



SEFS Fellowship/Scholarship Top-Up Funding Policy

Students may receive a fellowship to support their graduate work from a variety of sources. These fellowship funds are intended to support student academic progress with no specific work requirements and are usually based on the merit and efforts of the student. In cases where a SEFS student has been awarded an external or UW (i.e., non-SEFS) fellowship or scholarship that provides an award amount less than the student would be paid as a Schedule 1 RA (stipend or salary), the faculty advisor should request a **SEFS Top-Up Fellowship** to cover the difference. If the student is also not receiving the tuition and benefits they need, those will be topped up as well. By encouraging faculty-provided matching funds, this policy addresses equity in funding levels across SEFS graduate students and amplifies the amount of graduate funding support that external awards provide.

To request a **SEFS Top-Up Fellowship**, the faculty advisor shall provide funding details about the award so that the top-up amount can be calculated. The nominating faculty advisor is also asked to commit to funding or seek funding for an equivalent match in the form of additional RA quarters. Whenever possible, our goal in SEFS is to provide full funding for our graduate students through a combination of fellowship and matching funds, defined here as two years of funding for MS students and four years of funding for PhD students, including summers.

We are committed to distributing **SEFS Top-Up Fellowship** funds to address inherent structural inequities that have traditionally limited access to graduate education. Fellowship programs that are designed for students from groups underrepresented in STEM will be automatically approved, provided that the conditions below are met. Examples of such fellowship programs include Gates Millennium, McNair, Bullitt, Fulbright, and GO-MAP. Top-up for other fellowship programs will be considered upon request. The amount of top-up requested, and the amount of match committed will be considered based upon available funding.

Process for requesting a SEFS Top-Up Fellowship:

- The student must be either admitted to SEFS or a current SEFS student in good standing.

- Submit the following information to SEFS Administrator, who will forward to the scholarship committee:
 - The student’s award letter outlining funding details, and
 - A statement of commitment to fund or seek funding for RA quarters for the student to match the top-up amount provided by SEFS.
 - A matching commitment is not required but will, in some cases, help strengthen the funding package available to the student.
 - If the faculty member commits the requested match and this extends the fellowship beyond the target of 2 or 4 years (including summers), the commitment will be expected to remain in the event that the student needs more time but would end when the student graduates.

This information will be reviewed by the scholarship committee, which will recommend awards. The request should be submitted as soon as the fellowship is awarded or when the student is admitted. Requests will be accepted at any time throughout the year.