



2025 National Wildlife Federation Graduate Student Research Fellowship Request for Applications

Topic: NWF Native Plant Habitat Education Research Fellow

Location: Remote, any U.S. location

Background: The National Wildlife Federation, America's largest and most trusted conservation organization, has been on the front lines for wildlife since 1936, fighting for the conservation values that are woven into the fabric of our nation's collective heritage. In 1973, the National Wildlife Federation launched what is now known as the Certified Wildlife Habitat® program, which formally recognizes citizens for their commitment to providing habitat for wildlife in their own outdoor spaces, including home gardens, workplaces, community greenspaces, and more. Today, over 315,000 sites have been recognized as Certified Wildlife Habitats and researchers across varied fields have been working diligently to show the impact that this kind of gardening has on wildlife, biodiversity, people, and climate.

Priority Goals of Fellowship:

- Create a literature review of the impacts of gardening for wildlife and Certified Wildlife Habitat landscapes on wildlife, biodiversity, people, and climate.
- Help create and administer a survey of affiliates, community, and municipal leaders, partners to identify municipal policy change levers, ordinances, or incentives that advance native plant habitat and sustainable practices at a local level.
- Explore platform options and propose solutions for mapping of NWF habitat sites.

Research Strategies could include, but are not limited to:

- Online research of existing academic research to identify results related to the impact of wildlife gardening methods (e.g. avoiding pesticides, planting native species, and providing water sources).
- Provide a summary of findings from the literature review including a list of relevant research conducted in this area, patterns and results across studies, and gaps in the research available.
- Create a survey to send to affiliate partner organizations and community leaders to gather information on municipal policy barriers and supports to creating native plant habitat.
- Define requirements with Native Plant Habitat team in order to research the best software or platform to display scale of NWF's habitat scale.

Qualifications:

- Ability to gather and interpret relevant data and report findings
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Familiarity with Arc GIS or other mapping programs ideal

- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- An entrepreneurial spirit, initiative and energy
- The ability to use initiative and work autonomously in addition to team working skills

Fellowship Program Requirements:

- Participate in a Fellowship kick-off call - date TBD.
- Create project plan for a 4-6 month Fellowship term based on agreed upon Fellowship goal.
- Participate in periodic phone check-ins with NWF staff about project status and responsibilities.
- Submit biweekly project updates throughout the Fellowship detailing the progress you have made and plans for the duration of your Fellowship.
- Develop a summary report of findings and programmatic recommendations

NWF Values:

Your actions are expected to reflect the staff values of the National Wildlife Federation: collaboration, mindfulness, empowerment, inclusivity, and mission focus. Your competencies should include:

- Being motivated by values of equity and responsibility to all individuals.
- Consistently bringing a high level of empathy and social skills to work and interpersonal interactions.
- Actively seeks feedback, direction, and guidance from all team members and keeps staff informed of decisions that impact them.
- Passion for and commitment to NWF's mission of uniting all Americans to ensure wildlife and people thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Applicants are invited to learn more about National Wildlife Federation's required equity competencies at <https://www.nwf.org/About-Us/Careers>.

Perks and Privileges:

- \$5,000 stipend
- Professional development resources, assistance, and networking
- Possibility of academic credit for successful completion of the project, as an independent study or integration of fellowship project into course curricula

Eligibility: Graduate students from any college or university within the U.S. are eligible to apply and if awarded the Fellowship must submit a W-9 and provide proof of valid work authorization to receive stipend payment. Applications are invited from students in all disciplines and are not limited to environmental studies majors. Current and former employees of National Wildlife Federation and former NWF Campus Ecology Fellows are ineligible to apply. Former NWF interns are eligible to apply following one year from their final work date. The name on the application must be limited to **one individual** and the Fellowship reporting, training, or other requirements cannot be transferred to or shared with another student. Additional involvement should be noted in the proposal. The applicant must be enrolled in school through the duration of the 4-month grant period.

Grant Terms:

The Fellowship is for a term of 4-6 months, depending on Fellow's schedule. The fellow will begin in May of 2025, with the specific date TBD. Fellows spend various amounts of time on their projects each week. The average amount of time spent is 10 hours weekly or 40 hours monthly. The time invested by each student is typically considerable, but it is also flexible to account for schoolwork and other commitments

and the working style of each Fellow. Fellows will receive a stipend for their work. Any Fellowship-related expenses accrued during the Fellowship period should be covered by the stipend.

Payments are dispersed in two installments: First installment of grant awards are made within two weeks of awarding the fellowship and finalizing fellowship agreement. The second installment will be made by August 31, 2025. Grant funds will be distributed to the student directly (with submission of a W-9). Grant funds may be taxable; consult your tax advisor for U.S. Internal Revenue Service reporting requirements.

How to Apply:

1. Carefully review the information provided in this document.
2. Complete and [submit the application form](#) for the 2025 NWF Native Plant Habitat Education Graduate Student Fellowship.
3. Submit an electronic letter of recommendation from your identified Advisor via PDF attachment to Fellows@nwf.org. Please make sure your name is in the subject line of the email.

All applicants must identify and work with an Advisor for the duration of the grant period. An advisor is a member of the staff, faculty, or administration on your campus who is willing to serve in an advisory capacity for the duration of the grant period. The advisor should be from the department on campus this is most closely related to your fellowship and can validate that the project is one that is supported by the department and/or campus.

Please secure an electronic copy of a letter of recommendation from the Advisor explaining the qualifications of the applicant and his or her role in advising the student and submit the letter as a PDF attachment via email to Fellows@nwf.org with the applicant's name in the subject line.

The deadline to submit applications is April 20, 2025 by midnight ET.

Applications are reviewed by a committee to determine which meet the selection criteria. All applicants will be notified of their status within one month of their application deadline.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- Demonstrated interest in and experience working within or with diverse constituencies
- Demonstrated knowledge of and/or skillset in market research
- Engagement with students, faculty, community organizations, and businesses
- Interest in conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Strong communication skills of applicant to build diverse constituency
- Initiative to overcome barriers and seek alternative avenues when necessary
- Proactive research and outreach to ensure project will successfully achieve stated goals