

**Future Investigators in NASA Earth and Space Science and Technology (FINESST)**  
**NNH23ZDA001N-FINESST (Earth Science, Heliophysics, Planetary Science, Astrophysics, Biological/Physical Sciences)**

**Important Information**

Link to solicitation: [FINESST](#)

\*Link to OCG forms: <https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/fellowships>

|                             |  | Comments   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Proposals due               | <b>February 6, 2024</b>  | <b>PI releases to OCG by 5 PM local time.</b> OCG will submit via NSPIRES by CU Boulder close-of-business in advance of the 9:59 pm MT deadline.   |
| Start Date                  | <b>August 15, 2024</b> (typical)<br><b>No later than 2/6/2025.</b><br><b>Award dispersal to FI expected after 11/1/2024.</b>   | If the award for a selected FI is not received by the NASA approved start date, the department must follow standard procedures for <b>pre-award spending</b> . <a href="https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/pre-award-spending-0">https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/pre-award-spending-0</a> CU supports NASA's automatic approval of 90 days of pre-award spending per sections 12.39 and 13.1 in the solicitation. |
| Max Duration                | <b>36 months</b>   | Must demonstrate annual satisfactory progress.   |
| Max Award                   | \$50K/year; \$150K total   | Submit a budget for the anticipated grant period.<br>Note: Students funded by a FINESST grant may receive funding from other sources for any expenses not covered by this award.   |
| Eligibility Constraints     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future Investigator (FI) is or will be pursuing a Masters and/or Ph.D. degree. FI must have applied to, been admitted to, or be enrolled as a graduate student in an Earth- or space sciences-related discipline. International students at CU are eligible; People's Republic of China (PRC)-U.S. bilateral activities are not permitted.</li> <li>• FI has never previously accepted a FINESST or NESSF award OR if FI did receive support, the original grant + this new request may not exceed 36 months OR if FI replaced another student on an award, the original grant + this new request may be 36 months, provided the FI received less than \$50K from the previous award.</li> <li>• An FI may be listed on only 1 FINESST proposal per year. A PI has no limit on submissions.</li> <li>• If project falls under ITAR or EAR restrictions, then only U.S. persons may be PI and FI.</li> <li>• A PI may have FINESST and other (e.g., ROSES, NSF, DoD) proposals with overlapping SOW submitted at the same time. If so, this should be acknowledged in the budget justification or noted in the current &amp; pending support section.</li> </ul> |  |
| OCG Submission Requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PI must submit a <b>Proposal Submission Request (PSR)</b> and must accept the <i>NASA China Assurance of Compliance</i> within the PSR. (PSR is Online as of Jan 16, 2024.)</li> <li>• FI and PI must sign an <b>OCG NASA FINESST Assurance Form*</b> to acknowledge NASA required post-submission notifications.</li> </ul>  |  |

**Summary of Application Procedures**

| STEP | Completed By | Required Action   |
|------|--------------|---|
| 1    | FI & PI      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Register with NSPIRES</b> - Affiliate with CU Boulder (UEI: SPVKK1RC2MZ3; CAGE code: 4B475).</li> </ul>   |
| 2    | PI           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create the Nspires proposal</b> and grant the FI (<i>Role: Graduate/Undergraduate Student</i>) view and edit permissions.</li> <li>• <b>Complete Nspires Proposal Team and Business Data pages.</b> A non-PI mentor need not be located at CU, but if named in proposal must be assigned as a Co-I.</li> <li>• <b>Request HEC resources, if applicable;</b> send request receipt to FI for uploading.</li> <li>• <b>Complete and submit a Proposal Submission Request (PSR).</b></li> <li>• <b>Sign OCG NASA FINESST Assurance Form*, obtain FI signature; send to PA.</b></li> </ul> |

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|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| 3 | FI (student)                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Complete Nspires Summary and Program Specific Data cover pages.</b></li> <li>● <b>Coordinate budget* and budget narrative*</b> with DRA and/or Proposal Analyst.<br/>*link to FINESST budget templates: <a href="https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/fellowships">https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/fellowships</a></li> <li>● <b>Upload proposal PDF to Nspires. Upload HEC request PDF, if applicable.</b></li> </ul> |
| 4 | PI                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Nspires “Release to Organization”</b> and notify PA</li> </ul>  |
| 5 | University AOR (Proposal Analyst) | <p>Complete Budget cover page. Review proposal for compliance.<br/>Submit application.</p>  |

**Elements of Proposal Document – 1 PDF file**

**Notes:**

1. The FI (student) must be the primary author of the project description and research readiness statement.
- \*\*2. Format: Main body text of proposals and captions - no more than 15 characters per horizontal inch (typical of 12-point Times New Roman) and no more than 5.5 lines per vertical inch (i.e., single-spaced). At least one-inch margins on all sides; must be sized for 8.5x11 paper. No technical content may be put in the margins; page numbers or disclaimers are permitted.
3. A Table of Work Effort is not required. A separately uploaded Total Budget pdf is not required.

| Sections – Include in this Order  | Pages    | Requirements  |
|---|----------|---|
| <b>i. Table of Contents</b>   | 1        |   |
| <b>1. Science/Technical/Management Section</b><br><i>(authored by the FI)</i>     | 6        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Well-defined problem, justification of scientific significance.</li> <li>● Relevance to Science Mission Directorate division/program.</li> <li>● Description of approach to address problem.</li> <li>● Period of performance, major milestones, planned publications, differentiation from ongoing research.</li> <li>● Must conform to format requirements (see above**).</li> </ul>   |
| <b>2a. References and</b>   | No limit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standard abbreviations for journals; complete names for books. URLs OK, but reviewers are not obligated to follow.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2b. Acknowledgements</b><br><i>(authored by the FI)</i>                        | 1        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statement of up to 150 words; affirm that the proposal is the work of the FI. Describe any other team member roles in preparing the proposal. Editorial and/or graphic support from a writing center, copy editor, colleagues, and peers to improve the proposal should be acknowledged.</li> <li>● If a resubmission, there is no requirement to identify it as such; however, If the FI desires to identify the proposal as a resubmission, then put that information here.</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. Open Science and Data Management Plan (OSDMP)</b><br><i>(New this year)</i> | 2        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe how data created will be made public or explain why an OSDMP is not needed given the nature of the work.</li> <li>● Guidance: <a href="https://science.nasa.gov/oss-guidance">https://science.nasa.gov/oss-guidance</a></li> </ul>  |
| <b>4. Research Readiness Statement</b><br><i>(authored by the FI)</i>             | 1        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the degree program &amp; mentor prepare FI for project.</li> <li>● Graduate study timeline, including est. graduation date.</li> <li>● Other relevant experience.</li> <li>● Must conform to format requirements (see above**).</li> </ul>   |

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| <p><b>5. Curriculum Vitae</b><br/>(no required format, but <b>DO NOT use SciENcv to create</b>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PI CV</li> <li>• FI CV</li> <li>• Additional mentor(s) CV</li> </ul>                  | <p>2<br/>2<br/>1 each</p> | <p>May include: education, professional experiences, positions, bibliography of publications, description of scientific, technical, and management experience on relevant prior efforts, skills, capabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Mandatory</li> <li>• Mandatory; don't include for non-mentor Co-I/collaborator.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>6. Current and Pending Statements</b><br/>(no required format, but <b>DO NOT use SciENcv to create</b>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PI current &amp; pending</li> <li>• FI current &amp; pending</li> </ul> | <p>No limit</p>           | <p>If the FI and/or PI have no C&amp;P to report, include a joint statement or separate statements, if applicable, that there is "No current and pending funding to report."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PI must list C&amp;P support for all ongoing and pending projects and proposals (regardless of salary support) in which they are performing or will perform any part of the work. Dollar amounts not required. <b>List other pending FINESST proposals (zero FTE), but do not self-reference "this" proposal.</b></li> <li>• FI must identify any external-to-CU funding, e.g., from U.S. federal, U.S. non-federal, and non-U.S. sources or active applications for grants, fellowships, etc., particularly those that have overlap with the proposed work. This also may include teaching assistance funding that provides stipend. Dollar amounts are not required, and <b>do not self-reference this proposal.</b></li> <li>• FI working as a contractor for NASA may list the applicable dates and briefly describe the nature of the work, identifying any potential conflicts or overlaps with the proposed FINESST work.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>7. Statements of Commitment and Letters of Resource Support</b></p>  |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Only if applicable</b>, for example:</li> <li>• If needed to demonstrate facility/resource is available.</li> <li>• If team member commitment cannot be made via Nspires.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>8. Mentoring Plan or Agreement</b><br/>(no required template)</p>  | <p>2</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared by FI, PI, and any additional mentors included as team members.</li> <li>• Sets expectations for collaboration between Mentor and FI.</li> <li>• Identifies and works towards FI's research career development goals, including for example: 1) training in preparation of data, publications, presentations, etc.; 2) opportunities to collaborate with researchers from diverse backgrounds; and/or 3) responsible professional practices.</li> </ul> <p>The CU Graduate School provides mentoring guidelines, including an advising agreement tool, on their website: <a href="https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/professional-development/mentoring/mentoring-resources">https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/professional-development/mentoring/mentoring-resources</a></p>  |
| <p><b>9. Budget and Narrative</b><br/>(See OCG templates)</p>  | <p>2</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget: \$ by cost categories, broken down by year.</li> <li>• Narrative: Provide justifications of the requested amount in each category.</li> </ul>  |

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|--|----------|---|
| <b>10. High-End Computing (HEC) request (optional)</b> | No limit | <b>PI submits HEC request</b> in NASA’s Request Management System (RMS) - <a href="https://request.hec.nasa.gov/">https://request.hec.nasa.gov/</a> - on behalf of the FI and saves as a PDF. FI or PI uploads the HEC PDF to Nspires separately from the proposal PDF file (“Appendix”). |
|--|----------|---|

**Budget Details**

**OCG has templates for the FINESST budget and FINESST budget narrative on the CU website:**

<https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/fellowships>

*FINESST student research grants are similar to what 2CFR200.1 Definitions calls a "Fixed Amount Award," a type of grant under which the Federal awarding agency provides a specific level of support without regard to actual costs incurred under the Federal award. This type of Federal award reduces some of the administrative burden and record-keeping requirements for both the non-Federal entity and Federal awarding agency. Accountability is based primarily on performance and results.*

Budgets should begin by specifying whether the institution is treating the FI as 1) an employee or **2) a participant** or 3) some other cost category, e.g., consultant or contractor, as this may impact what costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable, including overhead. Grants Officers (GO) at NASA Shared Services Center, not the FINESST Team, will have the final word on all and any costs in the budget.

**To date, OCG has supported option “(2) a participant” for Nspires proposal budget entry, and at award phase departments administratively have assigned an account code for the fellowship stipend that is not subject to indirect costs. Departments who have reason to deviate from this approach in the application should coordinate with their Proposal Analyst.**

- **Maximum amount: \$50,000 per 12-months; up to \$150,000 total for 36 months.**
- Propose partial years (less than 12 months) by prorating the stipend and allowance costs.
- NASA suggests a \$40K/\$10K allocation between stipend/allowance. If valid justification is provided, then amounts may be adjusted as long as the total amount requested does not exceed \$50,000 annually.
- If an FI’s compensation will be less than \$40,000, then the amounts in the other budget categories may be adjusted/exchanged up to \$50,000. Proposers who request no stipend nor salary nor other direct compensation for the FI may request up to \$10,000 annually for travel and other allowable costs, including any allowable indirect costs.
- No salary, travel, or other costs shall be requested for the PI’s, Co-I’s, or Collaborator’s use. Exceptions are made for joint publications.
- The purchase or lease of equipment or services in excess of \$5,000 for the entire period of performance is not permitted through FINESST awards.
- FIs may receive funding from other sources for expenses not covered by this award (e.g., to purchase equipment).
- When treating the FI as a “participant,” costs are input on the NSPIRES coversheet under letter E. Direct Costs-Participant/Trainee Support Cost. NSPIRES subcategories to use are 1) Tuition/Fees/Health Insurance, 2) Stipends, 3) Travel, and 5) Other. **With this approach, no indirect charges are applied.**
- The allowance may include the following: tuition/fees, health insurance, FI travel and registration fees, textbooks or other instructional supports, expendable laboratory supplies, page charges for journal articles, printing of a thesis, computers, digital devices, and materials.