UNITE PREDOCCTORAL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
Release Date: 07/25/2022
Application Deadline: 08/31/2022

Purpose
The UNITE Research Priority Area (RPA), in collaboration with the Office of the Vice President for Research, Office of Institutional Diversity, and The Graduate School, strives to increase the pipeline of racially and ethnically diverse scholars in research academic careers. To this end, the UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement Program (UNITE Predoctoral Fellows) mechanism seeks to implement evidence-based strategies to enhance research training for diverse scholars. Consistent with the mission of UNITE, our goal is to diversify the pipeline of candidates qualified to become academic leaders in their field. For more information on the UNITE RPA, see https://www.research.uky.edu/unite-research-priority-area/unite-research-priority-area.

The UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement Program is designed to engage and support scholars who will enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in PhD programs at the University of Kentucky and maximize their exposure to careers in research and academia. The UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement Program will provide a $10,000 stipend over 9 months to selected PhD students. As a UNITE Predoctoral Fellow, this stipend will be in addition to existing or expected funding from the Graduate School, college, or department. Each fellow will also receive $1,000 annually to support research related expenses such as: research travel (e.g., presenting first-author research at an association-based research conference), research equipment needs (e.g., software), or participant payments for pilot studies. Support from the UNITE RPA may be renewable for up to one year (maximum of two years) depending on availability of funding and assessed research progress of the recipient. This is a competitive application process and funds are limited. Fellows' home colleges and departments are encouraged to support this program with additional contributions (e.g., lab space, student travel or research support). Applicants that are not funded as research assistants on research grants or contracts will be prioritized for this mechanism.

Eligibility
The UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement is limited to new and existing Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) students seeking careers in the academy after degree completion. To be eligible for this funding mechanism, applicants must be fully funded through a support package that includes tuition. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Lyman T. Johnson Diversity Fellowship and McNair Fellowship program. The UNITE Predoctoral Research Enhancement applications must be submitted through the following link: https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_41NOAmuGEqtL2S

Applications must include the following information:
- Letter of commitment from a UK faculty research mentor
  - The letter should include an endorsement of the candidate, acknowledgment of the candidate’s commitment to an academic career, a commitment to mentor the candidate in research, and ensure the fellow participates in the career development activities associated with this program
- Curriculum vitae, including the name of the research faculty mentor
- Diversity statement (150 words or less) that addresses how the applicant will enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in their PhD program and academic field
o Personal statement (150 words or less) that addresses the fellow’s research plans, career aspirations, and commitment to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the academy upon completing the PhD program
o Copy of undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) transcripts (unofficial copies permitted)

Program Requirements
o Completion of annual individual development plan and an annual progress report with faculty mentor including a description of research plans and progress toward research plans
o Signed mentoring compact between faculty mentor and fellow
o Attendance at monthly UNITE research member engagement and UNITE-sponsored events
o Awardees must be willing to present findings at UNITE-sponsored events upon request and be responsive to ongoing contact from the UNITE RPA to assess progress and outcomes from the award

Please address specific application questions to Leah Holton (Leah.Holton@uky.edu).

*Note: This is a pilot program and continuation of this mechanism beyond 2024 is contingent on a program evaluation, dedicated funding, and overall impact.