



2022 NWF EcoLeader Graduate Student Fellowship Request for Applications

Topic: EcoLeader Tribal College and University Research Fellow

Location: U.S., Any location; Priority will be given to a member of a Native American Tribal Community

Background:

In Spring of 2014, the National Wildlife Federation launched the [EcoLeaders Program](#) to help students and young professionals develop sustainability leadership skills and secure great jobs that help the planet. The EcoLeaders leadership and career development program advances a proven model of leadership for sustainability. NWF's EcoLeaders take five steps towards their personal leadership and career goals:

1. Declare an EcoMission
2. Launch a project
3. Support others
4. Earn certification
5. Create a personalized career plan

NWF provides EcoLeaders with a [Career Center](#) and annual online EcoCareers Conference to facilitate the development of personalized sustainability career plans, learning about trends and opportunities in green careers, connecting with employers, and sharpening job skills. Currently, NWF's Higher Education programs (including EcoLeaders) engages directly with four Tribal colleges. With more than 32 fully accredited Tribal Colleges and Universities in the U.S. (and more not accredited), it's essential that NWF works to increase our knowledge and develop relationships with these key communities.

Additionally, NWF has an established Tribal Lands program that works nationwide with tribes to protect wildlife, advance land stewardship, safeguard water resources, provide environmental education, and combat climate change. The goal of the Tribal Partnerships Program is to promote environmental and economic justice for Native Americans and to address inequities and resource needs for tribes at the local, state, and national levels. A few current efforts include protecting bighorn sheep and the bison restoration project.

Goal(s) of Fellowship:

In an effort to strengthen the NWF EcoLeaders community, the NWF EcoLeader Community Fellow will support the growth and development of EcoLeaders and EcoCareers programs based on research of best practices related to strengthening and building relationships with Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and the advancement of equity, justice, and inclusivity principles within these programs. The specific goals and deliverables of the Fellowship will be determined based on the interests and strengths of the

Fellows, as expressed in their fellowship applications. Fellowship applications should address one or more of the following goals:

- Interview stakeholders at NWF and the College of Menominee Nation (CNM) in Minnesota to evaluate partnership for further opportunities and recommendations for expanding outreach to additional TCUs. Special attention should be given to the partnership with the College of Menominee Nation, as NWF has engaged with this school for many years, and CNM participates in more than one of NWF's higher education efforts. *This would include research, phone outreach, and writing.*
- Explore other current NWF relationships with Tribal Colleges and Universities and identify strengths, best practices, and opportunities for continued engagement. *This would include research, phone outreach, and writing.*
- In relation to environmental and conservation career and leadership development, research the key interests, challenges, needs, and opportunities for Tribal College and University students and staff in working with NWF's EcoLeaders and EcoCareer programs. *This would include phone outreach, online survey development, distribution and analyzation.*

Key Responsibilities

- Register and maintain an active personal profile and presence on NWF EcoLeaders community, and promote to personal network during the course of the Fellowship.
- Create project plan for a 4-6 month Fellowship term based on agreed upon Fellowship goal.
- Coordinate with 1-2 other Fellows to share ideas, progress, and cohesion. [Optional]
- Assist the NWF EcoLeaders team with additional duties as assigned.
- Develop a summary report of findings and programmatic recommendations

Fellowship Program Requirements:

- Participate in a Fellowship kick-off call - date TBD.
- 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.

Competencies:

- Motivated by values of equity and responsibility to those most marginalized
- Dedicated to deepening understanding of cultural and systemic racism and the intersectionality of multiple forms of social inequality
- Demonstrates awareness of positional power and privilege (both personally and professionally) and its attendant impacts
- Consistently brings a high level of empathy and social skills to work and interpersonal interactions
- Demonstrates awareness of the attributes associated with a white dominant culture and takes actions to dismantle hierarchies of oppression within that culture
- Must be a strategic thinker, self-starter, well organized, strong communicator, and relationship builder.
- An entrepreneurial spirit, initiative and energy is critical to success.
- Must have a passion for and commitment to NWF's mission.

Perks and Privileges:

- \$6,000 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. 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 2022, 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, 2022. Grant funds may be distributed to the student directly (with submission of a W-9) or to an Administrative Office on campus (e.g. Research, Grants and Contracts Office, Financial Aid Office, Campus Sustainability Office) to the attention of the appropriate administrator. 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 2022 NWF EcoLeader Graduate Student Fellowship, [HERE](#).
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

The deadline to submit applications is May 15, 2022 by midnight.

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
- 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 the above
- Commitment to advancing environmental initiatives on academic, personal, and professional levels
- Desire to remain an active member in NWF after the conclusion of the Fellowship