

Graduate School GRA STEM & Industry Funding AY2026-27 FAQ

A copy of the admissions form is at the end of this document. Please note: there may be some minor edits to the form in the future.

Q1. What is the Graduate School's GRA STEM & Industry Opportunity?

The Graduate School has funding available for the 2026-27 academic year to support STEM-based research and initiatives that engage industry. Faculty, who are affiliated with STEM degree programs and are currently conducting or plan to conduct research in collaboration with industry and/or other external non-academic organizations, may be eligible for one-time funding to support project-related graduate student research assistants for the upcoming academic year through the Graduate School. Please refer to [DHS's STEM Designated Degree Program List](#) for CIP codes of eligible STEM programs.

This opportunity provides funding for graduate research assistantships that are connected to projects engaging with industry and/or non-academic external organizations. It does not require a formal partnership nor pre-existing relationships with industry. **The opportunity requires that students receiving funding are hired into graduate research assistantships and is not a fellowship or grant opportunity.**

Q2. What students are eligible for the Graduate School's GRA STEM & Industry funding?

All new graduate students are eligible for the GRA STEM & Industry funding, including domestic and international students. Students must either be in a STEM graduate degree program OR be hired to work as a graduate research assistant on a project with a faculty member affiliated with a STEM graduate degree program (please refer to [DHS's STEM Designated Degree Program List](#) for CIP codes of eligible STEM programs). Students must be enrolled full time and remain in good academic standing. Students must be hired as a graduate research assistant to receive the funding, and they must be conducting research on a project that engages with industry and/or non-academic external organizations.

As a new requirement for the 2026-27 funding cycle, funded students will be required to either participate in the [A2i program](#) or the [Graduate Peer 2 Career \(GP2C\) student advising program](#). The time commitment for either of these programs is equivalent to 1 hour per week and must be incorporated into the student's assistantship responsibilities and hours.

Students will also be required to participate in an internship during Summer 2027, and they will receive an additional stipend for successfully completing an internship. Students selected for this funding

opportunity will be notified of the terms of funding prior to the start of the Fall 2026 semester to ensure they are aware of the A2i/Grad Peer 2 Career and internship requirements, and funding may be withdrawn for students unwilling to participate in either.

Q3. What kinds of projects can apply for the GRA STEM & Industry funding?

The project must engage in some way with industry and/or non-academic external organizations. There does not need to be a pre-existing relationship in order to request funding; however, should funding be awarded, documentation will be requested in the future to demonstrate that the project is engaging in some capacity with industry.

Faculty also must be affiliated with a STEM graduate degree program at Clemson University.

Q4. How do we request funding?

Interested faculty should complete this application form: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/PFfz2b9nTb> or reach out to the Graduate School's STEM Initiatives Coordinator, Dr. Rieta Drinkwine (rdrinkw@clemson.edu), to discuss their projects and potential eligibility for funding. If you are requesting funding for graduate student research assistants for more than one project, please complete separate applications for each project.

Q5. How will funding decisions be made?

The Graduate School will review all funding requests and announce award decisions by mid-June 2026 for students who will be receiving funding starting in Fall 2026. A final decision on the number of awards will be made at the time when all forms are reviewed. Priority funding areas will include: projects collaborating with external organizations in South Carolina, especially rural communities, and projects with new collaborators with which Clemson does not currently have any agreements or collaborations.

Submitting a form will result in a project being considered for funding but is not a guarantee of funding and does not result in any obligation or agreement on either the side of the Graduate School or the department.

Q6. How will the GRA agreement be configured?

Departments will be responsible for any hiring paperwork and assistantship documentation, including the GS61 and payroll. The Graduate School will provide information to departments to support the hiring

process, including the stipend chart string. Departments are encouraged to supplement Graduate School funding to ensure students receive stipends consistent with other students in the department.

Students should be on a 9-month GRA agreement and receive a stipend of \$20,000 + Fringe for 20 hours per week during the Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 semesters. Students will also receive institutional GAD. If departments provide additional funding for student stipends, students would not be expected to work more than 20 hours per week for the additional funding. If a department plans to hire a student for 10 hours per week during Fall and Spring, the stipend funded through the GRA STEM & Industry opportunity would be adjusted down to \$10,000 to remain consistent with other funded students.

Q7. What other requirements does this funding have?

As a new requirement for the 2026-27 funding cycle, funded students will be required to either participate in the [A2i program](#) or the [Graduate Peer 2 Career \(GP2C\) student advising program](#). The time commitment for either of these programs is equivalent to 1 hour per week and must be incorporated into the student's assistantship responsibilities and hours.

Students will also be expected to complete a Summer 2027 internship and will receive an additional stipend upon successful completion of the internship. Students will also be required to be enrolled in INT8010 (0 credit hours) while completing their summer internship, and students will be responsible for the INT8010 course fee.

This initiative is made possible in partnership with the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors. If there are any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the STEM Initiatives Coordinator, Rieta Drinkwine (rdrinkw@clemson.edu).