The goal of the fellowship is to increase the number of underrepresented groups completing doctoral degrees in the microbiological sciences. The ASM Robert D. Watkins Graduate Research Fellowship is aimed at highly competitive graduate students who are enrolled in a Ph.D. program and who have completed their graduate course work in the microbiological sciences. The fellowship encourages students to continue and complete their research project in the microbiological sciences.

**Funding**
The program provides a total stipend of $63,000 ($21,000 a year) for a three year period (July 2014-June 2017). Students will receive six stipend payments. Funds cannot be used for tuition and fees.

**Eligibility**
Eligible candidates must be from groups that have been determined by the applicant's institution to be underrepresented in the microbiological sciences. The ASM encourages institutions to identify individuals that have been historically underrepresented, and remain underrepresented today in the microbiological sciences nationally. These groups include African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Pacific Islanders.

In addition, applicants must:
- Be formally admitted to a doctoral program in the microbiological sciences in an accredited U.S. institution
- Have successfully completed the first year of the graduate program (first year graduate students cannot apply)
- Have successfully completed all graduate coursework requirements for the doctoral degree by the date of activation of the fellowship
- Be a student member of ASM
- Be mentored by an ASM member
- Be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident
- Not have funding OR have funding that will expire by the start date of the Fellowship

This fellowship cannot run concurrently with other national fellowships from NIH, NSF, HHMI, etc.