

Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship

Application Deadline: December 14, 2018

Fellowship Start Date: July 1, 2019

Virginia Sea Grant (VASG) and the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) are now soliciting applications for the 2019 Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship. This twelve month paid fellowship is intended to provide educational and professional development opportunities for post-graduates interested in Virginia's coastal and marine resources. Fellows receive on-the-job training by working with a Virginia host office to address pressing coastal and marine resource issues, while learning about the policy and management process occurring at the state level. Selected finalists for the fellowship will interview with prospective host offices to find the best fit for the fellow. VASG, VEE, and their partners anticipate supporting one to two post-graduate fellows starting on July 1, 2019. This announcement and guidance on how to submit your application can be found at: <https://vaseagrant.org/>

FELLOWSHIP DESCRIPTION

The Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship is sponsored by VASG and VEE, as well as the participating host offices. Modeled after the highly successful national Sea Grant Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship, the goal of the fellowship is to develop and support exceptional post-graduates by partnering them with a host office mentor where they receive on-the-job training and hone their professional skills, while improving the stewardship of the Commonwealth's coastal and marine resources. The program also aims to increase the capacity of the host offices by supporting fellows who are working on mission-relevant programs, and leveraging the knowledge and capacity of Virginia's academic institutions.

VASG is currently recruiting host offices among local and state government agencies, and non-government organizations (NGOs). As an example, previous fellows were placed at Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Marine Resource Commission, and The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve. These fellows worked on a myriad of issues including: total maximum daily load and water pollution; shoreline erosion; coastal community resilience; coordinating environmental document reviews and comments, and blue crab fisheries management.

SPONSORS

Virginia Environmental Endowment aims to improve the quality of the environment by using its capital, expertise, and resources to encourage all sectors to work together to prevent pollution, conserve natural resources, and promote environmental literacy. Established in 1977, VEE has worked collaboratively as a leading independent grant-maker, improving environmental quality, advancing environmental literacy, and partnering to establish land trusts, conservation networks, and a statewide mediation center.

In Collaboration With



Virginia Sea Grant advances the resilience and sustainability of Virginia's coastal and marine ecosystems and the communities that depend upon them. As a broker of scientific information, VASG works with resource managers, businesses, communities, and other stakeholders to provide and apply the best science and information available. We do this through funding, and by conducting research, education, outreach, and communication services. VASG is a federal-state partnership, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with matching funds from our seven-university partners. Hosted at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at William & Mary, VASG's other partner institutions include: University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, and George Mason, James Madison, Old Dominion, and Virginia Commonwealth Universities.

ELIGIBILITY

Graduate students close to completing their degree (Masters, Ph.D., or J.D.) in a coastal- or marine-related or relevant field at a Virginia university or college are eligible to apply. Recent graduates who completed their degree at a Virginia university or college, graduating in the spring semester 2018 or after are also eligible. Applicants should demonstrate a strong interest and some experience in coastal or marine resource policy and management (e.g., course work, internships, independent study, etc.). Fellows *must* complete all degree requirements prior to starting the fellowship.

The fellowship sponsors and hosts are committed to building inclusive research, extension, communication and education programs that serve people with diverse backgrounds, circumstances, needs, perspectives, and ways of thinking. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and/or health status, religion, veteran status, geographic origin and socio-economic status.

AWARD INFORMATION

VASG and VEE anticipate supporting one to two post-graduate fellows for the 2019 Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship. The length of the fellowship assignment is twelve months and is nonrenewable. The start date for the fellowship is July 1, 2019. All Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellows are considered *true fellows* by VASG and William & Mary, who are placed in a host office. Each fellow receive \$35,000 in stipend support for the twelve-month assignment, and \$5,000 for critical expenses (e.g., insurance, if needed) and professional development activities (e.g., travel, registration, or other expenses to participate in conferences, workshops, VASG-sponsored professional development training, etc.).

FELLOWSHIP REQUIREMENTS

In addition to their work responsibilities to the host office, selected fellows will be required to support VASG's Communication Center's efforts to publicize their fellowship activities, participate in periodic meetings including the fellowship orientation and the VASG Graduate Symposium, and submit a final report at the conclusion of the fellowship. Regular contact between VASG and the fellows occurs throughout the year, and fellows are encouraged to update VASG with future educational and professional activities and plans.

HOST-FELLOW RELATIONSHIP

The Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship is an innovative professional training experience and educational opportunity that will benefit both fellows and the host offices. As an integral foundation of the program, the fellows and host must be aware and sensitive to each other's mutual responsibilities, and the goals of the fellowship. Fellows are expected to honor the working protocols of the host office and contributed to useful and relevant products that meet the host office's mission. The host is expected to provide opportunities for involvement in substantive projects that contribute to the fellow's professional development, education, and career goals, as well as provide adequate and appropriate mentorship for the fellow.

Specifically, all host offices have agreed to: 1) Deliver an orientation that introduces their mission and goals, priorities, staff, and activities; 2) Provide opportunities for substantive involvement in, and contribution to their program's activities, including a focused project and work tasks for the duration of the fellowship; 3) Supply a professional mentor and coach who will develop an *Individualized Professional Development* plan with the fellow, and regularly engage with him/her during the 12 months; and 4) Provide a work space, supplies, travel expenses, etc. necessary to accomplish the fellow's tasks.

HOW TO APPLY

Intent to Apply

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact VASG's Fellowship and Research Program Coordinator, Sam Lake (contact information below), to indicate their interest in the fellowship, discuss the application process, and to schedule their virtual interview.

Application Requirements

For all application elements outlined below, use Calibri or Times New Roman font. Font size can be no smaller than 11 point, and margins must be at least one inch on standard 8.5x11 inch paper. VASG recommends submitting all application elements as PDF documents; however, application elements I-III are required to be submitted as a single PDF document.

- I. ***Personal and Career Goal Statement*** (1,000 words or less)—The statement should emphasize the applicant's ambitions, professional growth interests and objectives, and how their experiences and competencies contribute toward their short- (1-5yr) and long-term (>5yr) goals. The statement should highlight what the applicant expects to gain from the fellowship and how it relates to their career aspirations.
- II. ***Resume or CV*** (two-page maximum)—Must include the applicant's name and contact information (including address, phone number, and email address). Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate the diversity of their education and work experience, honors and awards, extra-curricular activities, volunteer history, and interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills.
- III. ***Undergraduate and Graduate Transcripts***—Clear, scanned copies of all undergraduate and graduate student transcripts. Unofficial copies are acceptable but must clearly indicate the name of institution, degree program, courses taken, and GPAs. Transcripts should be included in reverse chronological order (i.e., newest transcripts first).
- IV. ***Recommendation Letters***—Three letters of recommendation, including one from the student's primary faculty advisor or appropriate major professor. If no major professor exists, a letter from the faculty member who is most familiar with the applicant's academic experience may be substituted.

The sponsors encourages applicants to request at least one letter from a non-academic source, i.e., someone who can speak to your strengths and potential from a different perspective than your academic references. Referees are strongly encouraged to speak to a candidate's professional skills and potential, as well as previous performance and accomplishments.

To maintain confidentiality, letters of recommendation should be submitted directly from the referee to VASG through eSeaGrant and must be submitted by the application deadline to be considered. Please address letters to Dr. Troy Hartley, Director Virginia Sea Grant. Late submissions may lead to the rejection of incomplete applications.



Application Submission

Applications must be submitted online via eSeaGrant (<http://vaseagrants.ecsion.com>) by **5:00 pm EST on Friday, December 14, 2018**. If you plan to apply, we strongly recommend notifying VASG and registering for eSeaGrant at least two weeks in advance of the deadline. Notifications can be sent as a short, simple email expressing your interest in the fellowship. Please reference "Commonwealth Fellowship" in the subject line.

Instructions on how to register and start an application on eSeaGrant are included below. Additional instructions can be found on the VASG website (<https://vaseagrants.org/>) and on eSeaGrant.

Applicants can register for eSeaGrant by visiting the website, selecting the "Register" tab, and completing the required information. If you do not receive a "welcome" email with login credentials shortly after registering, please contact Sam Lake.

To start a fellowship application, or edit an existing application, click on "Current Tasks" on the banner head, and select "Add Fellowship Application" under "2019 Commonwealth Coastal & Marine Policy Fellowship." Once you have added the fellowship application to your Current Tasks, you must progress down through the sequence of application sections ("Start Here" through "Submission Preview") listed on the left side of the window to submit the application. Guidance related to these sections follows, in sequence. Please note: some sections may require additional pop-up pages. Please allow your browser to display pop-up windows and enable JavaScript.

Application elements I-III must be converted to a single PDF document before uploading to eSeaGrant. Adherence to the format requirements and page limits is mandatory, and ensures fairness across all applications. Applications not meeting these requirements may be rejected without review.

To preserve confidentiality, letters of recommendations must be uploaded directly from the referees to VASG through eSeaGrant. Applicants must identify and submit requests to their referees through eSeaGrant, by entering their names and email addresses on the corresponding section.

All elements, including recommendation letters, must be submitted by the deadline. VASG will not accept late applications under any circumstances (e.g., internet delays), so please allow ample time to submit your application in advance of the deadline. Confirmation of the application and recommendation letters will be automatically generated and sent by eSeaGrant. If you do not receive confirmation shortly after submitting your application, please contact Sam Lake.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

VASG will first review all applications to assure that they are complete and adhere to all application guidelines. Applicants will be invited to participate in a virtual interview with the fellowship selection committee, which could be composed of the funders, potential hosts, and VASG stakeholder advisors. The committee will select finalists based upon the submitted application materials and virtual interviews. The selection criteria will be based on the applicant's academic and professional performance and potential, professional and career goals, relevant and qualifying experience, communication and professional skills, and supporting recommendations and endorsements.

The placement of the selected finalists will be based on in-person interviews with the host offices, and ranking of preferences by both finalists and participating hosts. Consequently, placement to a specific host cannot be guaranteed.



TENTATIVE TIMELINE FOR FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION

Fellowship announcement released	September 2018
Applications due to VASG by 5:00 p.m. EST	December 14, 2018
Virtual interviews	January 2019
Notification of finalists	February 2019
Selected finalists interview with host offices	February 2019
Fellows notified of placements	March 2019
Placements announced	April 2019
Fellowship begins	July 1, 2019

Period of fellowship: twelve-months

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

VASG has secured funding for the 2019 fellowship year, a determination of future fellowship announcements will be dependent upon review and assessment by the sponsors and host offices. It is the sponsors' hope that the Commonwealth Coastal and Marine Policy Fellowship becomes a mainstay of Virginia's coastal and marine resource management community, although future award notifications will be contingent upon the availability and timeliness of federal appropriations.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Sam Lake, VASG Fellowship and Research Program Coordinator to indicate their interest in the fellowship, and to discuss the application process. VASG will visit each partner institution in late September or October 2018 to discuss all of VASG's fellowship announcements, and answer questions. Please contact Sam Lake for more information on these informational sessions.

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