that institution. You may still edit details of your attendance at this institution, but may not edit the name of the institution.

TIP:	All correspondence related to your fellowship will be sent to your mailing contact information. Your mailing email address will also be the email address that all system-generated emails and reminders will be sent to. Please be sure that you keep this information up-to-date.

3.3.2 **Other Experience**

1. Enter fellowships, scholarships, teaching, and work experiences relevant to your field of study since entering college/university. Experiences do not have to be limited to the academic realm. (Up to but no more than five are recommended.) Begin with the most recent.

To Add a Fellowship, Scholarship, Teaching, or Work Experience:

a. Click the **Add New** button.

The Adding Education and Work Experience screen is displayed.

Figure 20: Adding Education and Work Experience Screen

b. Enter the details of the position. The table below describes all of the fields.

Feature	Description
Title	Type your position held at time of experience (required).
Institution/Organization	Type the name of the institution/organization (required).
Start Date	Type the date (MM/YYYY format) you began the fellowship, scholarship, teaching, or work experience (required).
End Date	Type the date (MM/YYYY format) you completed the fellowship, scholarship, teaching, or work experience. If the experience is ongoing, leave this field blank.

2. Click the **Save** button.

The Education and Work Experience screen is displayed and the Fellowship, Scholarship, Teaching, or Work Experience information entered is displayed in the list.

Enter significant academic honors you have received relevant to your major field of study.

3.3.3 Additional Graduate School Information

Figure 21: Additional Graduate School Information

1. Answer the additional graduate school information questions. Select **"Yes"** or "**No"** for each question to indicate if you are or have been enrolled in a five-year or four-year joint baccalaureate-master's degree program (required).

2. Select your baccalaureate institution from the list of colleges and universities you attended. You may only choose one institution even if you have multiple baccalaureate institutions, so please choose the one which you feel is most applicable to this fellowship.

3. Select your current institution from the list of colleges and universities you attended (if applicable). You are only able to choose one institution even if you have multiple current institutions.

4. Click the **Save and Continue** button.

Your Education and Work Experience information is saved and the Proposed Graduate Program screen is displayed.

NOTE:	When changes are made to your College/University list, the baccalaureate institution and current institution fields are deselected so that you must reselect the baccalaureate institution and current institution from the most recent college/university lists.

3.4 Proposed Graduate Program

The Proposed Graduate Program section allows the applicant to enter information about the proposed University or College and field of study for graduate work.

To Submit Proposed Graduate Program Information:

1. Click the **Proposed Graduate Program** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Proposed Graduate Program screen is displayed.

Figure 22: Proposed Graduate Program Section

3.4.1 Proposed University or College

1. Enter your University or College information. The table below describes all the fields in the Proposed University or College Section.

Feature	Description
Proposed University or College	Select your Proposed University or College from the dropdown list. If your University or College is not listed, enter the University or College's name in the "Other" field.

Feature	Description
Other	Type the name of your Proposed University or College (Use this field only if it is not in the drop down list.).
City	Type the city where your Proposed University or College is located (Use this field only if it is not in the drop down list.).
State	Select the state where your Proposed University or College is located from the dropdown list. Required if the country of your Proposed University or College is the United States (Use this field only if it is not in the drop down list.).
Country	Select the country where your Proposed University or College is located from the dropdown list (Use this field only if it is not in the drop down list.).
Primary Field of Study	Select your proposed primary field of study (required) from the dropdown list.
Other Primary Field of Study	Type in your primary field of study if you choose "Other" from the primary field of study dropdown list. Type a description of your Primary Field of Study, if you have selected Major – Other (specify) (example: Chemistry - Other (specify)).
Department	Type the department of your proposed primary field of study.
Multidisciplinary Information	Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether your planned graduate program is multidisciplinary (required).

3.4.2 Multi Disciplinary Information

1. Enter your University or College information. The table below describes all the fields in the Multi Disciplinary Information.

Feature	Description
Proposed Graduate Program Multi Disciplinary	Select "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether your proposed graduate program is multi disciplinary (required).
Primary Field of Study	Type in the % of the program of the primary field of study. (Required if your planned proposed graduate program was multi disciplinary.)
Other Field of Study	Select your Other Field of Study from the dropdown list.
Other Field of Study % of Program	Type in the % of the program of the other field of study.

3.4.3 **Highest Level of Degree**

1. Enter your Highest Level of Degree and Field of Study. The table below describes all the fields in the Highest Level of Degree and Field of Study.

Feature	Description
Degree	Select the highest level degree toward which you expect to work on during your fellowship from the dropdown list. If the degree is not listed, enter the degree in the field provided.

3.5 References

The References section allows the applicant to enter information for individuals that they would like to submit reference letters for their Fellowship application.

You are required to submit at least three references in order to submit the application. Scientists or faculty members who have current knowledge of your academic and/or professional experience and ability should be selected as references, since they will be able to give meaningful answers to the questions asked. NSF suggests that at least two of the three references should be persons with whom you have worked in your present (or most recent) department, including the thesis adviser, if applicable.

After adding each reference, please click the **'Send Email'** link in order to notify the person of your request for a reference letter. The individual will receive an email that contains instructions on how to submit a reference letter for your Fellowship application. Please remember that the system will not send any email notification to references on its own; your action of clicking the 'Send Email' link is required.

NOTE:	Only the NSF Reference Report Format will be accepted. The student reference statements on file at colleges and universities will not be accepted in lieu of the NSF Reference Letter.

To Submit Reference Information:

1. Click the References link on the Prepare Application screen.

The References screen is displayed.

Figure 23: References Section

2. Enter your reference information.

To Add your Reference Information:

a. Click the **Add New** button.

b. Enter your reference information. The table below describes all the fields.

Feature	Description
Last Name	Type the last name of the Reference person (required).
First Name	Type the first name of the Reference person (required).
Middle Initial	Type the middle initial of the Reference person.
Organization	Type the name of the organization (university, college, institution) for the Reference person (required).
Email Address	Type the Reference person's email address (required).

c. Click the **Save** button.

The Reference screen is displayed and the reference information entered is displayed in the list. The Status field shows either "Submitted" or "Unsubmitted" indicating whether the reference writer has submitted the letter of reference.

> NOTE: Make sure you click on the "Send Email" button for each reference you identify to actually send the email request to the person. If you update any of the reference information after you have sent the request email using the "Send Email" link, you must resend the email to the person of your request via the same link.

3.6   Personal Statement

The Personal Statement section allows the applicant to upload an essay that describes personal, professional, and educational experiences.

To Submit Personal Statement Information:

1.   Click the **Personal Statement** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Personal Statement screen is displayed.

Figure 24: Personal Statement Section

NOTE:	Before attempting to submit an essay for the Graduate Research Fellowship Application, it is important to make sure that java script is allowed within your browser, and that popup blockers are disabled. To view browser specific instructions on how to do this, please see section 13.

2. Upload your Personal Statement Essay: NSF Fellows are expected to become knowledge experts and leaders who can contribute significantly to research, education, and innovations in science and engineering. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate your potential to satisfy this requirement. Your ideas and examples do not have to be confined necessarily to the discipline that you have chosen to pursue. Describe any personal, professional, or educational experiences or situations that have prepared you or contributed to your desire to pursue advanced study in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. Describe your competencies and evidence of leadership potential. Discuss your career aspirations and how the NSF fellowship will enable you to achieve your goals. You MUST provide specific details in this essay that address BOTH the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts in order for your application to be competitive. Please refer to the Program Announcement for further information on the NSF Merit Review Criteria.

To Upload your Personal Statement Essay:

a. Either type the file location of your essay in the input box or click the **Browse** button to find the location.

b. Click the **Upload** button to begin the upload process.

The PDF Conversion/Compliance Check screen is displayed. Please be patient, this process may take a few minutes. Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file.

During the upload process, your file is converted to a PDF. After successful conversion, the File is Ready for Proofreading screen is displayed.

c. Proof-read the converted PDF file. Click the **Proofread PDF** button to proofread the converted file.

A new window is opened to display the PDF file. Pay special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved.

The Proofreading Complete screen is displayed.

d. Click the **Accept** button to accept the converted PDF file (However, if you detected any problems in the PDF file, you can cancel the upload by clicking on the **Cancel** button. You may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of your document.)

The Personal Statement screen is displayed and a **View PDF** link is now displayed on the screen for your uploaded essay- (if the Accept button was clicked in step d).

NOTE: Essay files can be updated at any time prior to application submission. New, corrected, or revised essays will not be accepted after the application is submitted.

NOTE: Review panelists will not be able to view web page links when evaluating your application. Web links are not accepted in lieu of essays uploaded into the FastLane application.

NOTE: There is a 2-page limit for this essay, and references and citations are included toward the 2-page limit. The essay should be written using the standard 8.5" x 11" page size with 1 inch margins, and may be single-spaced. Adherence to type size and page length is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the application. Images may be included in your essays, however they will be produced only in black and white. All images, footnotes, endnotes, and other citations are included in the 2-page limit. Prepare your response using a word-processor.

3.7 Previous Research Experience

The Previous Research Experience section allows the applicant to upload an essay that describes experience they have in research activities.

To Submit Previous Research Experience Information:

1. Click the **Previous Research Experience** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Previous Research Experience screen is displayed.

Figure 25: Previous Research Experience Section

> NOTE: Before attempting to submit an essay for the Graduate Research Fellowship Application, it is important to make sure that java script is allowed within your browser, and that popup blockers are disabled. To view browser specific instructions on how to do this, please see section 13.

2. Upload your previous research experience essay that describes any scientific research activities in which you have participated, such as experience in undergraduate research programs, or research experience gained through summer or part-time employment or in work-study programs, or other research activities, either academic or job-related. Explain the purpose of the research and your specific role in the research, including the extent to which you worked

independently and/or as part of a team, and what you learned from your research. In your statement, distinguish between undergraduate and graduate research experience. If you have no direct research experience, describe any activities that you believe have prepared you to undertake research. At the end of your statement, list any publications and/or presentations made at national and/or regional professional meetings. You MUST provide specific details in this essay that address BOTH the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts in order for your application to be competitive. Please refer to the Program Announcement for further information on the NSF Merit Review Criteria.

To Upload your Previous Research Experience Essay:

    a. Either type the file location of your essay in the input box or click the **Browse** button to find the location.

    b. Click the **Upload** button to begin the upload process.

The PDF Conversion/Compliance Check screen is displayed. Please be patient, this process may take a few minutes. Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file.

During the upload process, your file is converted to a PDF. After successful conversion, the File is Ready for Proofreading screen is displayed.

    c. Proof-read the converted PDF file. Click the **Proofread PDF** button to proofread the converted file.

A new window is opened to display the PDF file. Pay special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved.

The Proofreading Complete screen is displayed.

    d. Click the **Accept** button to accept the converted PDF file (However, if you detected any problems in the PDF file, you can cancel the upload by clicking on the Cancel button. You may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of your document.)

The Previous Research Experience screen is displayed and a View PDF link is now displayed on the screen for your uploaded essay (if the Accept button was clicked in step d).

NOTE:	Essay files can be updated at any time prior to application submission. New, corrected, or revised essays will not be accepted after the application is submitted.

NOTE:	Review panelists will not be able to view web page links when evaluating your application. Web links are not accepted in lieu of essays uploaded into the FastLane application.

| NOTE: | There is a 2-page limit for this essay, and references and citations are included toward the 2-page limit. The essay should be written using the standard 8.5" x 11" page size with 1 inch margins, and may be single-spaced. Adherence to type size and page length is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the application. Images may be included in your essays, however they will be produced only in black and white. All images, footnotes, endnotes, and other citations are included in the 2-page limit. Prepare your response using a word-processor. |

3.8 Proposed Plan of Research

The Proposed Plan of Research section allows the applicant to upload an essay that describes in detail their research plans.

To Submit Proposed Plan of Research Information:

1. Click the **Proposed Plan of Research** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Proposed Plan of Research screen is displayed.

Figure 26: Proposed Plan of Research Section

NOTE:	Before attempting to submit an essay for the Graduate Research Fellowship Application, it is important to make sure that java script is allowed within your browser, and that popup blockers are disabled. To view browser specific instructions on how to do this, please see section 13.

2. Upload your proposed plan of research essay that in a clear, concise, and original statement, present a complete plan for a research project that you may pursue while on fellowship tenure and how you became interested in the topic. Your statement should demonstrate your understanding of research design and methodology and explain the relationship to your previous research, if any. You MUST provide

specific details in this essay that address BOTH the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts in order for your application to be competitive. Please refer to the Program Announcement for further information on the NSF Merit Review Criteria. Format: Include the title, key words, hypothesis, research plan (strategy, methodology, and controls), anticipated results or findings, literature citations, and a statement attesting to the originality of the research proposal. If you have not formulated a research plan, your statement should include a description of a topic that interests you and how you would propose to conduct research on that topic. Research topics discussed in your proposed plan will be used to determine eligibility. Refer to the Field of Study eligibility criterion in the program announcement..

To Upload your Proposed Plan of Research essay:

a. Either type the file location of your essay in the input box or click the **Browse** button to find the location.

b. Click the **Upload** button to begin the upload process.

The PDF Conversion/Compliance Check screen is displayed. Please be patient, this process may take a few minutes. Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file.

During the upload process, your file is converted to a PDF. After successful conversion, the File is Ready for Proofreading screen is displayed.

c. Proof-read the converted PDF file. Click the **Proofread PDF** button to proofread the converted file.

A new window is opened to display the PDF file. Pay special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved.

The Proofreading Complete screen is displayed.

d. Click the **Accept** button to accept the converted PDF file (However, if you detected any problems in the PDF file, you can cancel the upload by clicking on the Cancel button. You may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of your document.)

The Proposed Plan of Research screen is displayed and a View PDF link is now displayed on the screen for your uploaded essay (if the Accept button was clicked in step d).

NOTE:	Essay files can be updated at any time prior to application submission. New, corrected, or revised essays will not be accepted after the application is submitted.

NOTE:	Review panelists will not be able to view web page links when evaluating your application. Web links are not accepted in lieu of essays uploaded into the FastLane application.

NOTE: There is a 2-page limit for this essay, and references and citations are included toward the 2-page limit. The essay should be written using the standard 8.5" x 11" page size with 1 inch margins, and may be single-spaced. Adherence to type size and page length is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the application. Images may be included in your essays, however they will be produced only in black and white. All images, footnotes, endnotes, and other citations are included in the 2-page limit. Prepare your response using a word-processor.

3.9   NSF GRFP Program Information

The NSF GRFP Program Information section allows the applicant to select their status description and upload an essay that describes their graduate study information. This section also allows the applicant to select whether or not they want their name and email address published if chosen for an award or honorable mention. In addition, the applicant can enter how they learned about the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship and report other fellowships for which they are applying

To Submit NSF GRFP Program Information:

1. Click the **NSF GRFP Program Information** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The NSF GRFP Program Information screen is displayed.

Figure 27: NSF GRFP Program Information Section

3.9.1   Completed Study

1. Select your status description from the list of choices (required).

If you selected **"more than 12 months of completed graduate study"** in this section, you must explain in detail the circumstances that you wish to have considered for eligibility purposes. Issues to be addressed in this section include a significant change of field, and interruption of studies for work or medical reasons. Any other eligibility or extenuating circumstances you wish to have considered must be addressed here. Failure to supply detailed information could result in

a determination of ineligible. Refer to the current GRFP Program Announcement to review important information about eligibility.

NOTE: During the Check Application Completeness process, the system will check entries in the previous education section to make sure that the level of completed graduate study selected does not conflict with the education entries.

3.9.2   Description of Extenuating Circumstances

To upload your NSF GRFP Program Supporting Essay:

a.   Click the **Click Here** link.

The Description of Extenuating Circumstances Essay Upload screen is displayed.

Figure 28: Description of Extenuating Circumstances Essay Upload Section

b.   Either type the file location of your essay in the input box or click the **Browse** button to find the location.

c.   Click the **Upload** button to begin the upload process.

The PDF Conversion/Compliance Check screen is displayed. Please be patient, this process may take a few minutes. Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file.

During the upload process, your file is converted to a PDF. After successful conversion, the File is Ready for Proofreading screen is displayed.

d.   Proof-read the converted PDF file. Click the **Proofread PDF** button to proofread the converted file.

A new window is opened to display the PDF file. Pay special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved.

The Proofreading Complete screen is displayed.

> e. Click the **Accept** button to accept the converted PDF file (However, if you detected any problems in the PDF file, you can cancel the upload by clicking on the Cancel button. You may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of your document.)

The NSF GRFP Program Information Essay screen is displayed and a View PDF link is now displayed on the screen for your uploaded essay (if the Accept button was clicked in step d).

NOTE:	Essay files can be updated at any time prior to application submission. New, corrected, or revised essays will not be accepted after the application is submitted.

NOTE:	Review panelists will not be able to view web page links when evaluating your application. Web links are not accepted in lieu of essays uploaded into the FastLane application.

NOTE:	There is a 1-page limit for this essay, and references and citations are included toward the 1-page limit. The essay should be written using the standard 8.5" x 11" page size with 1 inch margins, and may be single-spaced. Adherence to type size and page length is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the application. All images, footnotes, endnotes, and other citations are included in the 1-page limit. Prepare your response using a word-processor.

3.9.3 **Additional Program Information**

Figure 29: Additional Program Information Screen

1. Select "**Yes**" or "**No**" to indicate if you wish your name to be published on the Honorable Mention List, posted at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/.

2. Select "**Yes**" or "**No**" to indicate if you wish your e-mail address to be published on the Awards List or Honorable Mention List, posted at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/.

3. Select how you learned about the NSF Graduate Research Fellowships. (Check all that apply.)

4. Select any fellowships for which you have applied this year. (Select all fellowships that apply.) If a fellowship that you applied for is not listed, enter the fellowship name in the Other Fellowships field.

5. Click the **Save and Continue** button.

Your NSF GRFP Program Information is saved and the Submit Application screen is displayed.

3.10 Submit Application

The Submit Application section allows the applicant to review their entire application on one screen. The section also allows the applicant to view and print a PDF version of their application. Once the application has been reviewed, an applicant can click the Continue button to check the for application completeness. If all required fields have been completed, the applicant will be able to click Continue and provide an Electronic Certification.

To Submit an Application:

1. Click the **Submit Application** link on the Prepare Application screen.

The Submit Application screen is displayed.

Figure 30: Submit Application

2. Click the **Continue** button to check the applications completeness.

The Check Application Completeness screen is displayed.

ERRORS/WARNINGS

Check Application Completeness Instructions

An **ERROR** indicates that you have not entered information for a required field. You must return to application and enter the required information before you can submit your application. *For GRE Test Scores, please refer to the Program Announcement on how to enter the information into your application.*

A **WARNING** indicates that you have not entered information for a field. The information for this field is not required but failure to provide full and complete information may reduce the possibility of your receiving an award.

Personal Profile   Edit

- *WARNING: **Native Language** is missing.
- *WARNING: **Date of Birth** is missing.
- *WARNING: **High School Location City** is missing.

GRE Test Scores   Edit

- *WARNING: Please refer to the program announcements for **GRE Subject Test Scores** requirements.

Education and Work Experience   Edit

- *WARNING: **List fellowships, scholarships, teaching, and work experiences relevant to your field of study since entering college/university.** is missing.
- *WARNING: **Academic honors you have received** is missing.

Proposed Graduate Program   Edit

- *WARNING: **Highest Level Degree** is missing.
- *WARNING: **Field of Study of Highest Level Degree** is missing.

Figure 31: Check Application Completeness

3. Click **Continue** to provide an Electronic Certification.

The Applicant Electronic Certification screen is displayed.

Application E-Signature

E-Signature Instructions   View

You must read and agree to all the terms and conditions in the below information before your application can be submitted.

Certifications Page

There are three certifications which must by law be made before the National Science Foundation can authorize funds for a fellowship award. These concern 1) controlled substances; 2) delinquency on Federal debt; and 3) debarment and suspension.

Certifications

I certify that:

☐ 1. I will not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in the conduct of any activity with this fellowship award;

☐ 2. I am not delinquent on repayment of any Federal debt, and

3. To the best of my knowledge and belief:
☐ (a) I am not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;

Figure 32: Application Electronic Certification

NOTE: The applicant must read and agree to the certification and check all certification check boxes on the page to proceed to submit the application package.

You may click the "**View**" link next to the E-Signature Instructions to see detailed instructions and definition of certification terms.

> 4. Check all certification check boxes, and Click **Sign and Submit Application**.

Once you have clicked the Sign and Submit Application button, your application will be submitted to the NSF for review.

4 CHECK APPLICATION COMPLETENESS

The **Check Application Completeness** link will be available in your Application Package Optional Task List. Click on this link at any time while preparing your application to display the readiness of your application for submission. When you perform this task to check your application, the system returns a list of both required and optional fields that have not been completed and the section of the application that the field is contained. The task link will remain until you have submitted the application.
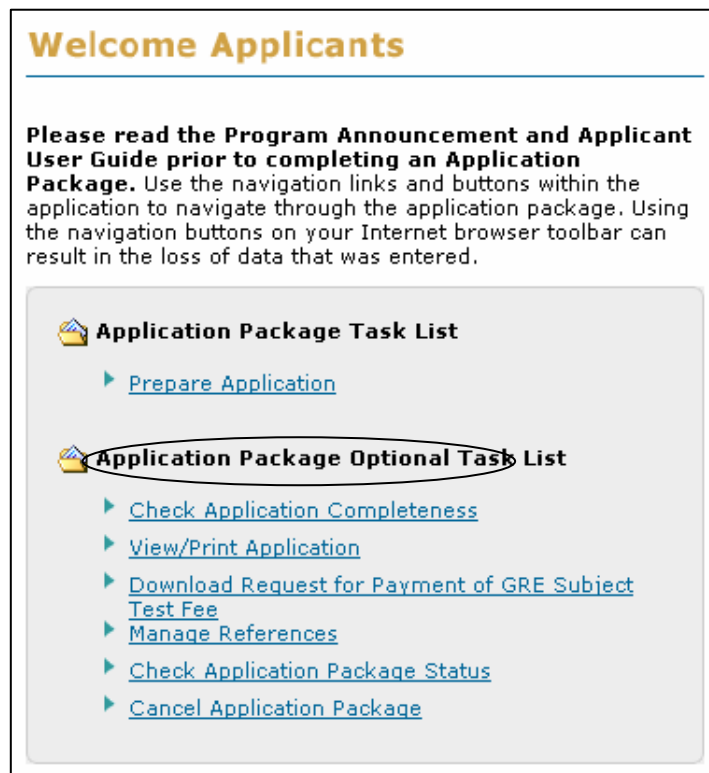
Figure 33: Check Application Completeness Link From Optional Task List

You also have the option to access this feature from within the **Prepare Application** Link.
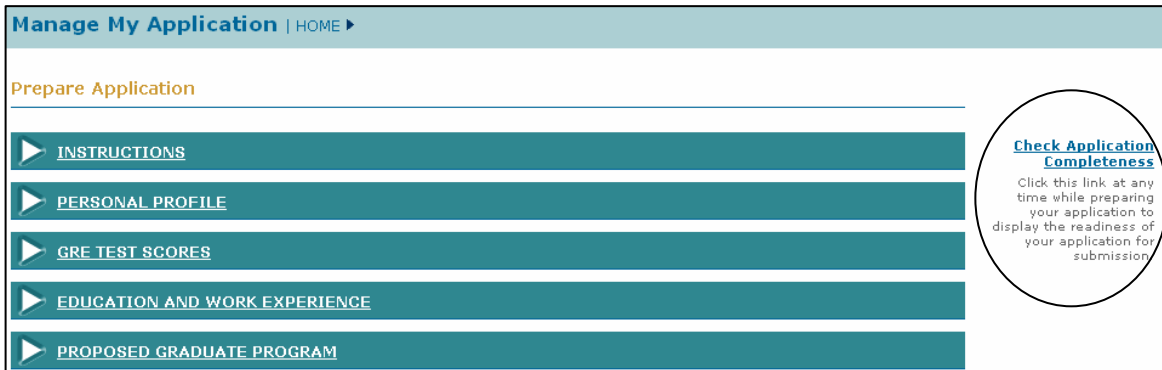
Figure 34: Check Application Completeness Link Within the Application

5   VIEW/ PRINT APPLICATION

The **View/Print Application** link will be available in your Application Package Optional Task List. Click on this link so that you can View/Print the Application.
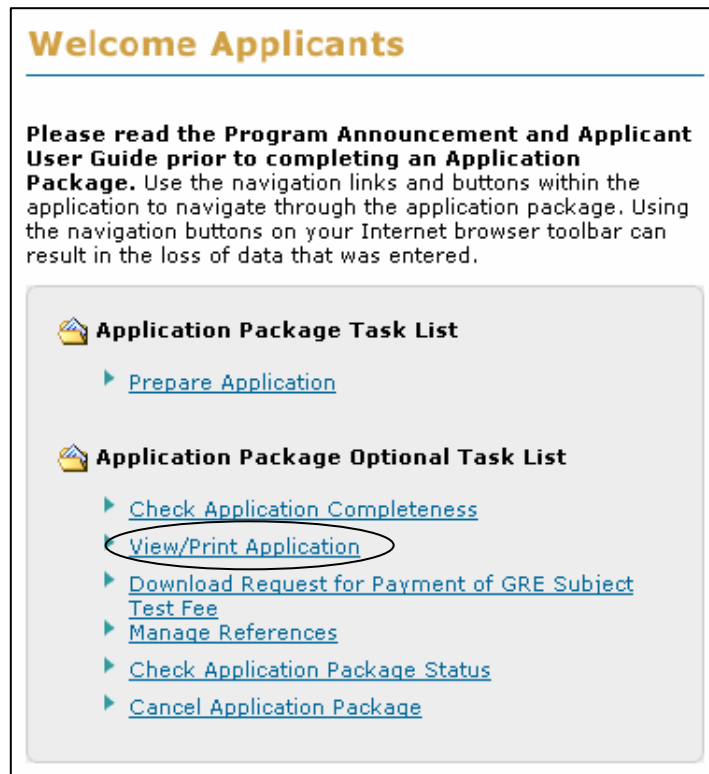
Figure 35: View/Print Application Link

To view the Application in a printable Adobe PDF version, click the **View PDF** link in the upper right hand corner of the View/Print Application screen. This feature is available both prior to and after application submission.

Figure 36: View/Print Application

6 DOWNLOAD REQUEST FOR PAYMENT OF GRE SUBJECT TEST FEE

The **Download Request For Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee** link will be available in your Application Package Optional Task List. Click on this link to download the form for requesting payment by NSF of your GRE Subject Test registration fee.
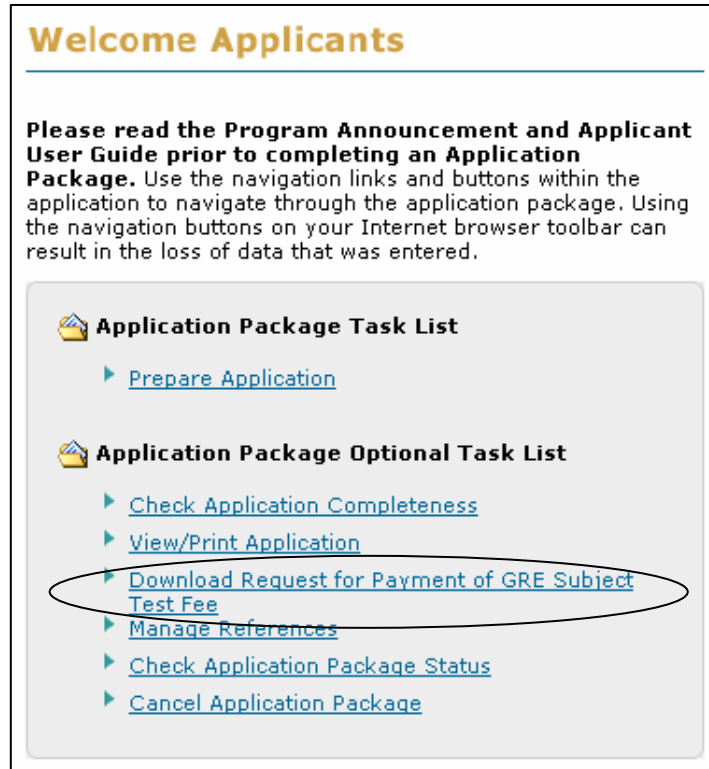
Figure 37: Download Request for Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee Link

7 MANAGE REFERENCES

The **Manage References** link will be available in your Application Package Optional Task List. Click on this link to manage your references. You may add references for your application package even after you have submitted your application using this task link. When you add a reference name to the system and click "**send email**", an email is sent to the reference person with the reference request. The email will contain a link that the reference person can use to access and submit their reference letter.
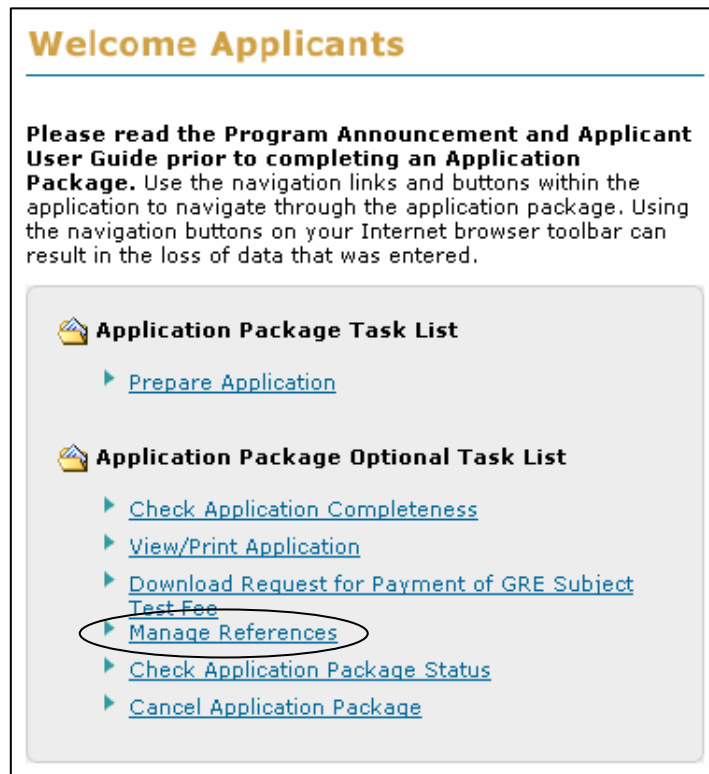
Figure 38: Manage References Link

NOTE:	Emails are the primary source of communication used by the GRFP Administrators. It is important for you to use an active email address and to update the email address if it changes.

8   CANCEL APPLICATION PACKAGE

The **Cancel Application Package** link will be available in your Application Package Optional Task List until you have submitted the application. If you decide not to complete the Graduate Research Fellowship Application, you may remove your application from the GRFP system by clicking on the Cancel Application Package link before the submission deadline.
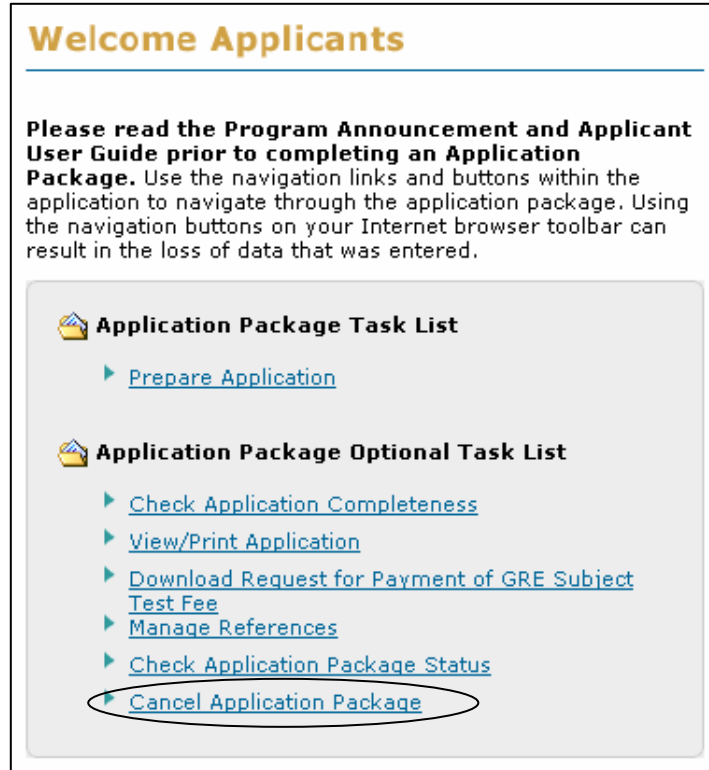
Figure 39: Cancel Application Package Link

9   WITHDRAW APPLICATION PACKAGE

The **Withdraw Application Package** link will appear in your Application Package Optional Task List after you have submitted the application. Click on this link to withdraw your application package before the submission deadline if you decide you do not want your application package reviewed for award consideration. If you wish to withdraw your application after the submission deadline, you must contact the GRF Operations Center with that request.
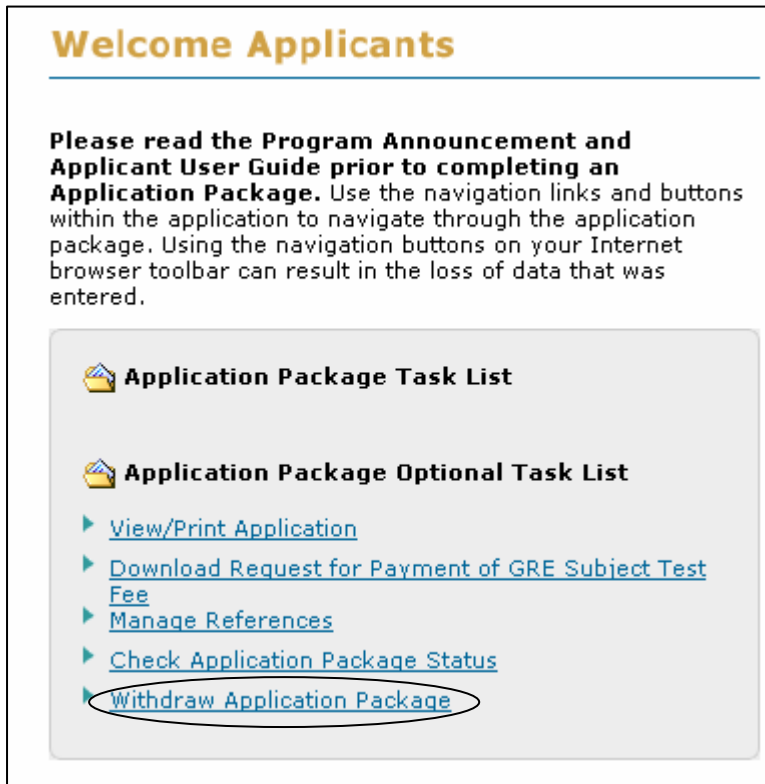
Figure 40: Withdraw Application Package Link

10 MANAGING YOUR PROFILE
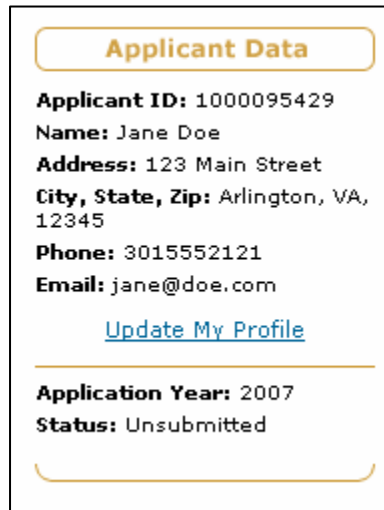
Your user profile includes your name, mailing contact information, and permanent contact information. Your name and mailing contact information are displayed in the Applicant Data area on the right side of your home page. You may view or update your profile at any time using the **Update My Profile** link found in the Applicant Data area.

When updating your profile information, you may make changes to your name, mailing contact information, or permanent contact information. The required fields in your profile are marked with an asterisk.

TIP:	All correspondence related to your application will be sent to your mailing contact information. Your mailing email address will also be the email address that all system-generated emails and reminders will be sent to. Please be sure that you keep this information up-to-date.

To Update Your Profile:

1. Click the **Update My Profile** link from your home page Applicant Data area.

Figure 41: Update My Profile Link

Your current profile information is displayed with the ability to edit each field (see below.)

Figure 42: Update My Profile Screen

2. Enter the changes to your profile information.

3. Click the **Save** button.

Once you have submitted the changes to your profile, a confirmation screen is displayed. You may select the **GRFP Home Page** link to return to your home page and task list. Any changes to your mailing contact information will be reflected in the profile area of your applicant data.

11 CHECK YOUR APPLICATION PACKAGE STATUS

You are able to check your application package status by clicking on the **Check Application Package Status** link in your Application Package Optional Task List. The check application package status screens allow you to obtain Application Package Requirement Information, Deadlines for the Applications Packages, Contact Information for Issues, and actual the status of the submitted GRFP Application, Official Transcripts, Reference Letters, and GRE Test Scores (if applicable).
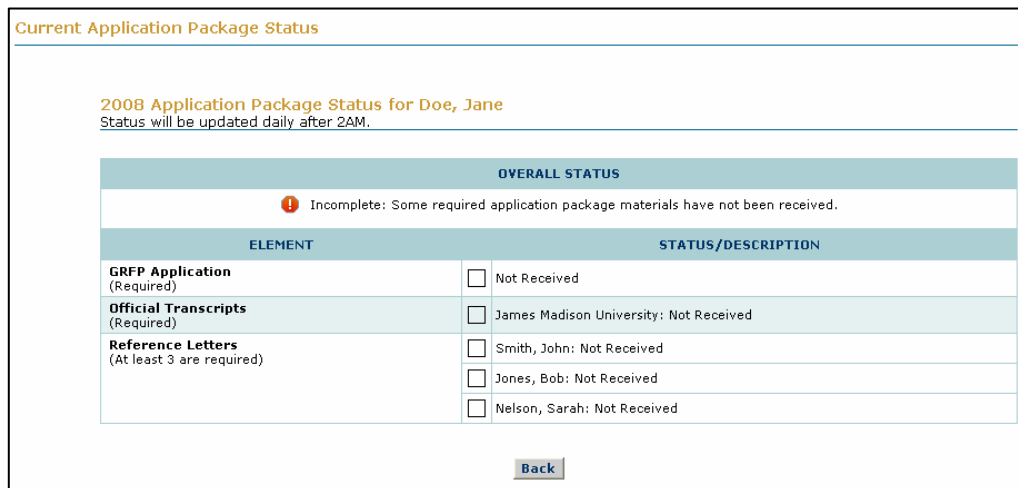
To Check Your Application Package Status:

1. Click the **Check Application Package Status** link.
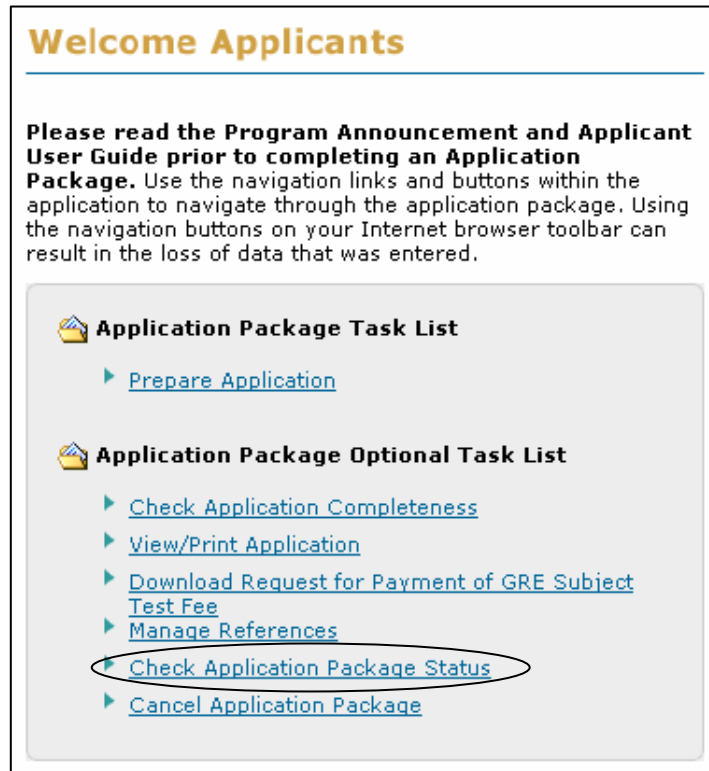
Figure 43: Application Package Task List Screen

The Informational Screen is displayed.

Figure 44: Informational Screen

2. To check your current application status, click the **View Your Application Package Status** link.

The Current Application Package Status Screen is displayed.

Figure 45: Application Package Status Screen

The Current Application Package Status Screen provides you with the latest status of your current application. The Overall Status of your application is provided at the top of the page, and will inform you if your Application Package is complete or incomplete. The Overall Status will remain incomplete until all of the required materials have been received. Each Application Package Element will display its status with either an empty or checked box next to it. An empty box indicates that the item has not yet been received. A checked box indicates that the item has been received. It is important to note that application package statuses are updated daily. Therefore, the system may not reflect an updated package status until the day after an item is submitted.

> NOTE: Waived transcripts will not display a checkbox and will be listed as "Not Required" instead of "Received".

12 INSTRUCTIONS FOR REFERENCE WRITERS

Reference Writers must submit their letters of reference through the FastLane system. Only the reference letters submitted via FastLane will be accepted for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship program.

12.1 Getting Access

12.1.1 Creating a Password (First-time users for the current application year only)

1. Access the GRFP application by typing the following address into your browser address bar: http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov. Click on the **Graduate Research Fellowship Program** link at the top of the page. This will take you to the GRFP application within FastLane.

Figure 46: The Submit Reference Letter link

2. Once on the GRFP site, click on the **Submit Reference Letter** link (pictured below) to begin the reference letter submission process.

NOTE:	The Submit Reference Letter link will only be available between the opening day of the competition and the reference letter deadline date listed on the GRFP homepage. After this date, a link to View Reference Letters will be available for 90 days after the Reference Letter Deadline date.

The Submit Reference Letter Log In screen will be displayed with the Rules of Behavior.

Figure 47: The Submit Reference Letter Log In Screen

This page is used to ensure that you understand the rules of behavior involved with interacting with a government computer system. You are required to read and accept the rules of behavior before continuing through the Registration Process.

3. Click the "**New User for the 2008 Application Year**…" link to create a password for the current application year.

The Create Your Password screen is displayed.

Figure 48: Create Your Password Screen

This page will be used to create your user profile. All required information (indicated by an asterisk) must be completed in order to save the data and submit the create password form.

4. Type your email address as entered by the applicant(s) in **the Email Address** field.

NOTE:	Applicants fill out a reference letter profile that includes your email address. You can obtain the e-mail address listed in our system from the email you received from NSF requesting a letter of reference.

5. Choose a password and type it in the **Password** field.

NOTE:	Password length must be between 6 and 20 characters. The password must contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character. Passwords are not case sensitive. You cannot reuse the last three passwords you have used. Passwords expire every 365 days.

6. Re-type your password in the **Confirm Password** field.

7. Click **Submit** to save the information and proceed to the next step.

A confirmation screen will be displayed and the system will email you a confirmation that a password was successfully created.

12.1.2 **Logging In (only after Creating a Password)**

1. Access FastLane to submit a letter of reference by doing either of the following: 1) use the URL sent in the email you received from the FastLane system via the applicant Or 2) navigate to the site by going to the Main GRFP page at https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/ and clicking the **"Submit Reference Letter"** link.

NOTE:	The Submit Reference Letter link will only be available between the opening day of the competition and the reference letter deadline date listed on the GRFP homepage. After this date, a link to View Reference Letters will be available for 90 days after the Reference Letter Deadline date.

2. Once on the Reference Letter Log In page, enter your login information in the log in box on the bottom of the screen.

Figure 49: Reference Writer Log In

3. Type your email address in the **Email Address** field.

4. Type your password in the **Password** field.

5. Click the **Log In** button.

The Reference Writer Homepage appears with Reference Letter Submission Instructions and your Reference Letter List.

Figure 50: Reference Writer Homepage

12.1.3 Resetting a Password

1. Click on the **Forgot Password?** link found under the Login button on the Reference Writer Log In page.

The Forgot Password screen is displayed.

Figure 51: Forgot Password Screen

2. Type your email address in the **Email Address** field.

3. Click on the **Submit** button.

A confirmation screen will be displayed and the system will email you a temporary password to the email address you provided. Once you log back into the system with the temporary password, you will be asked to change your temporary password to a new password of your choice.

12.1.4 **Changing Your Password**

1. Once you have logged in to the GRFP Reference Letter Submission process, click the **Change Password** link from the upper-right navigation bar.

NSF Home | News | Site Map | Contact Us | FastLane Help | Grants.gov Help |
Change Password | Logout
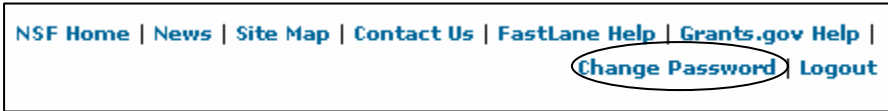
Figure 52: Change Password Link

The Change Password screen is displayed.

Submit Reference Letter | HOME ▶

Change Password

Password Requirements
Application Year: **2008**
Old/Temporary Password:
New Password:
Confirm Password:

Submit   Cancel

Figure 53: Change Password Screen

2. Enter your Old/Temporary Password, your New Password, and Confirm your New Password.

NOTE: Password length must be between 6 and 20 characters. The password must contain at least one alphabetic and one numeric character. Passwords are not case sensitive. You cannot reuse the last three passwords you have used. Passwords expire every 365 days. Passwords for users with Financial Functions permissions expire.

---

3. Click the **Submit** button.

A confirmation screen is displayed indicating you have successfully changed your password. You may select the **Reference Home Page** link to return to your Reference Letter list.

12.1.5 **Logging Out**

Once you have logged into the GRFP Reference Letter Submission process, a Logout link is available in the upper-right navigation bar.

NSF Home | News | Site Map | Contact Us | FastLane Help | Grants.gov Help | Change Password | Logout
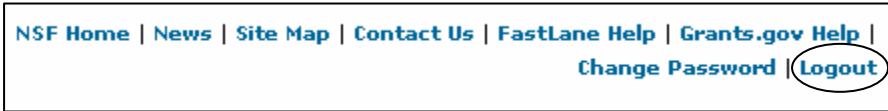
Figure 54: Logout Link

To exit the application at any time, click the **Logout** link. The web browser returns to the GRFP homepage.

12.1.6 **Understanding Your Reference Letter List**

Your reference letter list provides a list of all applicants for the current application year who have requested that you provide a letter of reference on their behalf.

To begin or continue working on a reference letter for an applicant listed below, select the "Submit" link in the corresponding table row. After you have submitted a reference letter for an applicant, you may view the letter by selecting the "View" link in the corresponding table row. You may also delete the uploaded letter of reference if you would like to upload a different letter of reference by selecting the "Delete" link.

My 2008 Reference Letters

1 item found.   1

Applicnat ID	Applicant Name	Status	Submit Date	Action
1000074997	Doe, Jane	Unsubmitted		Submit

Figure 55: Reference Letter List

The list below describes the attributes of the Reference Letter List.

Feature	Description
Applicant ID	The Applicant ID is the number that NSF assigns to an applicant when they begin their application to NSF.
Applicant Name	The names of the applicants who have asked you to provide a letter of reference.
Status	The individual status of each letter of reference is listed. The status of each letter will remain "Unsubmitted" until the submission process has been completed for that particular letter, at which point the status will be updated to "Submitted".
Submit Date	The date that a particular letter of reference was submitted to NSF.
Action	The action links allow a reference writer to "Submit" an unsubmitted letter, or to "View/Delete" a submitted letter of reference.

12.2 Submitting a Letter of Reference

Once you have chosen a password, and logged in to the Reference Letter GRFP Reference Letter Submission process, the **Submit** link will be available in your Reference Letter List for each current applicant who has requested that you provide a letter of reference on their behalf. Click on this link to begin or continue the reference letter submission process for a particular applicant. The Submit link will remain next to each applicant's name until you have either submitted the letter of reference for this applicant, or the deadline for submission has passed, whichever comes first.

To Submit a Letter of Reference:

1. Click the **Submit** link on the Reference Writer Homepage for the applicant you would like to submit a letter of reference.
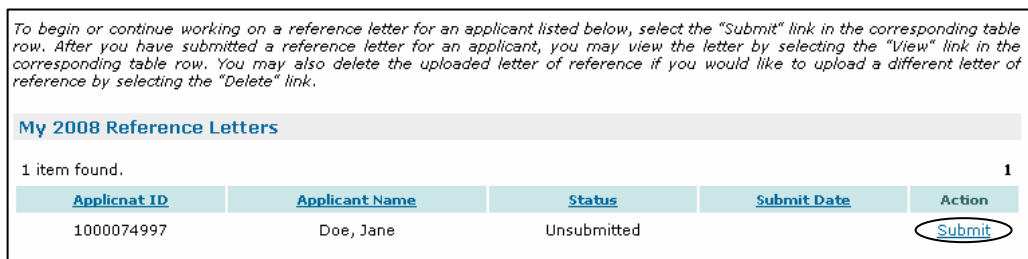
Figure 56: Reference Letter List

The Submit Letter of Reference screen is displayed.
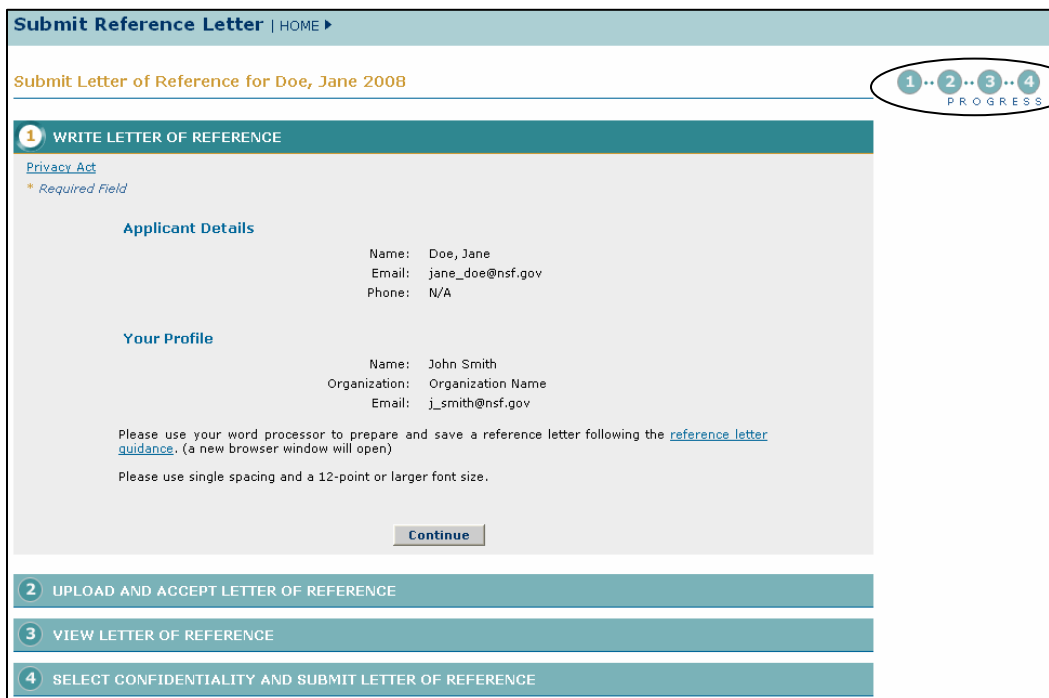
Figure 57: Submit Reference Letter Screen

The Reference Letter Submission process is divided into steps with separate headings. Instructions are provided for completing each section. A progress indicator on the right hand side will show your progress through the reference letter submission process.

The required fields in each step are indicated by an asterisk (*). You must complete the sections in order. Once you have uploaded your letter of reference and accepted the PDF version of this letter, the uploaded version of this letter is saved, and the submission process can be completed at a later time. Click "Continue" to save your data and advance to the next step.

WARNING:	Using the buttons on your Internet browser toolbar can result in the loss of data.

12.2.1 **Write Letter of Reference**

The Write Letter of Reference section of the reference letter submission process contains the contact information of the applicant who you are writing for, and your profile details the applicant provided. For your convenience, the "reference letter guidance" link provides the guidance for what information to include in the letter of reference, and the formatting instructions which were detailed in the original request email from the National Science Foundation. This guidance will open in a new window for easy reference as you write you letter.

Figure 58: Write Letter of Reference Section

To Complete the Write Letter of Reference Section:

1. Once you have prepared your letter in a word processor, you may click the **Continue** button to advance to the next step.

The Upload and Accept Letter of Reference section is displayed.

12.2.2 **Upload and Accept Letter of Reference**

Once you have produced and saved a soft copy of your reference letter in one of the supported file formats, you are ready to upload your file to the National Science Foundation server. During the upload process, your file will be converted into a PDF version of your letter of reference. You will be given the opportunity in this step to proofread the converted document to ensure that the file is accurately displayed.

NOTE:	Before attempting to submit a letter of reference for an applicant, it is important to make sure that java script is allowed within your browser, and that popup blockers are disabled. To view browser specific instructions on how to do this, please see section 13.

Figure 59: Upload and Accept Reference Section

To Upload a Letter of Reference:

1. Either type the file location of the reference letter in the input box or click the **Browse** button to find the location of the file.

2. Click the **Upload** button to begin the upload process.

The PDF Conversion/Compliance Check screen is displayed.

PDF Conversion/Compliance Check

Please be patient, this process may take a few minutes. Make sure your browser settings have javascript and popups from www.fastlane.nsf.gov enabled. Otherwise you will not be able to complete the file upload properly.

Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file.

You can check the latest status by clicking on the following link: Check PDF Conversion/Compliance Status.

You can cancel this process by clicking the following link: Cancel PDF Conversion/Compliance Check.

Portions copyright 2005, Adobe Systems Inc.

PDF Conversion in Progress

Figure 60: PDF Conversion/Compliance Check Screen

Please note this process may take a few minutes. Every 15 seconds this page will refresh to check the status of your file. During the upload process, the file is converted to a PDF. After successful conversion, the File is Ready for Proofreading screen is displayed.

File is ready for proofreading

Proofread Results

Please click the "Proofread PDF" button below to proofread the uploaded file, paying special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved. **Note:** This feature requires that javascript and Popups from www.fastlane.nsf.gov be enabled on your browser.

NOTE: Clicking the "Proofread PDF" button will create a NEW window to display the PDF file.

After proofreading your document, close the new window to return to this window and complete your upload.

[Proofread PDF]

National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA
Tel: 703-292-5111
FIRS: 800-877-8339
TDD: 703-292-5090

Figure 61: File is Ready for Proofreading Screen

3. Click the **Proofread PDF** button to proofread the converted file.

A new window is opened to display the PDF file. If a new window does not open, please refer to section 13 to disable popup blockers and enable java script.
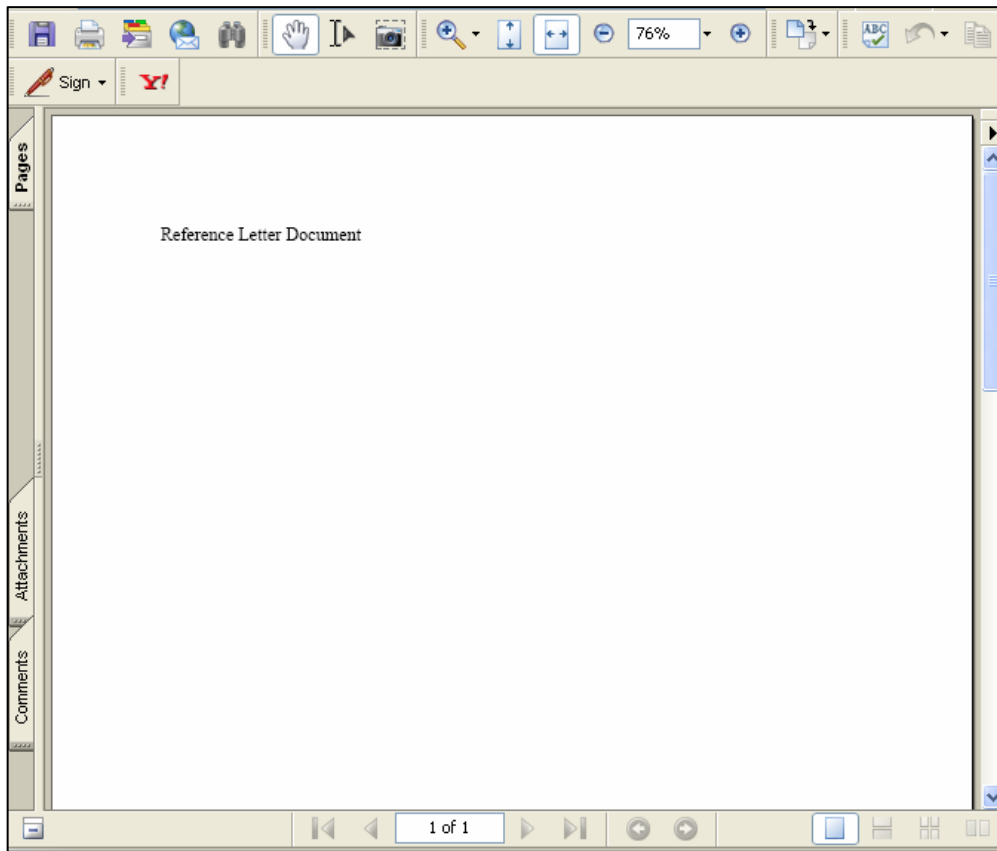
Figure 62: Write Letter of Reference Section

NOTE:	If you are unable to view and proofread your reference letter during the upload process, please still click the "Accept" button. On Step 3 of this process you will have the option to view and proofread your document again. If you detect any problems while proofreading, you can delete and re-upload the corrected version of your reference letter.

4. Proofread the PDF paying special attention to check that all figures, graphics, tables, margins, page breaks, and other special formatting options have been accurately preserved

The Proofreading Complete screen is displayed.

Proofreading Complete

Do You Accept The Results?

If you accept the results, click on the "Accept" button below.

However, if you detected any problems in the PDF file, you can cancel the upload by clicking on the "Cancel" button below. You may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of your document.

NOTE: Clicking the "Cancel" button will create a NEW window to display a verification message.

After verifying the cancellation, close the new window to continue your work.

Before accepting, you should carefully check all your figures to ensure proper results.

Accept   Cancel

National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA
Tel: 703-292-5111
FIRS: 800-877-8339
TDD: 703-292-5090

Figure 63: File is Ready for Proofreading Screen

5. Click the **Accept** button to accept the converted PDF file (However, if you detect any problems in the PDF file, you may cancel the upload by clicking on the Cancel button. The referee may then correct the errors and resubmit the corrected version of his/her document.).

Once you have uploaded and accepted your letter of reference, the uploaded version of the reference letter will be saved. You may continue towards submitting the letter of reference or return to the process at another time to complete the submission. The status of the reference letter will remain "Unsubmitted" until the final steps of the reference letter submission process are complete.

The View Letter of Reference screen is displayed and a **View PDF** link is now displayed on the screen for your uploaded letter- (if the Accept button was clicked in step d).

12.2.3 View Letter of Reference

Once you have uploaded and accepted your letter of reference, the View Letter of Reference step allows you to view the PDF version of the uploaded letter of reference.

To View a Letter of Reference:

6. Click the **View PDF** icon to view this file and confirm the accuracy of the uploaded letter.
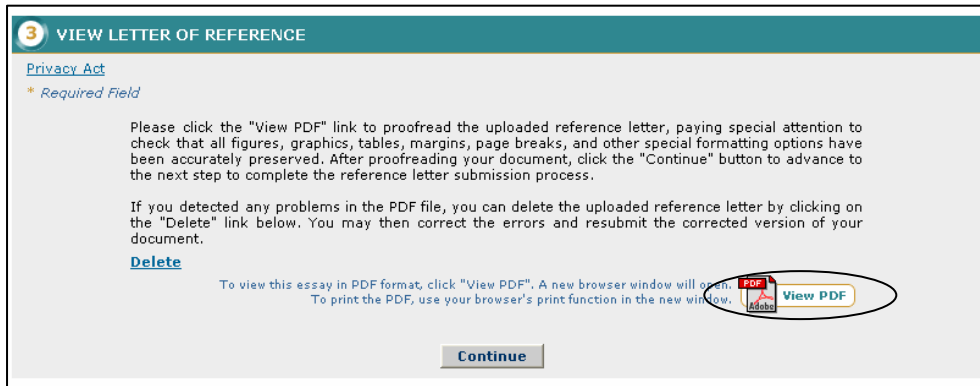
Figure 64: View Letter of Reference Screen

If the letter does not appear correctly, or if you would like to make modifications to the uploaded file, you may click the **Delete** link to remove the uploaded PDF, and return to the previous step to upload a letter of reference again.

7. If the letter does appear correctly, click the **Continue** button to proceed with the submission process.

The Select Confidentiality and Submit Letter of Reference screen is displayed.

12.2.4 Select Confidentiality and Submit Letter of Reference

After you have confirmed that the letter of reference is correct, and you are ready to submit the current version for review, select one of the confidentiality statements, and submit the letter of reference.

Figure 65: Select Confidentiality and Submit Letter of Reference Screen

To Select Confidentiality and Submit Letter of Reference:

1. Select one of the two confidentiality statements:

   a. My preparation of this Reference Report is conditioned on the promise of the Foundation to hold my identity in confidence.

   b. My preparation of this Reference Report is not conditioned on the promise of the Foundation to hold my identity in confidence.

2. Click the **Submit Reference Letter** button to submit the reference letter for the Applicant.

The Submit Reference Letter Confirmation Screen will display stating that the reference letter was successfully submitted.

Submit Reference Letter | HOME ▶

CONFIRMATION

Submit Reference Letter
You have successfully submitted the reference letter.

Reference Home Page
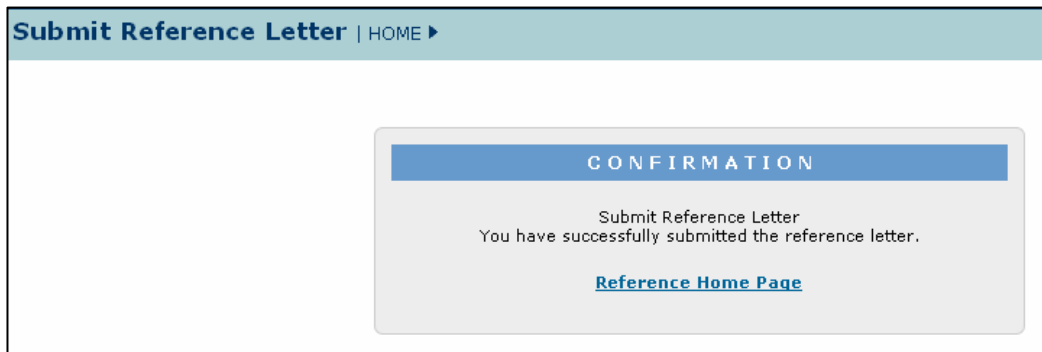
Figure 66: Select Confidentiality and Submit Letter of Reference Screen

NOTE:	To successfully submit a reference letter, the Reference Writer will need to click the Submit References Letter button after uploading their reference letter and selecting their confidentiality statement. The reference letter will not be submitted unless this action is taken.

NOTE:	If the submission of the reference letter was successful, the referee will receive a confirmation email message within the same day. Also, if the referee logs back into FastLane and the letter of reference was successfully submitted, a note will be displayed at the top of the screen stating the date and time it was submitted. Additionally, applicants can check the status of each reference letter by logging into FastLane and clicking the Manage References link.

12.3 Viewing a Submitted Letter of Reference

A reference writer can view a submitted letter of reference at any point prior to the reference letter deadline by selecting the "Submit Reference Letter" link on the GRFP homepage, and logging in as a reference writer. If the reference letter submission deadline has not yet passed, the reference writer will receive the option to delete the submitted letter of reference and submit a new version. For 90 days after the reference letter submission deadline, the reference writer will still be able to view the submitted letters of reference for the current application period by logging in through the "View Reference Letter" link on the GRFP homepage, but will no longer be able to delete and/or submit letters of reference.

My 2008 Reference Letters				
1 item found.				**1**
Applicnat ID	**Applicant Name**	**Status**	**Submit Date**	**Action**
1000074997	Doe, Jane	Submitted	07/29/2007	View/Delete

Figure 67: Reference Letter List

To View a Submitted Letter of Reference:

1. Select the **View/Delete** link in the appropriate applicant row in the Reference Letter List.

The View Reference Letter screen is displayed.

Submit Reference Letter | HOME ▶

View Reference Letter

To delete the uploaded reference letter, click the "Delete" link. To replace a previously-uploaded reference letter with a new file, delete the previously-uploaded reference letter, then you will get an upload option.

Delete

To view this essay in PDF format, click "View PDF". A new browser window will open.
To print the PDF, use your browser's print function in the new window.   **View PDF**

Cancel

Figure 68: View Reference Letter Screen

2. Click the **View PDF** icon to view the submitted letter of reference.

3. Click the **Cancel** button to return to the Reference Writer Homepage.

12.4 Deleting a Submitted Letter of Reference

If you are unsatisfied with the submitted letter of reference, and would like to submit a new letter of reference before the reference letter deadline, you may delete the submitted letter and submit a new letter of reference.

Figure 69: Reference Letter List

NOTE: Submitted reference letters cannot be deleted once the reference letter deadline has passed.

To Delete a Submitted Letter of Reference:

1. Select the **View/Delete** link in the appropriate applicant row in the Reference Letter List.

The View Reference Letter screen is displayed.

Figure 70: View Reference Letter Screen

2. Select the **Delete** link to delete the current submitted version of the letter of reference

The Delete Reference Letter Confirmation Page will display asking you to confirm that you would like to delete the submitted letter.
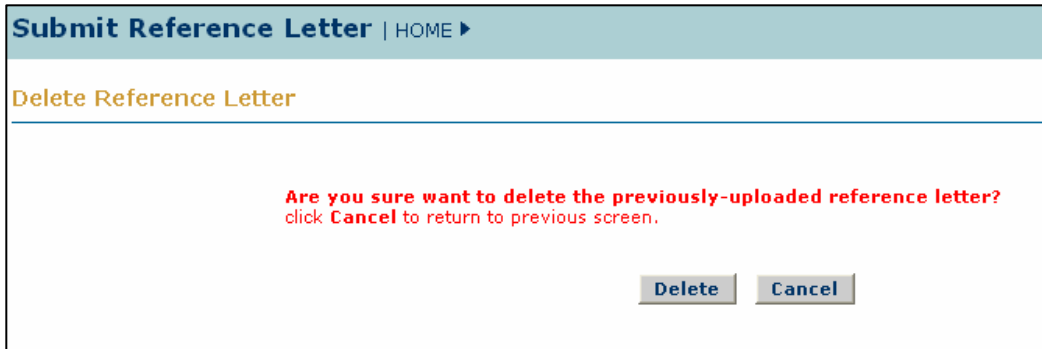
Figure 71: Delete Reference Letter Confirmation Page

WARNING:	The status of this reference letter will go back to unsubmitted if you chose to delete this letter, and you will need to begin the reference letter submission process again for this applicant.

3. If you are sure you want to delete the previously-uploaded reference letter, click the **Delete** button.

The Reference Letter Deleted Confirmation Page is displayed.
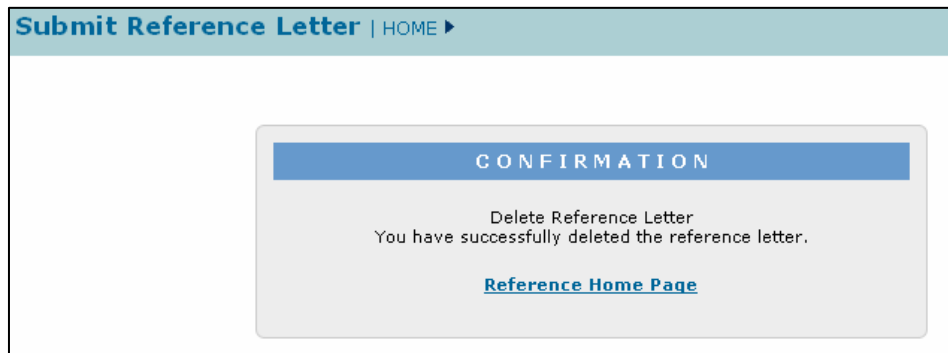
Figure 72: Reference Letter Deleted Confirmation Page

You may return to the Reference Writer homepage by selecting the **Reference Home Page** link.

The status of the reference letter for this applicant will now be "Unsubmitted". You may begin to submit a new letter of reference for this applicant by selecting the **Submit** link in the Action column of the corresponding applicant's record.

13   CHANGING BROWSER SETTINGS FOR ESSAY UPLOAD

In order to complete the essay upload process, the browser that you are using must allow Java Script to be run, and must allow popup windows to display. Please refer to the following instructions for how to disable popup blockers and how to enable Java Script in some of the most popularly used Windows and Mac browsers.

13.1 MS Windows Environment

The following instructions provide direction on how to change browser settings in FireFox Version 2 and IE 6.0 in the Windows Environment.

13.1.1 **FireFox Version 2: How to enable Java Script and disable pop-up blockers**

To enable Java Script

1. Open a FireFox browser window.

2. Click **'Tools'** from the FireFox browser menu options.

3. Select **'Options'**, an 'Options' Window is displayed.

4. Click **'Content'** image tab at the top.

5. Select **'Enable JavaScript'**.

6. Click **'OK'** in 'Content' tab of 'Option' window.

Try one of the two following ways to allow 'pop-up windows':

1. Global:

   a. Open a FireFox browser window.

   b. Click **'Tools'** from the FireFox browser menu options.

   c. Select **'Options'**, an 'Options' Window is displayed.

   d. Click **'Content'** image tab at the top.

   e. Deselect **'Block pop-up windows'**.

   f. Click 'OK' in 'Content' tab of 'Option' window.

2. Site specific:

   a. Open a FireFox browser window.

   b. Click **'Tools'** from the FireFox browser menu options.

c. Select **'Options'**, an 'Options' Window is displayed.

d. Click **'Content'** image tab at the top.

e. Select **'Block pop-up windows'**, then click **'Exceptions'** next to 'Block pop-up windows'.

f. At 'Allowed Sites – Pop-ups' window, add 'www.fastlane.nsf.gov' in the 'Address of web site' field, then click Allow button, then click 'Close' to close this window.

g. Click **'OK'** in 'Content' tab of 'Option' window.

13.1.2 Internet Explorer 6.0: How to set Security at medium level and disable pop-up blockers

To set Security at medium level

1. Open an Internet Explorer browser window.

2. Click **'Tools'** from the Internet browser menu options.

3. Select **'Internet Options'**, an 'Internet Options' Window is displayed.

4. Click **'Security'** tab at the top.

5. Select **'Trusted sites'** Web content zone.

6. Click **'Sites'** button, and the 'Trusted Sites' window is displayed

7. Add 'www.fastlane.nsf.gov' in the 'Address of web site' field

8. Click **'OK'** button to close this window.

To allow Pop-Up Window for our site:

1. Open an Internet Explorer browser window.

2. Click **'Tools'** from the Internet browser menu options.

3. Select **'Internet Options'**, an 'Internet Options' Window is displayed.

4. Click **'Privacy'** tab at the top.

5. Select **'Block pop-ups'**, then click 'Settings' next to it.

6. Type 'www.fastlane.nsf.gov' in the 'Address of web site' field.

7. Click the **Add** button to add this address to the list of trusted sites.

8. Click the **'Close'** button to close this window.

13.2 Mac Environment

The following instructions provide direction on how to change browser settings in Safari, FireFox, and IE in the Mac Environment.

> NOTE: Below information is gathered from a MAC O.S. v.10.2.8)

13.2.1 Safari: How to enable Java Script and disable pop-up blockers

1. Open a Safari browser window. The Safari Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

2. Click **Safari** then select **Preferences** option

3. Select the **Security** Tab in the Preferences Window.

4. Select the 'Enable Java Script' option.

5. Save the change. The Safari Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

6. Click Safari then de-select **"Block Pop-Up Windows"** option when they work with our site.

.

13.2.2 FireFox: How to enable java script and allow pop-up windows

7. Open a FireFox Browser. The FireFox Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

8. Click **FireFox** then select the Preferences option. The Preferences Window displays.

9. Select the **Content** Tab.

10. Select **'Enable Java Script'** option.

11. If you choose to select the **'Block pop-up windows'** option, then you must add fastlane.nsf.gov to the list of Allowed Sites.

12. Click **'Exceptions'** next to 'Block pop-up windows' . The 'Allowed Sites – Popups' window displays.

13. Add 'www.fastlane.nsf.gov' in the 'Address of web site' field

14. Click **Allow** button to add FastLane to the list of allowable sites.

15. Click the **'Close'** button to save and close the window.

13.2.3 Opera: How to enable java script and disable pop-up window blockers

Two ways to configure site preferences:

1. Using 'Quick Preference' option

    a. Open an Opera Browser window. The Opera Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

    b. Click **Opera** then select Quick Preferences option.

    c. Select **'Enable JavaScript'** and select **'open pop-ups in background'** options.

    d. Restore above options back to user preferring options when they done with our site.

2. Using 'Preference' option:
    a. Open an Opera Browser window. The Opera Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

    b. Click **Opera** then select **Quick Preferences** option. The Preferences Window displays.

    c. Click **'Advanced'** tab,

    d. Select the **'Content'** option on the first item of second group.

    e. Click the **'Manage site preferences …'** button. The 'Server manger' window is displayed.

    f. Click **'Add'** button to manage a new site. The 'Site Preferences' window is displayed.

    g. Select the **'General'** tab.

    h. Add https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/   in the 'site' field, and set the pop-up window option to 'open pop-ups in background'.

    i. Select **'Scripting'** tab.

    j. Select **'Enable JavaScript'**.

    k. Click **'OK'** to save data.

    l. Click **'Close'** button on the 'Server manager' window.

13.2.4 **Internet Explorer: How to change preferences**

Two ways to configure site preferences:

1. Configure security zone using 'Preference' option:

    a. Open an IE Browser window. The Explorer Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

    b. Click **Explorer** then select the **Preferences** option. The Preferences window displays.

    c. Select the **'Security Zones'** option.

    d. Click **'Add Sites.'**

    e. Add https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov in the 'Address of web site' field, then click Allow button, then click 'Close' to close this window.

    f. Click **'OK'** to add FastLane as a trusted site.

2. Enable JavaScript using 'Preference' option:

a. Open an IE Browser window. The Explorer Application Menu is displayed at the top of the window.

b. Click **Explorer** then select the Preferences option. The Preferences window displays.

c. Select the **'Web Content'** option.

d. In the **'Active Content'** section, check the 'Enable Scripting' option.