



SOUTH DAKOTA SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM
Research Experience for Teachers – Application and Instructions
Summer 2025

(Release Date – December 16, 2024)

Program Summary

The South Dakota Space Grant Consortium (SDSGC) is accepting applications for 2025 Research Experience for Teachers (RET) summer fellowships. The program enables secondary teachers to enrich their knowledge of science and engineering practices by joining a research group at a South Dakota university or laboratory for the summer of 2025. Research has shown that teachers who participate in research experiences are able to provide an enriched classroom experience for their students in subsequent years.

All 2025 awards are contingent upon U.S. Congressional approval of the 2025 federal budget and the availability and receipt of FY2025 Space Grant funding from NASA. 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 2024-2025 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 2025 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 2026 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 peggy.norris@bhsu.edu.

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

Important Dates

Application Receipt Deadline: **February 21, 2025, 11:59 p.m. MST.**

Award Notification: anticipated to be announced by March 31, 2025.

Eligibility and U.S. Citizenship Requirement

All applicants must be citizens of the United States. Applicants must be full time secondary school teachers in a STEM discipline during the 2024-2025 school year and planning to teach full time for at least three more years in South Dakota.

Application Instructions

Applications are to be submitted as one complete pdf file to peggy.norris@bhsu.edu. A complete application consists of the following four items in the following order:

1. A completed application form (page 3 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.

The applicant may wish to consult the NASA website www.nasa.gov for information on NASA priority areas.

Applications will be reviewed and award selections made by the SDSGC Management Team listed online at <https://sdspacegrant.sdsmmt.edu/contact.html>. The awardee should contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or a tax accountant to determine what needs to be reported on a tax return since Consortium personnel may not be qualified to answer all questions in this regard.

Reporting

By February 22, 2026, the awardee must submit a brief report (an email message will suffice) to Dr. Todd Letcher <todd.letcher@sdstate.edu> at the Space Grant Headquarters Office at South Dakota State University summarizing his/her experience and accomplishments. The report should include a description of: a) how the summer experience has impacted their classroom during the current school year, b) the estimated number of students reached (broken down in the grade categories of elementary, middle school, and/or high school), c) estimated percentage of minority students. Also, a brief Evaluation Survey will be sent to RET award winners at the end of their summer RET experience and towards the end of the school year by SDSGC's professional evaluator, Steckelberg Consulting, LLC to complete and return.

Inquiries

Questions concerning the preparation and submission of applications and the administration of this program should be addressed to Dr. Peggy Norris, Email: peggy.norris@bhsu.edu, Phone: 605-645-6325.

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)