



MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, Directors and Faculty
From: Jose F. Espiritu, Vice President for Research and Innovation
James M. Palmer, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Date: May 12, 2026
Re: **New Doctoral Fellowship Allocations (20)**

To strategically accelerate research growth and strengthen the university's doctoral pipeline, we are introducing two fellowship allocation models that balance capacity-building for early-career faculty with performance-driven investment in highly productive research programs. Expanding the recruitment, support, and graduation of doctoral students is essential to qualifying for Texas University Fund (TUF) support. Together, these fellowships enhance future research capacity while amplifying the impact of established high-performing programs. The model supports institutional priorities related to doctoral completions, research expenditures, proposal competitiveness, and progress toward Carnegie R1 and TUF benchmarks.

Research Excellence Fellows - \$50,000 Yearly Fellowship for Four Years

This opportunity includes ten (10) doctoral fellowships supported through the Texas A&M University System Research Excellence Fund (REF) and is primarily focused on assistant professors in high-growth research areas. These fellowships provide foundational support to help early-career faculty establish sustainable research programs by recruiting doctoral students, generating preliminary data, and building the research capacity necessary to compete for external funding. This investment is intended to cultivate the next generation of research leaders while expanding the university's long-term research enterprise. Six (6) allocations to Engineering and four (4) to Range and Wildlife doctoral programs will be distributed with support for four (4) years.

Distinguished Research Fellows - \$50,000 Yearly Fellowship for Two Years (with potential for four)

Six strong proposals submitted for MacKenzie Scott multiplier support, helped to shape the second tier of ten (10) additional doctoral fellowships established utilizing Scott and institutional funds. These fellowships will be directed toward highly productive faculty with a proven track record of securing extramural funding and successfully mentoring doctoral students to timely completion. This set of fellowship prioritizes faculty who can rapidly translate doctoral student support into competitive proposal submissions, increased research expenditures, high-impact publications, and sustained external funding growth. Special recognition goes to the following individuals who submitted proposals that contributed to the development of this fellowship: Zachary Nowak, Chang Sung, Tanner Machado, Veronica Sanchez Ramos, Vinod Kumar and Tresia Eaves.

Use of Funds

Funds are available immediately for recruitment of doctoral students to begin in Fall 2026 and will generally be allocated as follows:

- 12-month Salary: \$2,500/month (\$30,000/year)
- Fringe/Insurance: \$4,630
- Tuition and Fees: \$12,000
- Travel, Materials & Supplies: \$3,370

Further details will be shared with doctoral programs this week.