

2023

C o a s t a l | m a n a g e m e n t F e l l o w s h i p

Fellow Eligibility and Selection

Eligibility

Any U.S. citizen who will complete a master's or other advanced degree at an accredited U.S. university between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2023, is eligible to apply for the Coastal Management Fellowships. Students from a broad range of programs are encouraged to apply. A variety of degrees are applicable to the fellowship because the projects are new and different each year.

To read about the 2023 projects, visit [Coastal Management Fellowship projects](#) and [Digital Coast Fellowship projects](#) in early December 2022. Previous fellows have had degrees in environmental studies, natural resource management, marine affairs, marine science, geology, public affairs, communications, social sciences, and regional land management. The most important prerequisite is an interest in coastal issues. Students who are not U.S. citizens or who attend 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 point font).
2. Statement of the applicant's goals with emphasis on what the applicant expects from and can contribute to the fellowship experience. This should also include how the fellowship can help reach goals that may be difficult to reach without the fellowship opportunity. Include any obstacles that have been overcome to reach this point in your academic career (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.

Any additional materials submitted will not be considered in the selection process. If you are selected as a finalist, an additional writing sample will be requested.

How to Apply

Application packages must be submitted to the Sea Grant program office in the state where you earned your degree by January 27, 2023. Each Sea Grant program office may select and forward up to three applications to NOAA for review. In order to increase diversity in the fellowship, Sea Grant may submit one additional application from a candidate who attended a [minority serving institution](#), for a total of four. The fourth nomination spot is reserved solely for minority serving institution candidates.

Applicants from states not served by a Sea Grant program office should contact the [fellowship coordinator](#) for more information on [submitting an application](#).

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Selection of Finalists

From the nominations submitted by Sea Grant directors, 12 finalists will be selected by a panel. Final decisions will be made by March 24, 2023, and all applicants will be notified of the decision by the end of the following week.

Finalists will be selected using the following criteria::

- Statement of the applicant's goals. How well does it emphasize what the applicant expects from and can contribute to the fellowship experience? Does it address how the fellowship can help reach goals that may be difficult to reach without the fellowship opportunity? Consider any obstacles the candidate may have overcome.
- Diversity of educational background and quality of academic performance
- Candidate experience, including life experience, internships, volunteer experience, extracurricular activities, and jobs
- Scholarships, awards, honors, and acknowledgements
- Endorsement letter from the applicant's Sea Grant director
- Support from two letters of recommendation, including one from the applicant's principal professor. The letters should demonstrate knowledge of the applicant and their abilities.

Placement of Fellows

The Coastal Management Fellowship matching process will take place in late April 2023. The process will consist of program orientation by NOAA, project presentations by the hosts, presentations by the finalists, and two rounds of interviews.

The finalists will be brought to Charleston at the expense of NOAA. Before the workshop begins, each of the finalists will be able to review the fellowship projects on the fellowship website. Each of the selected host organizations will send the fellow mentor to the placement workshop. No contact between prospective hosts and finalists should be made prior to the placement workshop. Candidates and hosts will submit their top choices of placement to NOAA, and NOAA will match fellows with hosts.

Of the 10 finalists selected in 2023, up to five will be placed with a state coastal program. If a host does not find a suitable candidate during the matching process, it will be given the option to defer fellow placement for one year. Hosts will only be allowed one deferment before they have to reapply.

For more information on the 2023 state projects, please visit the fellowship website at coast.noaa.gov/fellowship/coastalmanagement.html. 2023 projects will be posted in early December. Contact the fellowship coordinator with any questions at ocm.fellowships@noaa.gov.

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Fellowship Projects

Host Agency: Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Location: Hartford, Connecticut
Project Title: ImPACT: Improving Public Access in CT
Project Goal: Spearhead a multipronged approach for addressing coastal public access needs in Connecticut through an equity and environmental justice lens.

Host Agency: Maine Coastal Program
Location: Augusta, Maine
Project Title: Implementing Maine's Climate Action Plan through Innovation in Municipal Training and Technical Assistance
Project Goal: Help Maine's vulnerable coastal communities implement Maine's Climate Action Plan, by designing, conducting and evaluating an innovative municipal outreach and technical assistance program.

Host Agency: U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources
Location: St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands
Project Title: Development of Territorial Parks & Protected Areas Biological and Cultural Surveys and Database
Project Goal: Inventory newly established park lands managed by the DPNR Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas for natural and cultural resources and share the results with the community.

Host Agency: Washington Department of Ecology Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program
Location: Olympia, Washington
Project Title: Improving Shoreline Public Access in Washington's Coastal Zone
Project Goal: Develop resources and tools for Washington that support the use, preservation, and expansion of shoreline public access with a focus on increasing equity and environmental justice.

Host Agency: Coastal States Organization
Location: Washington, D.C.
Project Title: Systemic Change Around Justice and Equity within State Coastal Zone Management Programs
Project Goal: Support coastal states' and territories' ability to integrate the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and accessibility across the National Coastal Zone Management Program by providing technical assistance, capacity, and relationship building support.

For more information on the 2022 state projects, please visit the fellowship website at coast.noaa.gov/fellowship/coastalmanagement.html. Contact the fellowship coordinator at ocm.fellowships@noaa.gov.

Matching Our Partners With Future Coastal Managers



2023

C o a s t a l | m a n a g e m e n t F e l l o w s h i p

2023 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).

WHO is eligible?

- Any student completing a master's or other advanced degree from an accredited U.S. university between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2023. Students must also be U.S. citizens. Students from a broad range of programs are encouraged to apply.
- Application packages are due to your local Sea Grant director by January 27, 2023.

WHERE can you get information?

- Contact the 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/About

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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 2023 fellowship, applicants must complete a master's or other advanced degree between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2023, to be eligible. We encourage candidates from a broad range of degree programs to apply for 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, communications, 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 demonstrate a strong interest in coastal management, life experiences, 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 2023 fellowship will start in August 2023 and end in August 2025. 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.

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

A: The current salary is \$42,000 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. *(over)*

Matching Our Partners With Future Coastal Managers



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Coastal Management Fellowship

Q: How do fellows get paid?

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

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

A: Health insurance, worker's compensation, relocation stipend, 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: Coastal Management Fellows will be reimbursed up to \$8,400 for professional development and travel over the two-year fellowship. A portion of this money must be used to travel to specific meetings and conferences required by the fellowship program. These include a summer fellowship meeting, the Social Coast Forum, and the Coastal GeoTools Conference. Digital Coast Fellows are provided up to \$11,600, and are required to attend two in-person Digital Coast partnership meetings in addition to the three required meetings mentioned above. Fellows may use the remainder of these funds at their discretion to attend conferences, workshops, or trainings (prior approval from NOAA and their host organization is required). Any travel requested by the fellowship host, such as travel required to complete the fellowship project or travel to the host organization's annual conference, must be covered by the host and should be considered when budgeting for hosting a fellow.

Q: Do fellows have contact with each other during the fellowship?

A: The fellows see each other in person at three events throughout their fellowships—the Social Coast Forum, the Coastal GeoTools Conference, and a fellowship meeting. Fellows also connect with each other through regularly scheduled virtual gatherings, including meetings, trainings, and social happy hours. The quarterly fellowship newsletter, Fellow News, also helps fellows learn more about each other and their work.

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.

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Q: Does the fellowship have a diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) value statement?

A: Yes, the four NOAA Office for Coastal Management fellowship programs share a [DEIJ value statement](#). “Our office is committed to making coastal fellowships accessible to all interested and eligible candidates, allowing all fellows to be comfortable in their identities and participate fully in their fellowships, and removing barriers to becoming part of the next generation of coastal leaders.”

Q: How does the fellowship define diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice?

A: **Diversity**¹: there are many different kinds of diversity, based on race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, country of origin, education, religion, geography, physical, or cognitive abilities. Valuing diversity means recognizing differences between people, acknowledging that these differences are a valued asset, and striving for diverse representation as a critical step towards equity.

Equity²: the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Inclusion¹: being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and quantitative representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation, with a true sense of belonging and full access to opportunities.

Justice³: the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys: the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards; and, equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

1: from Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation Race Reporting Guide

2: from Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (EO 13985).

3: from the US EPA's definition for environmental justice

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What's new in 2022?

Q: What happened during the fellowship pause in 2021?

A: The fellowship team conducted a “refresh” of the program in 2021 with the help of fellowship partners, including state coastal management program managers and mentors, Digital Coast partners, Sea Grant partners, and former fellows. This group developed the recommendations listed [here](#).

Q: What changes were made to the host requirement?

- A:
- The \$15,000 host match does not have to come from non-federal funds.
 - Project proposals must describe how the project will consider diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or justice in the project proposal.
 - Project proposals must describe how staff at the host office are working (e.g., in the office, telework, or some combination), how the host intends the fellow to work, and how they will ensure the fellowship experience is successful in this work environment.

Q: What changes were made to the candidate requirements?

- A:
- The goal statement should include what the candidate expects from and can contribute to the fellowship experience. This should also include how the fellowship can help reach goals that may be difficult to reach without the fellowship opportunity. The candidate should include any obstacles that have been overcome to reach this point in their academic career.
 - To be eligible for the fellowship, candidates must have completed their latest degree no more than two years prior to the fellowship start date. For the 2023 fellowship, eligible candidates must have completed their degree between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2023. This was increased from the former limit of 1.5 years.

Q: What changes were made to Sea Grant's role?

- A:
- Sea Grant nominates candidate applications to NOAA. In 2023, Sea Grant programs can nominate up to three candidates from their state. In order to support an increase in diversity in the fellowship, Sea Grant may submit one additional application from a candidate that attended a minority serving institution, for a total of four. The fourth nomination spot is reserved solely for minority serving institution candidates.