



2025-2026 Graduate Student Leadership Award

Award Description:

Sponsored annually by the Graduate School at Florida State University, the Leadership Award recognizes outstanding graduate student leaders who are making a positive difference in their scholarly/creative work, campus, and wider communities. Graduate students who exhibit strong leadership skills are encouraged to apply. The person selected for the prestigious Graduate Student Leadership Award will be recognized at the *Celebration of Graduate Student Excellence* held each spring semester in April. The Graduate Student Leadership Award recipient will also receive a \$1,000 award.

Criteria:

Applicants will be evaluated in two general categories:

1. Characteristics of Leadership
 - Does the student collaborate well with others and inspire/empower others to act?
 - Does the student manage change and transition well?
 - Does the student participate in professional association activities that are external to the university?
 - Does the student engage in student organizations and the scholarly community?
2. Level of Leadership Involvement
 - Each student's application will be reviewed for evidence of leadership participation at the national, state, regional/local, university, and departmental levels.

Requirements:

Each applicant must be an active, enrolled, FSU degree-seeking or professional graduate student in good academic standing and must provide the following to the Graduate School:

*All documents must be submitted in PDF format.

1. A personal essay that includes a rationale for receiving the Leadership Award
 - Maximum length is 2 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Calibri, 1-inch margins.

- No cover page is required.
 - The personal essay needs to explicitly address the evaluation criteria noted above.
2. An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resume
 3. A Letter of Recommendation supporting the student for the Graduate Student Leadership Award
 - Maximum length is 3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Calibri, 1-inch margins.
 - Only **one** (1) Letter of Recommendation can be provided by a faculty or administrator who can address the leadership skills and efforts of the student in light of the evaluation criteria. The letter can be co-written. It is strongly encouraged that the faculty or administrator sends the Letter of Recommendation to the student so that it can be uploaded into the online application portal via Qualtrics during the submission process. However, if the faculty member or administrator does not feel comfortable doing this, the Letter of Recommendation can be sent via email directly to James Beck at jbeck@fsu.edu.

General Nomination/Selection Process:

An academic department or college may nominate a student of their choosing. Any graduate student interested in applying for the Graduate Student Leadership Award should consult with their program/unit and faculty/staff member who will be writing their Letter of Recommendation. Program faculty/staff are encouraged to identify students within their respective units who demonstrate strong leadership skills through the general competencies noted above.

The number of nominations each department or college (if no departmental subunits) may submit for the Graduate Student Leadership Award will be based upon its number of graduate students. Departments or colleges with fewer than 100 graduate students may nominate one candidate; departments or colleges with 100-200 graduate students may nominate a maximum of two candidates; departments or colleges with over 200 graduate students may nominate a maximum of three candidates.

Submission of Materials:

Students should first confirm a nomination with their program or unit. Afterwards, students can apply online for the Graduate Student Leadership Award by clicking on the following Qualtrics link:

TBA

NOTE: Students should not begin the online application process until they have all of the materials listed above (e.g., Personal Essay, CV or Resume, and Letter of Recommendation). Applicants cannot stop or restart the application process; they must submit all of the application materials in the same session in which they begin. Also, students may not edit the application or change the scope of work once it has been submitted.

Completed applications are due no later than 5:00 P.M. on **Friday, January 30, 2026**. No time extensions will be awarded for late submission of materials as it is the student's responsibility to be sure all required documents are accepted on time and prior to the deadline.

Review Process:

An award selection committee comprised of university faculty and staff will review all nominee materials. The Dean of the Graduate School (or designee) will select the Leadership Award winner based on the final scores submitted by the award selection committee. Award notifications are sent out to all applicants in late March. All nominees for this award will be recognized at the spring *Celebration of Graduate Student Excellence* ceremony in April.

For more information, questions, or concerns regarding the Graduate Student Leadership Award, please contact James Beck (644-3501 or jpbbeck@fsu.edu)