



MICHIGAN SEA GRANT UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN + MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## Michigan Sea Grant Graduate Research Fellowship Proposal Guidelines (2021)

Michigan Sea Grant is offering one-or two-year fellowships from 2022-2024 for graduate students enrolled full-time at Michigan universities and colleges who are interested in research relevant to the Great Lakes. The fellowship supports exceptional graduate students (Masters or Ph.D.) engaged in research relevant to the Great Lakes, ongoing agency research, and to the [Michigan Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#). This fellowship will provide support for a student's research up to \$50,000 total per fellowship that could include tuition, stipend, travel, and research expenses. The fellowship requires a 50% non-federal match (e.g. faculty salary). It will be available in February 2022, but the fellowship can begin in either 2022 or 2023, as appropriate, concluding by January 31, 2024.

Research fellows will work with an agency sponsor to ensure results are useful and contribute to ongoing Great Lakes research and with faculty member at an accredited institution in Michigan. Agencies could include federal, state, and tribal agencies, NGOs, and local governments that conduct research on Great Lakes coastal issues and could include natural or social science research. Applicants submit a brief proposal for their research as part of the selection process and are expected to have letters of support from agency and faculty sponsors. Interactions with agency and MISG professionals are expected to enhance academic and professional development opportunities.

### Application Submission Information

#### Online Submission Process:

- Graduate Fellows will submit their application package by 5 p.m. (EST), May 24, 2021. A pre-proposal is not required for the fellowship.
- Please allow sufficient time for all application materials to be received before the deadline. Late applications will not be accepted. We suggest that fellowship applicants access the [Fellowship Application Submission Form](#) to complete Parts 1 and 2 at least two weeks before the deadline. This step will initiate a system-generated request for recommendation letters and allow enough time for those letters to be received by the deadline.
- After applicants complete Part 2 of the online application form, the academic advisor and agency sponsor will receive a system-generated request for the letter of recommendation with instructions on how to log in and upload the letter as a PDF.
- After completing Parts 1 and 2 of the online application (be sure to click "save"), applicants will receive an email with a Fellowship Code that is required for logging in to complete the online submission.
- Complete [Budget Form 90-4](#) (XLS) to describe the proposed budget. Upload this as part of the online application.
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### Proposal Requirements: Research Fellowship

- **Research project narrative:** 1-2 pages describing the goals, approach including theoretical background if applicable, methods, and expected outcomes and how this research is relevant to the sponsoring agency.
- **Career goal statement:** 1 page maximum describing the student's career objectives and how the proposed research project will help to support those objectives.
- **Undergraduate and graduate transcripts:** Unofficial copies are acceptable.
- **Letters of recommendation:** One from primary academic advisor and one from an agency sponsor.



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- **Budget:** The budget should outline proposed expenses (e.g., tuition, stipend, research expenses, travel, supplies, etc.) up to \$50,000 total and a timeline for up to 2 years. The budget should also indicate the source and allocation of the 50% non-federal match (e.g., \$25,000 non-federal match for a \$50,000 funding request from MISG for a total of \$75,000 for the project).
  - Use [Budget Form 90-4](#) (XLS) to develop the proposed budget. Each year must be separately detailed in the budget spreadsheet, including budget justification, with an overall project budget summary included, as well.
  - Commitment Letter confirming match requirement from university/institution.
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV):** Two pages maximum and must include contact information for the graduate student applicant and primary advisor(s).
- **Data Management:** NOAA regulations require a data management plan to make data available within two years of award completion. If you will generate new data, you will be required to submit a data management plan as part of your final proposal. The MISG data management plan can be found [here](#).
- **NEPA:** All research projects are required by NOAA under the National Environmental Protection Act to submit an abbreviated Environmental Compliance Questionnaire. The form can be found on this [webpage](#), and MISG research staff are available to assist you with filling out the form.

**Note: please attach the Data Management and NEPA forms as an addendum to your proposal and submit with the proposal package as one pdf.**

Please note that applications that do not meet the requirements specified above may be rejected without review.

## Proposal Evaluation: Research Fellowships

Fellowship applications will be evaluated on the five criteria listed below:

- a) **Quality of Research Proposal and Integration with Agency Research:** Is the research proposal clearly stated and the outcomes achievable? Does the proposed research topic address a relevant agency concern or question? (30 pts)
- b) **Research and Career Goals of the Student:** How does the student's proposed project fit in with their stated career aspirations? Will the proposed project benefit the student's stated research or career goals? (30 pts)
- c) **Academic Ability and Relevancy:** How does the student's academic history support the proposed research topic? Does the student's educational background and experience lend itself to the successful execution of the proposed research topic? (10 pts)
- d) **Communication Skills:** How well can the student communicate with a variety of stakeholder audiences, both technical and non-technical? (10 pts)
- e) **Support from Faculty and Agency Advisors:** What kind of support will the student receive from faculty and relevant agency advisors? (20 pts)

Three external reviewers, possibly including representatives from Great Lakes agencies (state or federal) and academia, will review all qualified Graduate Research Fellowships proposals. Members of the MISG Management Team and two of the external reviewers will interview fellowship applicants in mid-to-late summer 2021. The MISG Management Team will make funding decisions based on external reviews and rankings, with consideration for availability of funding, prior award performance of applicants, balance across institutions, focus areas, and applicant diversity, as well as programmatic needs, objectives, and priorities. Notification of funding decisions will occur in September 2021, and fellowship research will be conducted within the 2-year period from February 1, 2022, through January 31, 2024.



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**About the Michigan Sea Grant Research Program**

*Michigan Sea Grant supported research studies an array of issues affecting the Great Lakes and Michigan’s coastal areas, including Integrated Assessments and basic research. The goals are to develop information, create tools and build partnerships that will improve decision making for particularly challenging coastal issues in the state and to fulfill critical research needs for the Great Lakes and coastal systems. See: [www.michiganseagrant.org/research](http://www.michiganseagrant.org/research)*

**About Michigan Sea Grant**

*Michigan Sea Grant helps to foster economic growth and protect Michigan’s coastal, Great Lakes resources through research, education and outreach. See: [www.michiganseagrant.org](http://www.michiganseagrant.org)*