



Application Form and Instructions
Research Experience for Teachers Fellowships (2026)
NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium
(*This Announcement Released on January 26, 2026*)
Application Deadline: March 13, 2026



The South Dakota Space Grant Consortium (SDSGC) <https://sd.spacegrant.org> invites applications from South Dakota teachers for one of three 2026 Research Experience for Teachers (RET) Fellowships, an award of \$8000 in 2026. Applications are due by **March 13, 2026**.

About the Fellowship

The Research Experience for Teachers Fellowship program was established in 2017 in order to give secondary classroom teachers in South Dakota an opportunity to enrich their knowledge of science and engineering practices by joining a research group at a South Dakota university or laboratory for a summer. Research has shown that teachers who participate in research experiences are able to provide an enriched classroom experience for their students in subsequent years.

Program Summary

We invite current secondary teachers in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) disciplines to apply. Up to three RET fellowships will be offered. Research projects must align with NASA's mission and those of the SDSGC and its affiliates. The RET fellowship will be \$8000.

Consideration is open to all secondary teachers in South Dakota who are teaching full time in 2025-2026 in an area of STEM. Preference will be given to high school teachers and teachers who have not previously received a SDSGC RET fellowship.

Participants are expected to

- work at a SDSGC affiliate research organization* during the Summer of 2026 for at least eight weeks;
- participate in occasional videoconferences with other RET teachers and science education professionals to develop strategies for transferring the summer experience to the classroom;
- give a poster or oral presentation about your research; some choices are the South Dakota Academy of Science or the South Dakota Science Teachers Association annual conference in the spring of 2027, or the NSF EPSCoR Summer Research Symposium (if offered);
- participate in two on-line surveys or phone interviews as part of our evaluation process.

Teachers will make their own arrangements for working with a research group. However, if you are interested in a particular area of research and/or location and need help in making contact with a faculty member, please contact Peggy Norris at peggynorris73@gmail.com.

Any travel expenses associated with the required presentation are expected to be borne by the teacher utilizing their fellowship funds.

All 2026 awards are contingent upon U.S. Congressional approval of the 2026 federal budget and the availability and receipt of FY2026 Space Grant funding from NASA.

Eligibility

Fellowship applications are invited from any science or math teacher at a public, private, or tribal K-12 school in South Dakota who is a full time secondary school teacher in a STEM discipline during the 2025-2026 school year and planning to teach full time for at least three more years in South

Dakota. **U.S. citizenship is required.** The SDSGC recognizes that STEM education encompasses a broad spectrum of physical and biological sciences, mathematics, and related fields. Teachers from any STEM-related field aligned with NASA's mission and those of the SDSGC and its affiliates are encouraged to apply. Applicants may wish to consult NASA's *Strategy for STEM Engagement* for alignment with the Agency's objectives:

<https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/nasa-strategy-for-stem-2020-23-508.pdf>

Up to three RET fellowships of \$8000 each will be awarded.

Important Dates

Application Receipt Deadline: March 13, 2026, 11:59 p.m. MST.

Award Notification: Applicants and mentors will be notified by March 31, 2026.

Application Procedure

A complete application consists of the following four items in the following order:

1. A completed application form (page 4 of this announcement)
2. A cover letter which includes an explanation of what you hope to bring back to the classroom from your RET experience and how the proposed research aligns with NASA interests
3. A letter of commitment from a principal investigator in the proposed research group
4. A Curriculum Vita which includes 1) the schools in which you have taught, 2) the courses you taught and 3) any STEM enrichment activities in which you have participated, all for the previous five year period.

Application submission

One completed copy of the application must be received as a **single electronic file** (Word or PDF format preferred) via email by **March 13, 2026** to **Dr. Peggy Norris, peggynorris73@gmail.com**. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

We anticipate notifying award winner(s) and all other applicants by March 31, 2026.

Distribution of awards

Fellowship funds will be distributed through SDSU in advance of the summer experience upon completion of required paperwork.

Questions?

Questions can be directed to Dr. Peggy Norris at peggynorris73@gmail.com or 605-645-6325.

Reporting, tracking, and evaluation

- 1) Winners are required to complete two evaluation surveys provided by SDSGC Program Evaluator Steckelberg Consulting, LLC, the first at the end of their summer experience and the second towards the end of the first school year after the RET program.
- 2) Winners are required to submit a pdf of their poster or oral presentation (see scope of work) to peggynorris73@gmail.com upon completion.

Acknowledgement

In any presentations or publications that are developed as a result of the RET research project, we ask that the teacher please acknowledge the support provided by the NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium and to also send us a copy or citation.

* **SDSGC affiliate research institutions are:** Augustana University (Sioux Falls), Black Hills State University (Spearfish), Dakota State Univ (Madison), Lake Area Tech (Watertown),

Northern State Univ (Aberdeen), Oglala Lakota College (Kyle), Sanford Underground Research Facility (Lead), Sinte Gleska University (Mission), South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (Rapid City), South Dakota State University (Brookings), United States Geological Survey Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS), University of South Dakota (Vermillion)

SDSGC Research Experience for Teachers
APPLICATION COVER PAGE

NAME: _____

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE: SCHOOL: _____ CELL: _____

SCHOOL: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE INFORMATION:

INSTITUTION: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____

MENTOR: _____

MENTOR'S EMAIL: _____

I ATTEST THAT I AM A UNITED STATES CITIZEN.

(type or sign your name)

(date)

I ATTEST THAT I AM WORKING FULL TIME TEACHING IN A SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL IN 2024-2025 AND THAT, BARRING UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES, I AM PLANNING TO CONTINUE TEACHING IN SOUTH DAKOTA FOR AT LEAST THREE MORE YEARS.

(type or sign your name)

(date)