



First Solar PhD Fellowship Program at the University of Michigan

The Institute for Energy Solutions welcomes applications for the inaugural class of the First Solar PhD Fellowship Program at the University of Michigan ("First Solar Fellowship"). The First Solar Fellowship will support PhD students in the College of Engineering who are pursuing research related to solar cells and photovoltaic (PV) materials and devices and their applications. The funding is intended to help promote the success of the next generation of solar energy researchers in a challenging funding environment, and is made possible by a generous gift from First Solar. Fellowship information, eligibility, and application details are provided below.

Fellowship Information:

- Funding will cover salary, tuition, and fringe benefits from Winter 2027 through Fall 2028.
- We anticipate awarding 3 to 5 fellowships this year.
- Funding can be renewed annually for up to 2 years.
- The fellowship should provide new funding for a student, not replace existing funding.
- Selected fellows will be invited to the annual First Solar Fellows conference and be encouraged to apply to the First Solar internship program.

Eligibility:

- PhD students in the College of Engineering are eligible recipients.
- Funded research must advance research on solar cells and photovoltaic (PV) materials and devices and their applications.
- Students must be in good academic standing at time of application, and remain in good academic standing for renewal.

Application Details:

- Application deadline: October 16, 2026.
- Applications must be submitted by a student's primary faculty advisor on behalf of a student. Each faculty member is limited to 1 application per cycle.
- Applications must include:
 - 1-page CV of the nominated student;
 - 1-page description of the research the student will conduct, written by the student (Times New Roman size of 10 or larger, 1" margins);
 - 1 paragraph explaining how the fellowship will enable new student funding rather than replace existing funding; and
 - 1 letter of recommendation from the submitting faculty member.
- Materials should be compiled into a single PDF and submitted to ies-contact@umich.edu.

Review Criteria and Process:

- Applications will be reviewed and scored by an expert panel based on their intellectual merit and broader impact per [NSF review criteria](#), and their relevance to solar cells and PV materials and devices