

## **2022-2023 Washington Sea Grant Keystone Fellowship Project Information**

### **Host Office: Port of Seattle**

### **Host location and contact information**

Port of Seattle Headquarters  
Pier 69  
2711 Alaskan Way  
Seattle, Washington 98121  
(206) 787-3000

### **Name of fellowship supervisor(s)**

Primary Supervisor: Kathleen Hurley, Sr. Environmental Program Manager, Maritime Environment & Sustainability

Additional mentors:

- Jon Sloan, Sr. Manager, Maritime Environment & Sustainability
- Danielle Butsick, Sr. Environmental Management Specialist, Permitting & Compliance
- Christina Billingsley, Sr. Program Manager, Community Engagement
- Vy Nguyen, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- TBD, Environmental Program Manager

### **Project overview**

The Keystone Fellow will play an important role in supporting the development and implementation of the Port's habitat restoration projects as well as community engagement and stewardship activities within the Green-Duwamish River Watershed and associated near-shore marine areas. The fellow will serve as a key link between the Port's maritime habitat team and the community engagement team via activities associated with the Port's [Duwamish Valley Community Equity Program](#) as well as help the Port more broadly consider the intersection between habitat stewardship and equity.

The watershed, known as Water Resource Inventory Area 9 (WRIA 9), has been heavily developed over time, degrading estuarine, riparian, and freshwater wetland environments. Development and operations by the Port and other businesses in the watershed sometimes adversely affect aquatic environments or sensitive areas. However, there are limited opportunities to complete mitigation projects in this heavily developed region. As a significant landowner and lessor in the area, the Port has the direct ability to identify, implement, and sustain offsetting habitat restoration and creation projects.

To that end, the Port of Seattle (Port) has established its [PORTfolio](#), an inventory of potential habitat restoration projects within the watershed to rehabilitate ecological functions and restore priority habitat, while facilitating sustainable growth and development throughout the region. Implementation of the projects within the PORTfolio would substantially contribute to the Port's Century Agenda goals and strategies to advance commerce and promote industrial growth in an environmentally and socially responsible way.

The Keystone Fellow will support multiple aspects of the Port's habitat program, including:

- Support habitat program tasks, such as habitat restoration planning, restoration site monitoring, participation in periodic habitat maintenance with invasive species removal, planting, and other related tasks as identified during the fellowship. This also includes innovative projects such as kelp research, floating wetland islands, blue carbon monitoring, and more.
- Provide liaison support among the activities of the Port's Maritime habitat team and the Port's community engagement team. Additionally, the fellow will participate in activities/projects associated with the Port Community Action team, Georgetown and South Park neighborhoods groups, and the Duwamish Valley Youth Corps.
- Engage with Port teams to strengthen the linkage between habitat restoration, stewardship, community engagement and equity.
- The fellowship will provide a unique opportunity to work at the crossroads of economic, environmental, and community equity policies.

The fellow is expected to conduct their work through an equity lens and build on the partnerships between the Port and our neighboring communities. Please see Keystone Alignment section below.

### **About the Port of Seattle**

As a special-purpose municipal corporation, the Port serves King County and operates the Seattle seaport and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (STIA). The Port's mission is "to create good jobs here and across the state by advancing trade and commerce, promoting manufacturing and maritime growth, and stimulating economic development". The Port owns and manages many properties and seeks to maximize the public assets in their portfolio, with an eye toward best uses and environmental sustainability.

### **Mentorship, professional development, and networking opportunities**

The fellow will be part of the Port's Maritime Environment and Sustainability Department, a passionate team of 25 scientists, planners, and specialists that manage all the environmental programs for the Maritime and Economic Development Divisions. The Port aims to provide a meaningful professional experience to the Fellow via application of their academic and professional skills to projects, issues, and emerging topics facing the Port. Tasks will be diverse and can change to accommodate the interests and academic background of the Fellow. Broadly, the Fellow will provide technical support for the Sustainable Shorelines program, habitat stewardship activities, habitat monitoring, community science, and science communications.

The fellow will be offered a performance and development plan that aligns with project goals and the fellow's career goals. Staff will regularly check-in to discuss progress and conduct a final performance evaluation at the end of the fellowship. This process is similar to that used by the Port of Seattle for full-time staff and to establish a clear framework for expectations and career growth.

The Port will encourage the fellow to plan, facilitate, and attend all coordination meetings and other relevant events that align with the fellow's interest. The Port supports the fellow gaining a deeper understanding of coastal management and environmental restoration issues and approaches from the perspective of a special purpose district charged with promoting economic development without compromising environmental performance. The fellow will have opportunities to apply science-based solutions and an equity lens to complex marine and coastal issues, grow their professional network, and showcase their knowledge and expertise to a broad audience including elected officials.

### **Keystone Alignment Statement**

The Port's [Vision](#) is to develop a Port that mirrors — throughout its breadth of operations and services and within its leadership structure — the diversity of our community, instills principles of equity in its culture, and ensures a fair and intentional distribution of opportunities to expand economic development and quality of life for all.

The Port of Seattle commits to taking a lead role in regional and national efforts to achieve equity and social justice. The Port is making progress on these goals via initiatives such as the Equity Index, the South King County Community Impact Fund, and Workforce Development programs. The Equity Index was created by the Port of Seattle's Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as a tool for the Port to understand social and environmental disparities that exist within the region and use that information to direct resources towards the areas of greatest need. Port staff uses the Equity Index to equitably guide funding decisions and broadly inform policy decisions across the Port. The Port of Seattle established the South King County Community Impact Fund (SKCCIF) to develop equity-based partnerships and provide resources and support in historically underserved near-airport communities. The fund will award \$10 million between 2019 and 2023 to address noise mitigation, environmental health and sustainability in these ethnically and culturally diverse communities.

Additionally, in December 2019, the Port of Seattle Commission adopted the Duwamish Valley Community Benefits Commitment. This program seeks to improve capacity-building, promote a healthy environment, and foster economic prosperity within near-Port communities.

The Fellow will support work to better integrate the Port's equity commitments in the maritime habitat and stewardship program, support data analysis with the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and program implementation with the community engagement team to identify new opportunities to achieve these goals.

### **Diversity, equity, and inclusion statement**

#### **Port of Seattle Equity Statement**

The Port of Seattle commits to being a leader in the regional and national efforts to achieve equity and social justice. We are identifying and dismantling structural barriers to ensure that historically oppressed communities, particularly communities of color, have access to the resources they need to thrive. Bias and oppression are embedded in our society, systems, and our organization. By failing to acknowledge inequities, we play a role in perpetuating them. We can and must do better. In order to achieve equitable outcomes for all our communities, we must be accountable for equitable and effective policies that ensure racial, social, and economic justice are achieved in strategies, practices, and projects.

Our vision is to develop a Port that mirrors — throughout its breadth of operations and services and within its leadership hierarchy — the diversity of our community, instills principles of equity in its culture, and ensures a fair and intentional distribution of opportunities with the goal of expanding economic development and quality of life for all.

### **Why we are committed to equity**

For too long, many in our region, including the Port of Seattle, have benefitted from white-dominant culture and comfortably operated in an unjust, racist society. Our institutional practices made it difficult for people of color and women to thrive and gain leadership positions, businesses owned by women and people of color to win contracts, and diverse communities in our surrounding area to contribute meaningfully to our decision-making processes.

We recognize that without greater emphasis on root causes of inequity, our organization will always face an uphill challenge to achieve our public service mission for all members of the public. We also recognize the negative impact this lack of equity has had on our ability to create a region with shared prosperity.

The Port of Seattle views diversity as a source of innovation and strength. Leading our efforts with a racial equity lens allows a specific, strategic focus that can develop structural approaches for all forms of oppression. Because racial oppression is so foundational to our country's origins — from mass exploitation of Native American populations to the enslavement of Black Americans — it forms the language, logic, and structure for all types of discrimination.

Through developing an organizationally cross-cutting Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI), we are building capacity to address institutional racism within the Port and to transform policies, practices, and processes. This new capacity will also improve our ability to address other forms of oppression — such as sexism and heterosexism — and shift power structures that give the communities most impacted a seat at the table and power to guide decisions that impact their lives.

### **What we will do**

The Port has taken significant steps in adjusting current practices and moving toward equitable outcomes. These efforts include:

- Our Duwamish Community Equity program
- Our racial equity toolkit and pilot programs
- Becoming a Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE) member.

By identifying and addressing the root causes of inequities, OEDI will deepen current efforts and further catalyze organization-wide, systemic change.

In 2020, OEDI will conduct a variety of foundational initiatives. In order to achieve our vision, we will lead employee and leadership trainings to normalize conversations and improve understanding about equity at the Port, participate in strategic planning to infuse equity in all strategies and objectives, and collaborate with the Commission office to embed equitable policies Port-wide.

## How we will do it

While we are not ranking systems of oppression, we have learned from experts and partners around the country that implementing a strategy focused on racial equity will lead to equitable outcomes for all; dismantling the foundational elements that enable racism to continue will weaken the structures on which all oppression depends and benefit those who experience sexism, ableism, and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and socioeconomic class.

The concept of **Normalize, Organize, and Operationalize** undergirds the OEDI strategic plan. The Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) has developed this as a way to think about systemic change for equity. These are three stages (though not necessarily linear) that equity activities can fall into, and all are important to achieve comprehensive system change.

**Normalize:** Foster discussions about race and equity at the Port by having leadership, management, and all staff model behavior, hosting learning events, and setting the tone for leadership and employee dialogues.

**Organize:** Build infrastructure and capacity to implement equity practices by creating policy and completing an equity planning process. This process will include establishing definitions, vision and values and creating staff capacity, and strengthening relationships with community partners.

**Operationalize:** Develop all the elements that allow equity principles to be fully integrated into day-to-day operations including budgeting with an equity lens, creating accountability mechanisms, and ensuring engagement by both Port staff and the public.