

2018

COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND DIGITAL COAST FELLOWSHIP

2018 Coastal Management and Digital Coast Fellowship

WHAT is it?

- A fellowship established to provide on-the-job education and training opportunities in coastal resource management and policy for postgraduate students.
- A two-year opportunity that offers a competitive salary, medical benefits, and relocation and travel expense reimbursement.
- A program that matches postgraduate students with state coastal resource agencies and nonprofit organizations to work on projects proposed by the hosts and selected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management.

WHO is eligible?

- Any student completing a master's or other advanced degree in natural resource management or environmental-related studies from an accredited U.S. university between January 1, 2017, and July 31, 2018.
- Students from a broad range of environmental programs are encouraged to apply.
- Application packages are due to your local Sea Grant director by January 19, 2018.

WHERE can you get information?

- Contact the Office's fellowship coordinator at ocm.fellowships@noaa.gov
- Visit the fellowship website at www.coast.noaa.gov/fellowship
- Contact your local Sea Grant director at www.seagrant.noaa.gov/whoware/leadership/seagrantedirectors



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Fellow Eligibility and Selection

Eligibility

Any student completing a master's or other advanced degree program in natural resource management or environment-related studies at an accredited U.S. university between January 1, 2017, and July 31, 2018, is eligible to apply for the Coastal Management and Digital Coast Fellowships. Students from a broad range of environmental programs are encouraged to apply. Students from non-U.S. institutions are not eligible. All applications must include the following items:

1. Resume or curriculum vitae (not to exceed two pages using 12 pt. font).
2. Statement of the applicant's goals with emphasis on what the applicant expects from and can contribute to the fellowship experience (500 words or less).
3. Two letters of recommendation, including one from the applicant's principal professor. If no principal professor exists, the faculty member who is most familiar with the applicant's academic work may be substituted.
4. Unofficial copies of all undergraduate and graduate student transcripts.

How to Apply

Application packages must be submitted to the Sea Grant program office in the state where you earned your degree by January 19, 2018. Each Sea Grant program office may select and forward up to four applications to the NOAA Office for Coastal Management for review. Applicants from states not served by a Sea Grant program office should contact the Office's fellowship coordinator for more information on submitting an application (contact information is below).

Selection of Finalists

From the nominations submitted by Sea Grant directors, 18 finalists will be selected by a selection panel. Final decisions will be made by March 16, 2018, and all applicants will be notified of the decision by the end of the following week.

Placement of Fellows

A workshop to match hosts with fellows will take place in Charleston, South Carolina, April 23-27, 2018. Before the workshop begins, each of the 18 finalists will receive a packet of information detailing the fellowship projects, each of the host organizations, and the background of the area of assignment. No contact between prospective hosts and finalists should be made prior to the placement workshop.

The finalists will be brought to the workshop at the expense of the NOAA Office for Coastal Management for final interviews and placement. Each of the selected host organizations will send the fellow mentor to the placement workshop. The workshop will consist of program orientation, project presentations given by the hosts, finalist presentations, finalist and host interviews, and fellow matching. Of the 18 finalists selected in 2018, six will be placed with a state coastal program and three will be placed with a Digital Coast partner.



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Fellowship Projects

- Host Agency:** California Coastal Commission
Location: San Francisco, California
Project Goal: Complete several key sea level rise-related projects that include data analysis, vulnerability assessment, and stakeholder engagement to advance the coastal commission's overall planning and regulatory work on sea level rise.
- Host Agency:** CNMI Division of Coastal Resources Management
Location: Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
Project Goal: Establish and pilot a stakeholder-informed method of calculating the user capacity of impaired and emerging tourist sites in the CNMI and provide clear implementation recommendations to guide the sustainable development of a growing tourism industry.
- Host Agency:** Coastal States Organization and Association of State Floodplain Managers
Location: Washington, D.C.
Project Goal: Lead Coastal States Organization and Association of State Floodplain Managers' efforts to promote and improve the Community Rating System (CRS) as a tool to achieve coastal flood resilience, including bridging the gap for communities that do not have sufficient capacity to join or advance in the CRS.
- Host Agency:** Delaware Coastal Management Program
Location: Dover, Delaware
Project Goal: Using stakeholder input, develop a method to prioritize dredging projects in Delaware that is easily understood and accepted by the public.
- Host Agency:** Illinois Coastal Management Program
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Project Goal: Enhance coastal tourism and regional-identity branding in the three northernmost Illinois coastal communities by strengthening outreach and communications about Illinois Beach State Park.
- Host Agency:** Maine Coastal Program
Location: Augusta, Maine
Project Goal: Protect critical ecosystem services by designing and applying a method to prioritize habitats at risk and inform robust policies and strategies that will increase the resilience of important resource areas.

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Host Agency: National Association of Counties
Location: Washington, D.C.
Project Goal: Conduct original research and outreach that will help coastal counties in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi increase their long-term resilience by assessing their mitigation plans, evaluating their disaster-related spending to determine their return on investment, and ensuring their use of cutting-edge Digital Coast tools.

Host Agency: National States Geographic Information Council
Location: Anchorage, Alaska
Project Goal: Help rural Alaskan coastal communities understand flood impacts and respond to coastal storms, and develop flood impact guidance for coastal mapping on the last frontier, while working with the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys and collaborating with local, regional, state, federal, and national stakeholders.

Host Agency: Washington Coastal Zone Management Program
Location: Olympia, Washington
Project Goal: Provide coastal managers with information and tools to improve implementation of shoreline armoring regulations on Washington's Puget Sound.

For more information on the 2018 projects, please visit the fellowship website at coast.noaa.gov/fellowship/stateprojects.html or contact the fellowship coordinator at ocm.fellowships@noaa.gov.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What degree program does someone need to complete to be eligible for the fellowship?

A: For the 2018 fellowship, applicants must complete a master's or other advanced degree by July 31, 2018, to be eligible. A broad range of degrees are applicable to the fellowship because the projects are new and different each year. Previous fellows have had degrees in environmental studies, natural resource management, marine affairs, marine science, geology, public affairs, and regional land management. The most important prerequisite is an interest in coastal issues.

Q: What criteria do the Sea Grant directors use when writing their letters of endorsement?

A: The Sea Grant directors evaluate applicants based on a face-to-face or phone interview. They look for applicants who have a strong professional interest in coastal management; have experience, through internships, extracurricular activities, or jobs, in coastal activities; and have a proven ability in interpersonal, oral, and written communication.

Q: What is the length of a fellowship project?

A: Fellowship projects are two years long. For instance, the 2018 fellowship will start in August 2018 and end in August 2020. Newly selected fellows are given the opportunity to visit their host organizations prior to the start of the fellowship to meet the staff at their host organization and to look for housing.

Q: Can the fellowship hosts nominate someone for a fellowship position?

A: Fellowship hosts cannot nominate anyone to be a fellow on their project. Hosts and fellows are selected independently of one another and then matched up through a mutual interview process. Contact between applicants and hosts is not allowed. Applicants are encouraged to read about the fellowship projects on the website or to contact current fellows and ask them questions about their position or experience.

Q: Does the place where applicants live or go to school determine what project they are eligible for?

A: Not at all. Applicants are eligible for any of the projects regardless of where they live or have studied.

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Q: What is the salary for the Coastal Management and Digital Coast Fellowship?

A: The current salary is \$34,000 per year. In the second year of the fellowship, a locality pay factor may be added to the salary, depending on the location of the fellowship.

Q: How do fellows get paid?

A: All of the benefits, including salary, are administered by an outside contractor through a contract with the NOAA Office for Coastal Management.

Q: What other benefits, in addition to salary, are included as part of the fellowship?

A: Health insurance, worker's compensation, relocation reimbursement, and travel reimbursement.

Q: How much relocation reimbursement do fellows receive?

A: Fellows will be reimbursed up to \$1,000 to move to their fellowship location and up to \$1,000 to move at the end of the two-year fellowship. If relocation is not required or the fellowship is not completed, relocation reimbursement will not be provided.

Q: How much travel reimbursement do fellows receive?

A: Fellows will be reimbursed up to \$1,000 per year for professional development travel. A separate pot of money will be set aside for fellows to travel to specific meetings and conferences required by the fellowship program. Any travel related to their project will be reimbursed by the host.

Q: Do fellows have contact with one another during the fellowship?

A: The fellows see each other at three events throughout their fellowships. One is the fellows' meeting, which takes place in the summer of each odd year, and the other is a winter conference, which changes depending on the year. In even years, the fellows attend the Social Coast Forum, and in odd years they attend the Coastal GeoTools Conference.

Q: Where have previous fellows gone on to work?

A: Fifty-eight percent of fellows accepted positions with state government as their first post-fellowship job. Others accepted positions with the private sector (8 percent), the federal government (13 percent), nongovernmental organizations (8 percent), local governments (3 percent), academia (5 percent), and 5 percent went back to school.

