

Overview

Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) compensation is defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Notice [NOT-OD-02-017](#) for those GSRs funded by NIH research grants. The compensation level is tied to the National Research Service Award (NRSA) Postdoctoral stipend level 0 that is in effect at the time the grant award is issued. GSR compensation includes total salary or wages, fringe benefits and tuition remission from all NIH sources. This notice established a policy related to the level of compensation for graduate students supported by funds from the NIH. It applies to all graduate students at the grantee institution supported by research grants or cooperative agreements funded by the NIH. This notice does not apply for graduate students receiving compensation under a NRSA training grant or fellowship.

Stipend supplementation can be provided based on institutional policy. It must be consistently applied and can only be provided by federal funds if specifically authorized by the research program. Approval of the grant budget does not automatically provide approval to pay a GSR at a rate higher than the Postdoctoral stipend level 0 as per the guidance in this notice.

For those students that are supported by NRSA-Kirschstein awards, specific guidelines are outlined in the NIH Grants Policy statement regarding any additional compensation. Any effort they perform on a NIH funded award must not be paid via stipend, cannot be considered stipend supplementation, must be limited part-time employment, may not conflict with the research being completed under the NRSA-Kirschstein supported award or detract from or prolong the fellow's approved training program. Information can be found in the NIH Grants Policy Statement (NIH GPS) in section 11.2.10.1 Stipend Supplementation and 11.2.10.2 Compensation found at [NIH GPS 11.2.10](#). This section further defines how a NRSA-Kirschstein supported student can receive support under a NIH research grant or cooperative agreement.

UCSF Guidelines

UCSF policy allows for a GSR to be supported by other sources to help defray the costs of their education. Most programs designate an annual stipend level for their students and will provide support up to that amount. In order to provide this support many GSRs are appointed by their faculty mentor to perform work on a funded research grant. When this situation arises, departments must be aware of the rules stated in [NOT-OD-02-017](#). These GSRs cannot receive compensation over the stipend level 0 applicable for the grant or grants that they are receiving funding from.

[NOT-OD-02-017](#) allows for Institutions to re-budget funds to charge more than the awarded amount as long as the principle surrounding reasonable compensation are followed and if a GSR is not paid at a rate higher than the amount provided to a first year postdoctoral scientist at the same institution. At such time that the University of California Academic Personnel Manual no longer ties the Postdoctoral Scholar Salary levels to the NIH NRSA-Kirschstein stipend levels, higher compensation will be available from federal awards as long as all other criteria is met. See [APM-390 Postdoctoral Scholars](#) for more information. The specific salary scale information can be found at [Salary Scale revisions](#).

To ensure compliance with the NIH policy, proposals that include graduate students can only be budgeted up to a total compensation equal to NRSA post doc level 0. If a student is on more than one NIH research grant, the total compensation is an aggregate of all funding sources. The Office of Sponsored Research will only submit proposals that follow this policy.

Graduate Student Compensation

There are many avenues that a graduate student may receive support. Please refer to the following matrix to identify the allowability of the funding and at what level the GSR can be supported.

Graduate Student Researcher Funding Allowability Matrix

NIH RXX, UXX, PXX	NRSA F30, F31, T32	PRIVATE OR FEDERAL NON-NIH	COMPENSATION RULING
x			NIH: Compensation maximum is NRSA Postdocs level 0
x, x			NIH: Combined compensation maximum is NRSA Postdocs level 0
x		x	NIH: Compensation maximum is NRSA Postdocs level 0 Private and Federal Non-NIH: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow sponsor's compensation guideline. UCSF does not define a maximum that can be received from these sources Specific graduate programs determines compensation levels annually
	x	x	NRSA: Defined by grant Private and Federal Non-NIH: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow sponsor's compensation guideline. UCSF does not define a maximum that can be received from these sources Specific graduate programs determines compensation levels annually
x	x		NIH: Compensation maximum is NRSA Postdocs level 0 NRSA: Defined by grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is separate from supplementing the NRSA stipend level to the level set by UCSF graduate programs. Only allowed if research under Mentor's research grant is different from fellow's NRSA's planned training experience, as verified by the Mentor on the NRSA
	x, x		NRSA: Unallowable

Each x represents a source of funding for the GSR. If there is more than one x in a box, then the GSR is receiving funding from more than one award in that category.

References

NIH NOT-OD-02-017

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-02-017.html>

NIH GPS: Kirschstein-NRSA: 11.2.10.1 Stipend Supplementation & 11.2.10.2: Compensation

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2013/nihgps_ch11.htm

NIH GPS: Cost Considerations 7.9.1: Fringe Benefits/IHE Tuition/Tuition Remission

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2013/nihgps_ch7.htm#students_compensation