

Connecticut Sea Grant Veterinary Aquaculture Research & Policy Fellowship Opportunity

The goal of the Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG) Veterinary Aquaculture Research & Policy Fellowship is to broaden participation of underrepresented/underserved veterinary students in marine aquaculture animal health by providing early career experience, training and mentorship to the next generation of veterinary scientists, decision makers, and marine industry professionals. The program will do so by funding 2-4 week fellowships for students in their 3rd and 4th years of veterinary school. Fellowships will be awarded to students who have been historically underrepresented in, or excluded from, veterinary medicine and aquaculture. Current literature commonly cites the lack of racial/ethnic diversity and gender disparities in both fields. Recognizing that there are many identities that face barriers to inclusion, students of all backgrounds, such as underrepresented minorities and socioeconomically disadvantaged students as well as students of color, indigenous students, Veterans of the US Armed Forces, members of the LGBTQ community, and students with disabilities are encouraged to apply for this opportunity.

This 2–4 week program is designed for veterinary students wanting to explore aquaculture medicine research and policy. This opportunity will largely focus on bivalve shellfish aquaculture on the east coast US. Fellows will assist the staff at the NOAA Fisheries, Milford Laboratory with laboratory and field-based bivalve disease research based on current needs. During the fellowship, students will become familiar with shellfish aquaculture practice, the economic, societal, and environmental benefits it provides, and threats to shellfish health and production. Current Milford Lab research focuses on the field epidemiology of bivalve diseases and relationships with climate change-related environmental conditions. Fellows should expect to gain an understanding of how veterinarians and researchers can support aquaculture sustainability in this context. As a part of the program, fellows will also participate in career development activities tailored to their present needs, and they will engage in networking opportunities with other aquatic veterinarians and scientists across NOAA and Connecticut Sea Grant. Fellows are expected to report 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis for fellowship experiences taking place summer 2023–fall 2024. Fellows will receive a stipend of \$800 for each week of their fellowship (ie. \$3,200 for a 4 week fellowship and \$1,600 for two weeks). The application process includes submission of an application form which includes 3 short answer questions about the students interest in the program, a resume, and an unofficial veterinary school transcript. Application materials should be submitted no later than 3 months prior to the desired start date.

Timeline

- Call for submissions/Fellow Recruitment. Applications accepted on a rolling basis.
- Deadline to submit application materials: No later than 3 months prior to desired start date.
- Fellowships take place April 2023 through October 2024. Fellowship opportunities are not available in the months of December 2023–March 2024.

Prospective Fellow Information

Eligibility

This program is for veterinary students from backgrounds historically underrepresented in, or excluded from, veterinary medicine and aquaculture. Current literature commonly cites the lack of racial/ethnic diversity and gender disparities in both fields. Recognizing that there are many identities that face barriers to inclusion, students of all backgrounds, including underrepresented minorities and socioeconomically disadvantaged students as well as students of color, indigenous students, Veterans of the US Armed Forces, members of the LGBTQ community, and students with disabilities are encouraged to apply for this opportunity.

Students submit their application on their own behalf, and will work 2-4 weeks as their schedule permits between the period of June 2023 and October 2024. Fellows will receive a stipend of \$800 for each week of their fellowship (ie. \$3,200 for a 4 week fellowship and \$1,600 for two weeks). Fellows are expected to report to the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Milford Laboratory in Milford, Connecticut 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Student nominees must be:

- enrolled veterinary students at a school or college of veterinary medicine accredited (or provisionally accredited) by the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education.
- U.S. citizens or residents and will be enrolled in their 3rd or 4th year of veterinary school at the time the fellowship will take place.
- Willing to travel to and work in Milford, Connecticut during the fellowship period.

Inclusivity Statement

People of color, indigenous people, US Veterans, members of the LGBTQ community, and individuals with disabilities, underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and/or individuals from economically or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds are encouraged to apply. All prospective Fellows, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, or other demographics should demonstrate awareness of diversity issues and a commitment to the advancement of equity and inclusion.

Previous veterinary experience with aquatic animal medicine is not a requirement of this program.

Fellowship Program Application Guidelines

Application and Submission Information

Required materials:

- 1) Completed application form, including answers to the following short answer prompts (300 word maximum per question):
 - a) Describe your previous veterinary training experience (pre-vet, vet school, and extracurriculars). Previous aquatic medicine experience is not a requirement for this program, but we would like to get an idea of what interests you have in veterinary medicine and what you have done so far in your training.
 - b) Please tell us about your career goals after graduation and how you feel this program will help you achieve those plans.
 - c) This program aims to promote diversity in the aquatic veterinary community. How will aspects of your unique background, identity, and experiences contribute to your future role as a veterinarian?
- 2) Unofficial copy of veterinary school transcript
- 3) A current resume (2-page max).

How to Apply

Applicants should complete the application form and send it, along with all other required application materials by email to NEFSC.intern@noaa.gov with the subject line “Veterinary Aquaculture Fellowship - Your Name”.

Finalist Selection

Applications will be reviewed by the Veterinary Aquaculture Fellowship Review Panel, and fellows will be selected for a cumulative total of 12 weeks of fellowships between May 2023 and October 2024.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of NOAA and Sea Grant staff members, on the basis of the candidate’s application materials including statements of professional and academic motivations and interests.

Selection Criteria

Programmatic factors that might influence selection after the technical evaluation include:

- Availability of desired fellowship dates
- diversity of institutions from which the fellows will be selected

Note

We acknowledge that the COVID 19 pandemic has and may continue to cause disruptions at several levels. It is the program's intent to build as much flexibility as possible in making adjustments to the fellowship program to assure a meaningful experience for the fellows.

For More Information**Please contact:**

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