



Informational Webinar

Delta Science Fellows Program 2020

October 24, 2019 | 10:30am

Registration Link: <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/156950966>



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The information in this presentation is accurate as of October 24, 2019.

However, the timeline and details of the 2020 Delta Science Fellows Request for Applications (RFA) contained herein are subject to change.

Any updates to the timeline or the RFA will be listed on the Sea Grant website:

<https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/fellowships/delta-science-fellowship>

We urge potential applicants to refer to the RFA itself when preparing applications and not solely rely on the information in this presentation.



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Introductions

Delta Science Program
Maggie Christman



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

California Sea Grant
Miho Ligare






Webinar Objectives

1. To describe the purposes and priorities for the Delta Science Fellowship Program
2. Go over important application components and tips on preparation
3. Answer questions that potential applicants may have

Agenda

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- 10:30 Welcome & Introductions
 - Webinar How-to
 - 10:35 Overview of DSP and Priority Topic Areas
 - 10:45 Fellowship Characteristics
 - 10:55 Review and Selection Process
 - 11:05 Application Requirements & Tips
 - 11:15 Submission Information and Important Dates
 - 11:30 Questions



Webinar Guidelines

- Phone lines muted during presentation
- Ask questions by using chat dialogue (preferred) or “Raise hand” button
- Designated question times
- Recording and presentation will be made available on Sea Grant website
- Please reserve very specific questions (relevant to your project only) for email to either Miho or Maggie



Delta Stewardship Council

- Independent State Agency created by the 2009 Delta Reform Act
- Responsible for developing a Delta Plan
- Achieve the coequal goals of
 1. providing a more reliable water supply for California; and
 2. protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem



Delta Science Program (DSP)

Mission statement

To provide the best possible scientific information for water and environmental decision making in the Bay-Delta system.

Delta Science Plan

A shared vision for Delta Science:
'One Delta, One Science' - an open Delta science community that works collaboratively to build a shared body of scientific knowledge to inform future water and environmental decisions

For more information:

<https://deltascienceplan.deltacouncil.ca.gov/>



Delta Science Fellowship Program

- Masters, pre and postdoctoral research fellowships (stipend + research funds) established in partnership with Delta Science Program and California Sea Grant
- Senior research/ academic mentor
- Community/ agency mentor
- More information available online:
<https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/fellowships/delta-science-fellowship>



Delta Science Fellowship Goals

1. Engage highly qualified scientific talent to help advance the state of scientific knowledge on the Delta Plan policy areas and high priority science actions.
2. Provide support for the training and development of scientists able to work in multidisciplinary, field-oriented and modeling-based research intended to support resource management in the Delta; and
3. Promote scientific partnerships across agencies, research institutions, and non- profit organizations.



2020 Priority Topic Areas

1. Invest in assessing the human dimensions of natural resource management decisions
2. Capitalize on existing data through increasing science synthesis
3. Develop tools and methods to support and evaluate habitat restoration
4. Improve understanding of interactions between stressors and managed species and their communities
5. Modernize monitoring, data management, and modeling

Questions?



Fellowship Eligibility



PH.D. & MASTERS FELLOWSHIPS

Prospective Ph.D. and masters science fellows must, at the time of application, be in or have recently been ***admitted to a Ph.D. or masters degree program in natural resources, environmental sciences, environmental policy and management, engineering, social sciences, human dimensions, or coastal, aquatic or related sciences*** at any accredited U.S. institution of higher education. Candidates must remain associated with an accredited U.S. institution of higher learning for the duration of the award.

Fellowship Eligibility



POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Prospective Postdoctoral Science Fellows ***must hold a Ph.D. or complete a Ph.D. before the starting date of the fellowship (approximately May 2020)***, in a Doctoral degree program in the ***natural resources, environmental sciences, environmental policy and management, engineering, social sciences, human dimensions, or in a related field appropriate for disciplines identified under “Fellowship Opportunities.”***

Any postdoctoral researcher may apply who is associated with an accredited U.S. institution of higher learning for the duration of the grant. Postdoctoral fellowships will not be awarded unless and until the prospective fellow has fully completed the Ph.D. degree.

Fellowship Awards



- Funding from Delta Stewardship Council
- Sponsor approximately 6 ~ 8 fellows total in disciplines that address the 2020 research topics (as described in Appendix B)
- Postdoctoral Fellowship
 - Up to 2 years of support (max: \$115,700/year)
 - \$55,000/yr in stipend (not paid as salaries, wages & benefits)
 - \$34,00/yr for research (supplies, equipment, travel) + 30% IDC on all costs
- Ph.D. & Masters Fellowship
 - Up to 2 years of support (max: \$75,400/year)
 - \$35,000/yr in stipend (not paid as salaries, wages & benefits)
 - \$23,000/yr for research (supplies, equipment, travel) + 30% IDC on all costs

Fellowship Project Deliverables



- Mentoring Plan one month after funds are awarded to successful applicants
- Participation in Early Career Leadership Workshop (if offered)
- Oral or poster presentation at Bay-Delta Science Conference and/or State of the Estuary Conference. Fellows are also encouraged to present their research at other national and international professional meetings
- Fellows are required to publish results from this fellowship in peer-reviewed, open- access journals, for example, *San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science*
- Annual progress reports and final completion report

Questions?





Application Required Elements

- Signed Cover Page
- Investigator(s) Information: CVs
- Project Summary
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget and Budget Justification
- Letters of Support & Letter of Commitment
- 3 Academic Recommendations
- Academic transcripts (undergrad & graduate for Ph.D. and masters fellows; graduate only for post-fellows)

Project Summary

***Probably the most important section in your proposal.
Write it last.***

- Typically first section of the proposal to be read and may be the only section read by some agency staff
- Plan to include objectives, approaches (brief), rationale/ significance and relevance to Delta high priority topic areas
- Should be clear, succinct, and compelling... you want to engage your readers





Proposed Research (12 page limit)

This is the “meat” of your proposal, where you describe what you’re going to do and how you’re going to do it. The format is flexible but please address the following:

- **Abstract:** Briefly describe the proposed work, with emphasis on the relevance and contribution to Delta Science Fellows Priority Research Topics ([Appendix B](#)).
- **Introduction/Question/Objectives:** What is the question/problem being addressed? What are the goals and objectives of the proposed research? The objective(s) should be well defined and clearly stated.
- **Approach/Plan of Work:** What is the anticipated approach of the proposed research? The application should present evidence that there has been thoughtful consideration of the approach to the question under study, with a timeline for meeting objectives during the requested period of support.
- **Output/Anticipated Products and/or Benefits:** Upon commencement of the fellowship, what are the anticipated benefits to the fellow, the research mentor, community mentor(s), and to the Delta Science Program priorities and mission? What can be expected after year 1, or year 2? Please describe anticipated per-year outcomes.

Proposed Research Cont'd

- **Proposed Research** (12-page limit, not including literature citations):
 - Abstract
 - Introduction/Question/Objectives
 - Approach/Plan of Work
 - Output/Anticipated Products and/or Benefits
- **References and Literature Citations**
(not counted in 12-page limit)
- **Explanation of how research links to the high priority actions identified in Appendix B** (1-page)
- **Personal Statement** (not to exceed 2 pages)
- **CV** from the fellowship candidate (not to exceed 2 pages).
This does not count towards your 12- page limit.



Key Selection Criteria



- The quality of the research proposal including appropriateness of approach to be used and likelihood of success.
- The strength of academic performance and relevant academic achievement, and quality of applicant's career goal statement and narrative summary of experience.
- The importance of the problem to science needs identified in Appendix B.
- The research mentor's demonstrated abilities in the general area of questions addressed by the proposal.
- The expected strength of interaction that will be developed between the research institution, the community mentor and her/his organization.

Review & Selection Process



- Review Panel selected by California Sea Grant and Delta Science Program
 - Subject area experts, Delta agency scientists, program staff of CASG and DSP, and chaired by DSP Lead Scientist
 - Review of all applications
 - Recommend finalists for funding
- Final decisions made by Lead Scientist at the Delta Science Program

“Big Picture” View of the Proposal



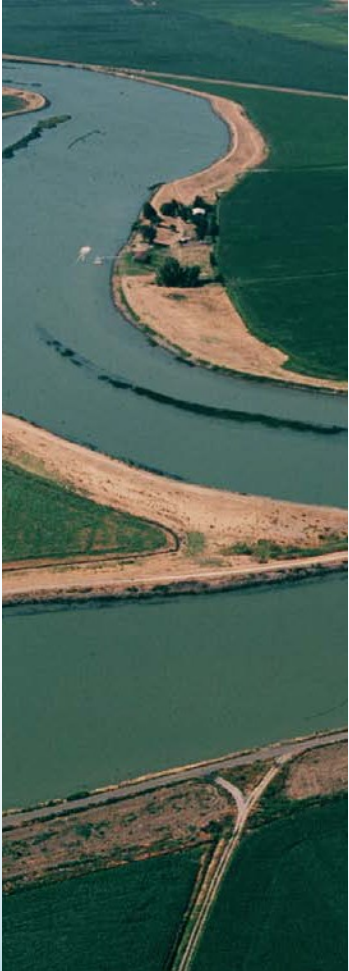
- Be Aware of Deadlines! (late proposals cannot be accepted)
- Hook Them Quickly (panel/reviewers, agency staff)
 - Project Summary and Introduction are THE KEY
- A Great Introduction Structure (Briefly):
 - What's The Problem And Why Is It Important?
 - What's Known (Only The Most Important Facts)?
 - What's Unknown And Why Is It Important To Know It?
 - What Will You Do To Address The Important Unknowns?
 - What QUESTIONS Will You Answer?

General Tips on Proposals



- Assume that you are writing for a reviewer in a somewhat related field, rather than for an expert directly in your area
- Polish your proposal extensively
 - Well-focused
 - Clear
 - Well-organized
 - Accurate, free of errors (esp. spelling, typos, grammar, budget numbers)
- Read proposal application instructions CAREFULLY and follow them EXACTLY
- Successful proposals must be a “a joy to read” and stand out from the ever increasing competition

Common Errors



- Proposal is too ambitious... promises too much for too little money and/or time, unrealistic
- Literature and background reviews are uncritical
- There are no results of pilot studies or other preliminary data
- There are no testable hypotheses (a proposal that is primarily descriptive is less favorably received)
- Proposal is fragmented and disjointed; different parts were obviously written by different colleagues and hastily assembled by the applicant
- Not enough detail or unclear research methods
- Proposal does not “fit” with the purpose of the RFA or address priority topic areas

Other Common Errors

- Introduction too long
- Plan of work and research methods too short and too vague; inadequate details to determine likelihood of success
- Inadequate expertise in the partnership
- Broader impacts to Delta policies and/or management is missing
- Relevance to coequal goals missing
- Community mentor and strength of relationship not identified
- Necessary permits not described



Important Dates



December 20, 2019 (5 p.m. PT) - Applications due to California Sea Grant College Program via eSeaGrant online submission portal

April 2020 (approximate) - Applicants notified of selection results

May 2020 (approximate) – Start date: Funds awarded to the selected Delta Science Masters, Ph.D. and postdoctoral fellows

May 2022 (approximate) – 2-year fellowship awards end. 1-year fellowships will also be considered (ending May 2021).

**** NOTE: No time or funding extensions will be granted due to the constraints inherent in the fund source**

Contact Information



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Maggie Christman

Program Manager II

916-445-0464

Maggie.Christman@deltacouncil.ca.gov



Miho Ligare

Research & Fellowship Coordinator

858-534-1160

mligare@ucsd.edu



Clarifying questions?
Thank you for your participation



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