

## Sea Grant's Community Engaged Internship for Undergraduate Students Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Community Engaged Internship (CEI) aims to broaden participation in coastal, ocean and marine sciences by providing training and mentorship to early-stage university and community college students from under-resourced, underrepresented and/or indigenous and tribal populations (please refer to FAQs for specific definitions). The overarching goal of this paid internship program is to broaden participation in marine and coastal professions by providing training and mentorship to the next generation of scientists, decision makers and citizens. Interns will assist mentors with field work, analyses, research and/or outreach and public engagement efforts. Program goals are to recruit, retain and engage diverse students (please refer to FAQs for specific definitions) in place-based research, extension, education and/or communication that respects and integrates local ways of knowing.

While details about specific internship opportunities vary by different [Sea Grant programs](#), CEI interns are expected to participate in all aspects of the [CEI program](#) listed below.

- ***On-the-ground learning experience*** through a 8-10-week internship over the summer months that includes:
  - Completion of a project that extends the knowledge of community stakeholders to address a coastal, marine or Great Lakes issue of environmental, economic and/or social importance, and
  - Participation in all CEI professional development and training opportunities.
- ***Mentoring*** by Sea Grant professionals, Sea Grant funded researchers and [Knauss Fellows](#).
- Virtual ***professional development*** sessions.
- Peer discussions with other interns in the ***cohort*** using Slack or other virtual platforms.
- ***Graduation Ceremony*** to celebrate accomplishments, network with peers and other professionals.
- Participate in pre/post ***evaluation***.

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who can participate in the CEI program?

*All Sea Grant programs are eligible to participate in the CEI program. Programs can tailor several aspects of the program to their individual needs, such as selection of projects or program duration. Required elements for students are listed above.*

2. Who is eligible to apply for the CEI program?

*To qualify for the CEI program, applicants, must be enrolled in an undergraduate degree program at an institution of higher education, including 2- and 4-year colleges and universities, at the time of application.*

*Generally, Sea Grant programs accept applications from students residing in their State (for example, a student residing in Alaska is expected to apply for the CEI program led by Alaska Sea Grant). Applicants are strongly encouraged to connect with their State Sea Grant program to learn about any additional eligibility requirements.*

3. What is meant by “diverse” students?

*Sea Grant’s CEI program seeks to recruit interns from under-resourced, underrepresented and/or indigenous and tribal populations. The intent is to provide meaningful internship to students from groups that are historically marginalized in the sciences, including Black or African-American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, female, first-generation college students, veterans, LGBTQ+, and students with disabilities. The program is also open to students who have experienced, and worked to overcome, educational or economic disadvantages, and/or who have personal or family circumstances that may complicate their career paths.*

*Ultimately individual Sea Grant programs define what “diverse” students mean for their state. Many Sea Grant programs do not exclude student applicants based on diversity criteria, and rather use language in their recruitment materials to strongly encourage diverse applicants. Some programs ask for a diversity statement or include a question in the application so that the student can self identify how they meet the goals of the program.*

4. What is meant by “under-resourced, underrepresented and/or indigenous and tribal populations”?

*Each Sea Grant program defines these terms for what is appropriate in their state and the populations with whom they work. As outlined in Sea Grant’s 10-year DEI vision document, underserved populations are those that have experienced low levels of access in coastal/ocean/marine sciences. Underrepresented populations refer to persons for whom representation in our programs is smaller than that of the general population.*

5. What kind of projects have past interns worked on?

*Please visit the CEI webpage (<https://seagrants.noaa.gov/Community-Engaged-Internship>) for information on selected internship opportunities and students who*

*participated in the CEI class of 2020. Check back as this list will continue to grow. Examples of 2020 topics/projects include:*

- *Great Lakes Geospatial Data Visualization*
- *Hawai'i Sea Level Rise Citizen Science Project*
- *Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Great Lakes literacy*
- *Manoomin (wild rice) education and outreach*
- *Green Infrastructure, Climate Adaptation, and Geodesign*
- *Habitat use of shellfish aquaculture by fish and invertebrates*
- *Assessment of larval fish shrinkage with preservation*
- *Tree Planting to discourage reed canary grass and watershed education*
- *Effects of Sea Lamprey on Lake Trout*
- *Environmental modeling of native wetland plants to build invasive resistance*
- *Distribution study of New Zealand Mud Snail in Boardman River*
- *Farmer engagement on flood resilience practices in eastern North Carolina*

6. What is the cost of the internship?

*Interns are typically paid \$5000-\$6000 over the 8-10 week period. In addition, each Sea Grant program should set aside \$1000 for the student to participate in the in-person graduation ceremony in Washington, D.C. Some Sea Grant programs may offer additional cost of living stipends, travel subsidies, or provide housing (\$1000-\$2000) depending on the location of the intern.*

7. Who pays for this internship?

*Sea Grant programs use their own funds to hire an intern. This might include funding from the omnibus, state funds or extramural grant awards. For the 2021 CEI cohort, similar to 2020, Sea Grant programs are expected to provide their own funding for interns. For 2022, the CEI coordination committee has secured funding for 18 interns who will be selected competitively to participate in the program. Other students will be welcome to participate in the 2022 CEI program, however, the funding will need to be provided by state Sea Grant programs.*

8. Can interns receive college credit?

*College credits for internships can be arranged with individual academic departments; Sea Grant programs typically do not provide for-credit academic opportunities.*

9. Can Sea Grant programs have multiple interns?

*Yes, Sea Grant programs can have as many interns as they can fund and manage. Regardless of the funding source, any student who is recruited as a CEI intern will have the opportunity to participate in the CEI program.*

10. When does the internship begin in 2021? How long is the internship expected to be?

*Sea Grant programs can choose their own start and end dates, but the timeframe should roughly correspond to the summer months June-August 2021, for example June 1-August 13, 2021, and cover approximately 8-10 weeks of full-time (40 hrs per week) participation. Doing so will allow students to participate in all professional development and cohort-building activities. Programs are welcome to use other models and timeframes that are more suited to individual students' needs.*

11. Who is supposed to supervise the interns?

*Interns can be supervised by a Sea Grant staff person, or an individual from a partner organization such as a faculty member, or employee of a state environmental agency or non-profit group.*

12. What do Sea Grant programs need to do to participate in the CEI program?

*All Sea Grant programs that wish to participate in the 2021 CEI program must fill out this spreadsheet:*  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YqjjdExzqos76gobiU4vpxRPLAj0fWlb6F7cPYRkFMo/edit#gid=0>. *Sea Grant programs should list the name and email address of intern supervisors, and provide a description of intern projects if known. Currently 2020 supervisors are listed and these names may need to be changed or removed. Any questions can be directed to members of the CEI coordination committee at [seagrant.cei@gmail.com](mailto:seagrant.cei@gmail.com)*

13. What do we need to know about the graduation ceremony?

*To celebrate student accomplishments, promote cohort-building and provide networking opportunities to students, the CEI coordination committee will host an in-person graduation ceremony for all CEI interns. It is likely that the graduation ceremony will take place in the month of August in the DC metro area. For 2021, the ceremony is tentatively scheduled to take place from August 3-5, 2021 in Washington, D.C., depending on the development of the COVID-19 situation. Additional opportunities to engage with the*

*coastal science and management communities may exist, such as through the November 2021 CERF (Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation) Conference.*

14. What are best practices for recruiting interns? How do you recruit hosts?

*There are various strategies that Sea Grant programs can use to recruit diverse interns. For example, programs should consider drafting an internship flyer and sharing the internship information with a wide variety of partners, including community partners, administrators of fellowships and faculty. Programs should also consider cultivating relationships through local and regional meetings, professional society meetings, or other networking opportunities, throughout the year. Sea Grant programs should also consider connecting with universities and campus groups that specifically serve underrepresented students (e.g. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), cultural centers, programs such as Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP)).*

**Additional questions about the program can be directed to [seagrant.cei@gmail.com](mailto:seagrant.cei@gmail.com).**