

Ocean, Coastal and Estuarine Acidification Fellowship

eSeaGrant Instructions

OVERVIEW

Applications are due by April 13, 2018 at 5:00 pm Eastern Time. If you plan to apply, we strongly recommend registering for eSeaGrant at least two weeks in advance of the deadline. Please review the 2018 Ocean Acidification Fellowship announcement (available at: <https://vaseagrant.org/>) and refer to these instructions as a guide to submit your application using eSeaGrant.

REGISTERING FOR ESEA Grant

Applicants can register for eSeaGrant by visiting the website (<http://vaseagrant.ecsion.com>), selecting the “Register” tab, and completing the required information. If you do not receive a “welcome” email with login credentials shortly after registering, please contact Sam Lake (contact information below). Once you login, you can change your password. To do so click your name in the upper-right corner of the screen, and select “My Profile.”

CREATING A FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

To start an application, or edit an existing application, click on “Current Tasks” on the banner head, and select “Add Fellowship Application” under “2018 Ocean Acidification Graduate Research Fellowship.”

Once you have added the fellowship application to your Current Tasks, you must progress down through the sequence of application sections (“Start Here” through “Submission Preview”) listed on the left side of the window to submit your application. Guidance related to these sections follows, in sequence. Please note - some sections may require additional pop-up pages, please allow your browser to display pop-up windows and enable JavaScript.

eSeaGrant provides sections to upload your signed title page, career and professional development goal statement, professional mentor and outreach plan, professional mentor letter of commitment, resumes/CVs, undergraduate and graduate school transcripts, project narrative, and budget and budget justification. These documents must be converted to PDFs. To preserve confidentiality, letters of recommendations must be uploaded directly from the referees through eSeaGrant. Applicants must identify and submit requests to their referees through eSeaGrant, by entering their referees’ names and email addresses in the corresponding section. Applicants must click the “Submit” button in the “Submission Preview” section to complete their application.

All elements, including recommendation letters, must be submitted by the deadline. Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances (e.g., internet delays), so please allow ample time to submit in advance of the deadline. Confirmation of the application and recommendation letters will be automatically generated and sent by eSeaGrant. If you do not receive confirmation shortly after submitting your application, please contact Sam Lake (see contact information below).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

For full details on the application guidelines, required elements, and review and selection process, please download the 2018 Ocean Acidification Fellowship Announcement. The information included below should not be considered a comprehensive guide. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their state Sea Grant Program to indicate their interest in the fellowship (see announcement for contact information). Links to related templates and forms are available in eSeaGrant under the corresponding application form.

Signed Title Page (two-page maximum)

The title page must list the project title, and identify and provide contact information for the prospective fellow, faculty advisor(s), and professional mentor. The proposed start and end date, and the total amount of MASGP/OAP and



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matching funds being requested for each project year must also be listed. The title page should include a Research Abstract of up to 200 words, summarizing the research project you will be working on during the fellowship that encompasses objectives, methodology and rationale. Please indicate if the funding program(s) peer-reviewed the research proposed fellowship work plan. Required institutional signatures (Principal Investigator and Authorized Institutional Representative) should be included on the title page; these are often provided by institutional sponsored program offices or equivalent to verify that the institution has reviewed the proposal. A title page template can be found on the eSeaGrant website.

Career and Professional Development Goal Statement (one-page maximum)

The statement should describe your educational and professional goals and ambitions, professional growth interests and objectives, and how these goals relate to broader societal needs in the coastal and marine environment. The statement should emphasize how past experiences and competencies contribute toward your short- (1-5yr) and long-term (>5yr) goals and in particular, how this fellowship would contribute toward those goals. Speak to your leadership potential, communication ability, stakeholder engagement interests or experience, and include any pertinent information that provides insights into your past choices and future interests. Illustrate what motivates you today and moving forward with your research and their applications. The sponsors encourage you to include what you hope to gain from your professional outreach or end-user mentor relationship, and how that contributes toward your long-term academic and professional goals.

Professional Mentor and Outreach Plan (one-page maximum)

The plan should be developed with both your academic advisor and end-user mentor to identify specific objectives of the professional mentoring and outreach activities to be conducted during the fellowship. What do you hope to gain professionally and academically from the specific outreach activities proposed in the outreach plan? What are the connections between your research and the needs and interests of an end-user, and how will you make these connections happen? Who are the target audiences for the outreach activities on your research? What deliverables will you produce once the research is completed, what deliverables may be planned for after the fellowship, and why are these the best option for your target audience(s)? How will you and the mentor interact to achieve these goals (e.g., frequency, timeline, means of communication, topics, etc.)?

Professional Mentor Letter of Commitment

The professional mentor letter should indicate a commitment to mentor the student, and include a description of the role the mentor will play in the fellow's academic and professional experience. It is recommended that fellows identify a single professional mentor. The proposed professional mentor may submit the letter either to the student to be included with the proposal, or submitted separately through eSeaGrant (see *Recommendation Letters* section below). The letter must be submitted before the deadline. There is no page limit, but the sponsors recommend that they not exceed two pages, and not include attachments.

Resumes/CVs (two-page maximum per Resume/CV)

A brief resume or CV should be included for the student, primary academic advisor(s), and professional mentor. Do not include the CVs of committee members, other associated project participants, or others.

Undergraduate and Graduate School Transcripts

Unofficial copies are acceptable but should clearly indicate name of institution, degree program, courses taken, and GPAs. Transcripts should be included in reverse chronological order (i.e., newest transcripts first).

Project Narrative (four-page maximum, including figures, tables, and other graphics but excluding literature cited and data management plan)

Project title and name of student must be included in the header. The narrative is intended to be a brief summary of the proposed thesis or area of study but should include sufficient detail to evaluate the appropriateness and relevance of the research and outreach approach, and the alignment of the project with the missions of Sea Grant and OAP.



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The narrative should include the following subsections: *Introduction, Research Plan, Outcomes and Broader Societal Impacts, Fellowship Milestone Chart/Timeline, Research Team and Coordination, Literature Cited, Data Management Plan, and NEPA Abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire Form*. Please refer to the announcement for detailed guidance on each of these subsections.

Budget and Budget Justification

Fellowships are for two years with \$47,000 available each year. \$40,000 is available each year for stipend, tuition, fringe benefits, and fees. There is an additional \$7000 per a year for fellowship related travel and research expenses. Funds must first be allocated for required travel to the OA training week and conferences, including a relevant national meeting in 2019 and the required Graduate Symposium hosted by Virginia Sea Grant in 2020. It is recommended that fellows anticipate a minimum of \$3500 per a year in travel expenses. The remaining \$3500 per year may be allocated for research supplies and analyses as needed for the proposed project. Facilities & Administrative (F&A) costs, also known as indirect or overhead, are NOT allowable on Sea Grant fellowships per federal regulation (15 C.F.R. § 917.11).

For this fellowship MASGP and OAP require an annual non-federal match of at least \$12,500 per year. Only non-federal funds may be committed as matching contribution. In-kind contributions, unrecovered F&A and tuition, and non-federal salaries are all examples of match. Budgets should be developed in the 90-4 budget worksheet (available on eSeaGrant website). The budget justification must be a detailed description of each cost item in the 90-4 budget; additional guidance is available on the eSeaGrant website. The sponsors strongly encourage applicants to work with their institution's research administration or sponsored programs office to develop their budgets.

In addition, include a paragraph at the beginning of the Budget Justification detailing the in-kind or leveraged support. This paragraph should provide an explanation of how the proposed research is being supported outside of the fellowship. This may include sources of in-kind support (e.g. agency, organizations, university programs, etc.) and how they are supporting the proposed research. Students are expected to use the project narrative to demonstrate the feasibility of implementing the proposed work, this section will be used to assess if there is adequate funding to complete the proposed work.

Recommendation Letters

Two letters of recommendation should be submitted in support of the student. To maintain confidentiality, letters should NOT be submitted with the student's proposal; instead, letters should be uploaded through eSeaGrant by their authors. One letter of recommendation should come from the student's primary academic advisor or faculty member who is the PI on the research award the applicant will be working on during the fellowship. Co-advisors may submit a joint letter, or they may submit separate letters. However, each student is limited to a total of two recommendation letters. There is no page limit for letters, but the sponsors recommend that letters not exceed two pages and not include attachments. Referees are encouraged to consider the student's:

- academic and professional performance, including record and relevant experience
- academic and professional potential for future success, including research and professional activities in integrated, trans-disciplinary settings
- responsibility, motivation, integrity, and creativity
- teamwork and leadership skills and potential, and ability to identify and understand the *big picture*, and connections among perspectives
- interest and competencies in the science-to-management process, science communication to non-experts, and capabilities and issues of relevance to their mentor relationship, and outreach activities

For the second letter of recommendation, applicants are encouraged to consider someone who might know the applicant from a different perspective (e.g., former employer, mentor from a previous relevant internship, someone you have worked with on an outreach or policy project). It is most important to select someone who will write a strong letter for you, but an "outside" perspective helps to demonstrate your diversity and will likely highlight different strengths and experiences.



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IMPORTANT – To maintain confidentiality, letters of recommendation should be submitted directly from the referee to eSeaGrant and must be submitted by the application deadline to be considered. Please address letters to the Ocean Acidification Review Panel. Candidates are encouraged to work with referees to meet the deadline.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding the use of eSeaGrant, please contact Sam Lake, Virginia Sea Grant's Fellowship and Research Program Coordinator (804-684-7436 or sjlake@vims.edu).

All university students applying for the 2018 Ocean Acidification Graduate Research Fellowship must have their fellowship application approved by their home institution's sponsored programs/research office prior to submitting to eSeaGrant. Each institution may handle this differently, although all will have an internal deadline for submitting application to their sponsored programs/research office for their review and approval prior to fellowship deadline.