

**MCKNIGHT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP**  
**2025-2026**  
**PROGRAM AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS, the McKnight Dissertation Fellowship Program is designed to address the underrepresentation of African American and Hispanic college and university faculty in the State of Florida by increasing the pool of citizens qualified with Ph.D. degrees.

NOW THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

(1) That the Florida Education Fund (hereinafter "FEF") hereby awards to **NAME** (hereinafter "the Fellow") a McKnight Dissertation Fellowship for the 2025-2026 academic year.

(2) That the Fellow accepts the Fellowship and agrees to comply with the following Program requirements:

- (a) The Fellow will remain a full time Ph.D. student in good standing at their university.
- (b) The Fellow will continue to progress towards completing their dissertation pursuant to the Dissertation Completion Schedule submitted as part of their Fellowship application. To certify satisfactory progress, at the end of the fall 2025 and spring 2026 semesters, the Fellow will complete and submit to the FEF office a Progress Report Form, which is included as Attachment A hereto, signed by their dissertation chair or advisor.
- (c) The Fellow will participate in the following McKnight developmental conferences:
  - (i) the McKnight Dissertation Fellows Orientation webinar, tentatively Thursday, **August 8, 2025**, 10:00 a.m.-Noon.
  - (ii) the McKnight Doctoral Annual Fellows' and Mid-Year Research and Writing Meeting (AFM-MYM) in Tampa, Florida, tentatively November 2025.
- (d) At the 2025 AFM-MYM referenced above, the Fellow will present their research.

(3) That in the event that the Fellow, while in good standing, decides to terminate their participation prior to achieving their terminal degree, the Fellow must notify the FEF office in writing 30 days before or after termination.

(4) That the Fellow's failure to provide the proper notice to FEF shall be deemed a default under this Agreement and will require repayment of used or improperly expended FEF Fellowship dollars. The specific terms of the repayment shall be developed by the FEF President or designee and shall be deemed final.

(5) That the FEF President shall review the considerations underlying the need for termination and shall have the discretionary authority to determine the final terms of the termination. Final terms shall include, but not be limited to, the possibility of renewing enrollment in a degree program and/or the repayment of used or improperly expended FEF Fellowship dollars.

(6) That the Fellow shall provide their current addresses to the FEF office and report any address change to FEF within 30 days of said change in location. Failure to do so shall provide FEF with the option to declare this Agreement in default.

(7) That, when requested by FEF, the Fellow shall respond completely, accurately and timely, in whatever format prescribed by FEF, to report to FEF any and all details pertaining to the Fellow's paid or unpaid employment and/or volunteer service provided to or on behalf of any Florida college, university, public agency or not-for-profit corporation, which details may include, but shall not be limited to, name of entity served, name of supervisor, number of hours served, compensation received, etc.

(8) That in any litigation, including breach, enforcement or interpretation, arising out of this Agreement, the prevailing party in such litigation, shall be entitled to recover from the non-prevailing party reasonable attorney's fees, costs and expenses whether incurred at the trial level or on appeal or in Bankruptcy.

(9) That, if FEF or the Fellow fail to comply with their responsibilities and obligations hereunder, then FEF or the Fellow shall have the right to proceed with any actions in a court of competent jurisdiction in Hillsborough County, Florida, either for specific performance or for damages or for both. Jurisdiction and venue of any action to construe or enforce this Agreement shall be in Hillsborough County, Florida.

(10) That this Agreement shall be deemed to be a Florida contract and construed according to the laws of such state, regardless of whether this Agreement is being executed by either party in another state.

(11) A portion of the Program funding is subject to State of Florida legislative appropriation, and availability of this Fellowship award is contingent upon FEF receiving funding from the State of Florida.

In witness whereof, the parties hereto have signed and entered into this Agreement.

**FLORIDA EDUCATION FUND**

**MCKNIGHT DISSERTATION FELLOW**

BY: Lawrence Morehouse, *President and CEO*

**NAME**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Attachment A*  
**MCKNIGHT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP**  
**2025-2026**  
**PROGRESS REPORT FORM**

Directions: Submit this completed form to the FEF office at the end of the fall 2025 and spring 2026 terms.

Fellow's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Doctoral Dissertation, Statement of Progress:**

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**II. General Comments:**

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Date of expected dissertation completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of expected dissertation defense: \_\_\_\_\_

As the dissertation chair or advisor of the above-named Fellow, I have reviewed the Progress Report Form above, and I believe the Fellow has the ability to successfully complete his/her dissertation within the timeframe set forth above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_