We depend on graduate students to challenge academic boundaries and shape emerging fields of inquiry. Their work fuels our country’s economic engine, improves healthcare, and helps us understand the richness of human experience. In a very real sense, graduate students are the standard-bearers for our reputation for excellence. Through the Duke Forward campaign, we seek investments that will secure our ability to recruit the most talented graduate students and help us prepare this elite group of scholars to become the next generation of leaders, teachers, and researchers.

GOAL
$20 MILLION

The Graduate School

Explore dukeforward.duke.edu
Fellowships

Duke’s graduate students energize the intellectual life of the university and conduct research that advances the frontiers of knowledge. As apprentices to our distinguished faculty, they are essential collaborators both in the classroom and on important research projects. Graduate students also play a vital role in the lives of our undergraduates not only as teachers, but also as mentors, advocates, and role models.

The most promising graduate students are highly sought after by other top programs. To compete effectively for prospective students, the Graduate School must keep pace with the funding packages offered by peer institutions. Through the Duke Forward campaign, we seek investments in fellowships that will make the difference in bringing the best students to Duke.

**YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE**
can establish an endowed fellowship that supports talented graduate students.

**YOUR GIFT OF $250,000 OR MORE**
can establish an endowed fellowship in a specific academic department, such as biology or economics.

“Graduate students are central to the university’s mission of pursuing society’s most pressing questions and training the next generation of scholars and teachers."

Richard H. Brodhead, President
Summer Support

For graduate students, who spend the academic year juggling their own coursework with teaching and other responsibilities, summers are crucial for advancing their own research and professional goals. The handful of months between semesters provides valuable time for students to conduct fieldwork, attend academic conferences, or make progress on dissertations. However, while this work continues over the summer, financial support often does not. In many fields, Duke only provides doctoral students with funding for the academic year, even as many of our peer institutions now provide a full 12 months of support. That leaves many students struggling to find a balance between their academic endeavors and financial obligations.

Summer stipends can tip the scales. Financial support during the summer months allows graduate students to immerse themselves in research. Summer stipends also give students a way to forgo full-time summer jobs, possibly shortening their time to degree. Through this campaign, the Graduate School will seek philanthropic investments that will enable us to provide summer funding for as many students as possible. Our ability to provide students with year-round support not only keeps our programs competitive, but also enhances the quality of our graduate students’ lives.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE can establish a named endowment to support summer research stipends for graduate students.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

On campus, art history graduate student Alexandra Dodson is working on the high-tech collaboration between Duke and Italian universities to develop a website and a mobile application that virtually chronicles Venice’s urban history. But to conduct research for her doctoral thesis, which examines the art and architecture of the Carmelite order of friars in medieval Italy, Dodson needs access to some low-tech source material: Italian churches and archives.

A summer fellowship allowed Alexandra to travel to Siena, where she studied the thirteenth-century San Niccolò del Carmine church. She also pored over archival material for insight on how the Carmelite order, which unlike the Franciscans and Dominicans claims to trace its origins back to the prophet Elijah, shaped Siena’s urban landscape.

Now, Alexandra is returning to Italy on an international travel research fellowship that will help her build on the information gathered in Siena and give her an opportunity to spend an academic year studying archives, museums and churches in Siena, Pisa, Rome, and Florence.

“Funding is critical for all grad students,” she says. “But particularly for those of us who must travel overseas to complete our dissertations.”
Daniel Heard is a big-picture guy. The Ph.D. candidate in statistical science is researching computational models that can simulate various phenomena, such as how diseases spread. From these models, scientists can predict how medical interventions might slow or even stop disease transmission.

But Daniel's statistics research isn't all work and no play. The lifelong football fan noticed that there existed no objective measure of NFL running backs like the quarterback rating, so he designed his own. By plugging in career stats for dozens of players, Daniel determined that Jim Brown was the greatest pro running back of all time, and Marshall Faulk had the best single season in 2000.

A Dean's Graduate Fellowship, which provides full support for two years and partial support for two more, has allowed Daniel to concentrate on his doctoral studies. At the same time, the Graduate School's Certificate in College Teaching professional development program is preparing him well for classroom work.

“The certificate program has been helpful for me in exploring teaching methods,” Daniel says. “It’s led me to examine how I can be more effective as a teacher and serve the students better.”

The Graduate School is committed to helping our students think about—and begin to shape—their professional trajectories from the moment they begin their Duke academic careers.

Today’s job market is very competitive, and it is essential for graduate students to pursue career and professional development in addition to traditional Ph.D. research training. The Graduate School is expanding professional development offerings and career services to help students acquire skill sets for leadership in a wide range of careers in academia, industry, government, and nonprofit organizations. This effort will encompass digital technology training for humanities students, coaching in public speaking and networking, workshops on grant-writing and entrepreneurship, support for conference presentations and travel, and the Preparing Future Faculty program, a national mentoring program that Duke faculty helped to develop. Our professional development offerings will also draw on a global perspective to prepare our students for the global marketplace.

Philanthropic investments to support professional development activities for our graduate students, such as training programs or travel to conferences, will help to ensure the overall excellence of Duke's Graduate School and position our students for success.

Your gift of $100,000 or more can endow a professional development fund that will give Duke graduate students a leg up in their careers.

The Annual Fund

Graduate students are a critical link between Duke’s research and teaching efforts. Gifts to the Graduate School Annual Fund provide the most immediate and direct way to support these students and fuel their important work.

Since 2005, the Graduate School has quadrupled the number of summer fellowships it offers students, thanks in part to gifts to the Annual Fund. Gifts to the Annual Fund also support the Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Mentoring and Teaching. The highest recognition graduate students can receive for the important role they play in advancing the university’s undergraduate teaching mission, the awards were created to cultivate a culture of mentoring.