IBM Ph.D. Fellowship Program (Fall 2015)

Internal Deadline: 10/12/2015
External Deadline: 10/27/2015


The IBM Ph.D. Fellowship Awards Program is an intensely competitive worldwide program, which honors exceptional Ph.D. students who have an interest in solving problems that are important to IBM and fundamental to innovation in many academic disciplines and areas of study. These include: computer science and engineering (including cyber security, cloud, and mobile computing), electrical and mechanical engineering, physical sciences (including chemistry, material sciences, and physics), mathematical sciences (including analytics of massive scale data with uncertainty, operations research, and optimization), public sector and business sciences (including urban policy and analytics, social technologies, learning systems and Cognitive Computing), and Service Science, Management, and Engineering (SSME). Additionally, IBM Research is paying special attention to the following areas of focus for 2016-2017 (see links above for more information):

- Technology that creates new business and social value
- Cognitive Computing research
- Cloud and distributed computing technology and solutions
- Fundamental science and technology

Preference will be given to students who have had an IBM internship or have closely collaborated with technical or services people from IBM.

IBM Ph.D. Fellows are awarded a stipend for one academic year. All IBM Ph.D. Fellows are matched with an IBM Mentor according to their technical interests, and they are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one internship at IBM while completing their studies. After receiving an award, an Award Recipient may be renominated the following year for consideration to receive another IBM Ph.D. Fellowship, based on the Award Recipient's continued exceptional academic standing, progress and achievement, and sustained interaction with IBM's technical community. A student may compete annually and be awarded a maximum of three years.

Ph.D. students must have completed at least one year of doctoral study. "Students must be nominated by a doctoral faculty member and enrolled full-time in a college or university Ph.D. program. The faculty member is encouraged to contact an IBM colleague prior to submitting the nomination to assure mutual interest. Students from U.S. embargoed countries are not eligible for the program. Award Recipients will be selected based on their overall potential for research excellence, the degree to which their technical interests align with those of IBM [see the FAQ], and their academic progress to-date, as evidenced by publications and endorsements from their faculty advisor and department head. While students may accept other supplemental fellowships, to be eligible for the IBM Ph.D. Fellowship Award they may not accept a major award in addition to the IBM Ph.D. Fellowship."

Note: Over the last few years, previous winners from this department have all been 1-2 years away from graduation, and all had internships/co-ops with IBM prior to applying for the fellowship.

A maximum of two nominations per department may be submitted, plus renewals.

Please ensure that the following materials are submitted by 5pm on 10/12/2015 to Colin Robertson (colinr@illinois.edu, 2233 SC):

1) Student's C.V./resume. 3 page limit.
2) A brief* description of the student's Ph.D. dissertation. 100 word limit.
3) Faculty Adviser's evaluation. "Include comparisons with peers and recent graduates, and detail what the impact of this student's thesis is likely to be. Also include evidence of outstanding achievement in both academic and research activities (other fellowships, awards, grants, and/or recognition of academic achievement)" NOTE: This year, IBM has set a 200 word limit on evaluations. However, for the internal review, please submit a standard-length letter.
4) A description of the any of the nominee's special considerations, such as personal attributes, or other (non-CS) accomplishments, etc. NOTE: This year, IBM has set a 100 word limit.
5) A reference letter from a scientist at IBM. For internal review. (If you do not know someone from IBM well enough to request a letter, you may want to reconsider whether or not you should apply.)

Note: Electronic documents are preferred and should be submitted as PDFs, Word documents, or plain-text files. Letters of recommendation should be sent from the letter writer directly to colinr@illinois.edu. Students, please include your netid in the filename(s) of any email attachments. Note that the final submission will need to be made as plain-text (online text-box submission).