The Graduate School uses the Matching Tuition and Fees Awards (MTFA) program to make strategic investments in graduate education.

The MTFA Program is a pre-approval program designed to strategically leverage Ohio State University resources to enhance the likelihood for the successful funding of competitive external research grants, training grants, and fellowships that support graduate students along with other aspects of graduate education. The pre-approval of these competitive applications to external funding agencies represents Graduate School investment in the form of Matching Tuition and Fee Awards.

Funds are limited. Not all requests can be approved. If a pre-approval request is approved by the Graduate School in the online Graduate School Fee Match System, then once the grant/fellowship is successfully awarded and the funding is submitted via the MTFA system, then student specific requests must be entered into the online MTFA system. Subsequently, the student specific requests for the Matching Tuition and Fee Awards will be applied to the specific student(s) accounts by the Graduate School.

Eligibility Criteria for Grant/Agency
Eligibility for Approval includes both of the following bullets:

- The funding grant/agency provides a graduate student stipend but **does not pay tuition and fees**. This must be confirmed in writing from official notice (on official letterhead) from the agency such as in the Request For Proposals (RFP) or public charter of a Foundation. Confirming materials must be entered into the nomination system at the time of the pre-approval request, with the page noted and the information highlighted.
- Competitive awards must pay fellowship stipends above a minimum posted by the Graduate School ($1,750.00 per month 02/01/22) to be considered for a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) from the Graduate School. The stipend minimum is based on the cost-of-living estimate for an individual living in the city of Columbus using their student benefits based on data from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI; http://epi.org). This minimum may be adjusted as the EPI updates their cost-of-living reports. Fellowship stipends are intended to fund 100% effort for a graduate student toward the progress of their degree. Students receiving a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) from the Graduate School may not hold other employment or paid appointments for the semester they are receiving the Fee Match from the Graduate School. Some awards may include payment of partial tuition and the Graduate School would provide the percentage unfunded by the external agency with our MTFA. For U.S. students receiving an externally funded fellowship (stipend) that meets eligibility criteria and does not pay tuition and fees, and the student is located abroad, in person, for the full year, the cost of living in the location of the study may be considered as the minimum stipend to qualify for an MTFA based on EPI recommendations for that location.

**NOTABLE EXCEPTION:**

- The Fulbright U.S. Student Program and the Fulbright Foreign Student program varies by appropriated funds and the U.S. Department of State reserves the right to alter, without notice, participating countries, numbers of awards, terms of agreement, and allowances. Fulbright awards provide additional support to students, such as travel and are one of the most prestigious awards granted to students and faculty at a university.

The United States Department of State Fulbright U.S. Student Program is supported by a Fee Match from the Graduate School for U.S. graduate students to study abroad. The Fulbright Foreign Student Program awards may be eligible for a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) from the Graduate School. Foreign graduate students may work through the Institute of International Education (IIE) Foreign Fulbright Academic Placement services, Amideast and Laspau, to apply to Ohio State University, and work with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, to receive an award from their home country. Each country’s awards differ and some countries provide stipend and tuition and fee support; these graduate student awards are not eligible for a MTFA if they cover the full tuition and fees. In these Fulbright Student programs, stipend
amounts can fluctuate and may not fully meet a minimum of the Graduate School stipend per month. For Ohio State University programs to accept Fulbright Foreign students into their programs located here in Columbus, the college/department/program will need to meet the Graduate School minimum stipend per month in order to receive a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) from the Graduate School. The Graduate School will provide a memorandum of understanding (MOU) among the partners, with each college appointing a designee to manage the Fulbright Foreign Student Matching Tuition and Fee Awards with the Graduate School Fellowship office.

The Ohio State University Fulbright programs are required to submit a pre-approval in the MTFA system by submitting the letter of offer that was received by the student from the Fulbright agency for preapproval through the Graduate School Fee Match system. If approved by the Graduate School for a Matching Tuition and Fee Award, and once the student has accepted the offer and the terms are fully defined, the Funding Information and the student specific request must be entered into the Graduate School Fee Match System adhering to the Graduate School deadlines as noted on the website. Late student specific requests will not receive the Fee Authorization until such time as the semester deadline is met (maybe the next semester) due to the tight timelines and complexities of the hiring of these foreign students. The Graduate School will provide MTFAs for Fulbright programs for up to 2 years. Fulbright Foreign Students that arrange to stay at Ohio State University longer than two years will be expected to roll onto college/department/program tuition and fee support. Please note that the Fulbright Foreign Students are considered External Fellows since their funding comes directly from an external source. These Matching Tuition and Fee Awards do NOT include coverage for student health Insurance for External Fellows.

Eligibility Criteria for the Graduate Student entered as a student specific request in the Graduate School’s Fee Match System for a MTFA.

- Good academic standing in the Graduate School
- Be enrolled full-time in a master’s or doctoral program; a minimum of 8 graduate credit hours during autumn and spring and 4 hours over summer as a master’s or pre-candidacy student, or 3 hours every semester as a post-candidacy student
- Be making satisfactory progress toward that degree
- Not have excessive credit hours (over 175 semester hours)
- Be engaged in a project that is relevant to their research and under the Principal Investigator of the grant/award in the Graduate School Fee Match System.
- Cannot hold any other employment or paid appointment while receiving the tuition and fee match. Graduate Students that receive a pre-approved fellowship and MTFA that funds a stipend only for the academic year (Au and Sp semesters), may hold other employment or paid appointment in summer semester if approved by their program.

An award may be terminated if a student does not continue to meet the above criteria or any other conditions specified by the Graduate School or by the funding agency.

Exclusion Criteria for Grant/Agency

A request will be denied with any one of the following criteria:

- The Graduate School does not provide Matching Tuition and Fee Award support for countries seeking matching funds to enhance international opportunities, including for graduate student’s international study. Countries have opportunities through international graduate cooperative degree agreements (IGCDA
information - Graduate School, Office of International Affairs) and other arrangements through the OSU Global Gateway for an arrangement with Ohio State that can include students. Scholarships/fellowships from foreign countries, including those to specific students, can be used by programs/colleges to provide partial support for international students, but are not eligible for the MTFA.

- The grant/agency does not provide sufficient funds to meet our minimum stipend and therefore are ineligible for a Fee Match from the Graduate School.

- Grants/awards that have already received funding are ineligible for the MTFA. Our Graduate School MTFA is a pre-approval program and must be processed and approved prior to the submission of the grant.

- Internal grants/awards/development funds are ineligible for the MTFA.

DEADLINES
For full consideration, pre-approval requests for Matching Tuition and Fee Awards (MTFA) must be fully entered and completed in the system a minimum of two weeks prior to the deadline to submit the grant/award proposal to the agency. Student Specific Requests must be entered and completed prior to the Graduate School Deadlines Graduate School Fellowship Calendar.

MATERIALS REQUIRED
Please see our MTFA step-by-step process document to assist with placing a request into the online system.

- Colleges must submit a letter from the Dean or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies with a statement of support and level of priority. Some colleges prioritize external grants that have indirect costs, release time and other resources. Some do not support agencies that only provide an individual student stipend without any other resources to support the program, college of university.

- The official award/grant announcement (Request for Proposal/Fellowship Document) along with the exact page and quote to this effect stating that tuition and fees are not covered, must be entered into the online system.

- An MTFA budget to the Graduate School must accompany each request. This is NOT the budget for the grant/award although that is helpful. The MTFA budget must include the number of years of support requested that must not be more than the number of years of the grant/award, the total number of students, and the total number of semesters requested. The budget must be specific to the stipend dollar amount provided by the grant/award and the cost of tuition and fees for that program and degree sought by the students.

NOTABLE CLARIFICATIONS (RESPONSE TO FAQs)

- Incomplete proposal/nominations will NOT be reviewed.

- Student Specific Requests that are submitted without pre-approval in the online Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) System will not be funded.

- Late pre-approval requests that are after the 2-week deadline for nomination in the Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) online system, but before the grant/award submission deadline, are NOT guaranteed a review.
• A Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) through the Graduate School MTFA program may be approved for some prestigious federal or national grants that have stipend support that is less than our minimum Graduate School stipend. In these cases, an MOU must be completed and the stipend is expected to be supplemented by the program/department or college to meet our minimum stipend. These arrangements will be uncommon, require an MOU, and fulfill a significant enhancement of Graduate Education for approval. Requests for graduate students on Matching Tuition and Fee Awards provided by our MTFA program will not be approved for other employment or additional paid appointments as for a fellowship. The additional stipend support can be processed as supplemental pay in Workday or placed on the student account as a scholarship. This minimum provides the necessary support for graduate students to live in Columbus and dedicate full time effort toward their degree. This also supports the university goal of shortened time to degree and career development.

• It is recommended that graduate programs seeking a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) should secure the Graduate School's approval as early as possible, ideally when the external funding proposals are first being developed, to ensure any delays due to additional information requested can be completed within the deadline.

• Funding for specific students is to be requested only after the grant/external funding proposal has been pre-approved by the Graduate School and, if applicable, the proposal has been approved by the funding source.

• Scholarships (partial funding of a stipend that does not meet our minimum stipend) will not receive a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA).

• Combinations (bundling) of External Scholarships can be submitted for an MTFA if all other criteria are met. Bundling of External Scholarships/Fellowships (submitting more than one together) to meet the minimum stipend that is eligible for an MTFA from the Graduate School may be approved for an MTFA. However, if one of these is not funded and the minimum stipend is no longer met, a different external scholarship/fellowship that meets eligibility criteria, can be added to the pre-approval before the student specific request would be approved.

• Communication that occurs outside of the Graduate School MTFA on-line system will not be official communication as it relates to the approval or denial of a request. If your program has questions about whether an agency is eligible, the process is to submit the request for a full review and to receive an official response.

• Students should not be notified or promised a Matching Tuition and Fee Award (MTFA) from the Graduate School without an approved pre-approval request through the Graduate School Fee Match online system.

• The circumstances of each pre-approval can be varied and maybe complex. If you are concerned about an outcome, the Graduate School can be contacted for questions within a few weeks after the notice.

• Requests for re-review of decisions made more than one semester prior will not be reviewed.

• Comparisons to past approvals should not be used as a guide for approval of the next pre-approval request due to the variability in availability of funding and the existing list of active requests and their priority.

• Grants/awards that were not funded and are resubmitted will need to resubmit a pre-approval request as a new proposal through the Graduate School Fee Match system

• Agreements that the Graduate School may make or initiate between units to cost-share may be processed via the Graduate School Fee Match System, such as on large competitive externally funded research grants (to increase the quantity, quality or diversity of graduate students) or special circumstances such as the Graduate School Tuition and Fee Match Extension of Degree Due to Covid Initiative. These arrangements may be made outside of the MTFA program but may be administered and managed via the Graduate School Fee Match online system. Research Grants requesting cost share via the Graduate School Fee Match system must already be funding an expected number of graduate students fully (stipend and tuition and fees) based on the size of the grant and be requesting the Fee Match for additional graduate students to add quantity, quality and/or diversity. Funds for cost-share are limited, discretionary and may be denied for many reasons.