



FELLOWS WANTED FOR ESA CENTENNIAL MEETING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Baltimore Earth Stewardship Initiative: Cities that Work for People and Ecosystems

100th ESA Annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland
August 9th – 14th, 2015

Purpose and Overview:

*Sustainability goals will be met only if we change the way science intersects society. The Ecological Society of America, through its **Earth Stewardship Initiative (ESI)**, is engaged in collaborations with other academic scientists, city officials, landscape architects, and non-governmental groups to formulate pragmatic strategies that foster a more sustainable trajectory of global change. This large-scale demonstration project seeks to extend this initiative by linking environmental stewardship through applied ecological research to community-based planning and outreach.*

The Baltimore Earth Stewardship Initiative will take place during the 100th annual ESA meeting. During the week-long conference this interactive initiative seeks to involve ecologists and student fellows in real-world community planning, outreach, and education. The Baltimore ESI aims to increase the relevance of ecologists in urban planning to foster resilience and human wellbeing, within its diverse urban communities.

We will build on activities shared across several sections and chapters of the ESA. Up to eighteen graduate research fellows will be selected to serve as leaders, organizers, and documenters of the ESI. We are also seeking ESI research assistants and design students to participate in the project. Three students will be in charge of six project themes. We will explore ways to incorporate ecological science into urban planning and design, while supporting community health, education, and outreach objectives. Our goals include generating materials and documents that synthesize the conference events, and create implementable plans to enhance resiliency, promote biodiversity and habitats, while engaging in revitalization efforts within the urban environment.

Selected Earth Stewardship fellows, , and design students will play an active role in working with local practitioners, stakeholders, and community-based groups to develop actual planning projects. Project deliverables will inform decision makers, help implement management, and be followed up with scientific evaluation. Materials generated from the conference will be

integrated into a Yale University Fall 2015 course on urban ecology, followed by a potential graduate seminar in the spring of 2016.

Expectations and Opportunities:

- **Attendance:** Applicants should commit attending the entire conference, August 9 to the 14th 2015.
- **Baltimore Community workshop (optional) and Webinar:** Meet or participate in a webinar with Baltimore's Park and People Foundation and stakeholders to engage with Baltimore residents and develop outreach and education goals. (May 2015, date TBD)
- **Participation in pre-conference community engagement (optional):** Engage with ESI organizers, designers, stakeholders, and community groups during the summer months. (summer 2015)
- **Participation in conference events:** Fellows will take part in field trips, workshops, and symposiums relevant to their identified research topics.
- **Collaboration:** Fellows will be working closely with their peers as well as professionals in the fields of ecology, landscape architecture, and urban design throughout the conference.
- **Deliverables:** Fellows are expected to record and document their experiences during the conference, and be prepared to present them during charette-style sessions and the final forum. Fellows will have the opportunity to work on articles based on the activities.
- **Webinars as Part of the graduate seminar:** A course will be organized for the Fall 2015 at Yale University. Fellows will be expected to participate in two webinar sessions to coordinate with students in this course. There may be an option to organize a distributed graduate seminar for the fall semester 2015 as well.
- **Data sharing and authorship:** Fellows must agree to share their findings from the conference with supporting institutions and organizations.

Reimbursement and Compensation:

- **Funding:** Research fellows will offered an honorarium that they can use towards the conference, for example, to cover registration, field trips or other incurred costs.

- **Networking opportunities and professional development:** Research fellows will enjoy opportunities to connect with distinguished professionals in ecology, landscape architecture and urban design, as well as leading academic and civic institutions in addition to stewardship groups and city agencies.

Important Dates and Events:

- Priority application deadline: **June 10th** 2015 (application received after this date will be considered based on availability)
- Fellows notified of award: **June 15th, 2015**
- Early-bird ESA registration deadline: 5pm EST **June 18th**, 2015. Students are responsible for their own registration. We encourage you to register before the early-bird deadline.

Community workshop (optional) and webinar. **May 2015** (date TBD).

- 2015 ESA conference in Baltimore, MD: **August 9th – 14th, 2015**
- Two-week synthesis documentation after conference: **August 15th – 30th, 2015**
- Two webinar interfaces with Yale University: fall course on ecological design (dates TBD)

Fellowship Research Areas

Fellows and research assistants will focus on one of the following project themes. In your application please indicate first and second choice topics.

1. **Resilient Communities through Public Health, Access, Education, and Recreation:** Explore how park networks and citywide greening efforts offer opportunities to integrate landscape ecology and design with community outreach and public health goals that promote access to green spaces, recreation, and education.
2. **Vacant Lots, Degraded Sites, and Restored Ecosystems:** Approach degraded sites as opportunities for social, recreational, and ecosystem regeneration. Foster resilient communities through grass-root initiatives for greening projects of vacant lots and degraded sites. Topics include directed succession and controlling invasive species.
3. **Anthropogenic Soils, Landscape Maintenance and Performance:** Understanding how anthropogenic soils function and how to improve on biogeochemistry (EPA soil taxonomy and infiltration) and landscape performance, in particular to promote sustainable urban food production on many potential sites throughout the city, including community gardens.

4. **Watersheds, Hydrology, and Aquatic Habitats:** Fellows will focus on projects at two municipalities aimed at protecting and restoring the urban watershed. In collaboration with the Baltimore city officials, stakeholders, and community-based groups enhance the role of ecologists in clean water initiatives and community-led revitalization efforts.
5. **Biodiversity and Managed Populations:** Focus on urban biodiversity and managed populations including deer populations, lack of regeneration, invasive species management, tree planting campaigns, and forest health.
6. **Design and Planning for Climate Change:** Spatial planning to manage the effects of climate change on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Incorporating ideas generated from the other research themes to generate a climate change synopsis with an emphasis on policy and planning.

Application Requirements:

1. **Applicant must be a student working toward a graduate or undergraduate degree.**
2. **Statement of interest.** 800 words maximum.

Please identify a first and second choice research topic from the six conference themes above and describe your background and interest in Urban Ecology and Earth Stewardship. Please also indicate if you are interested in participating in a community outreach event in Baltimore in May, as well as pre-conference activities in June and July leading up to the conference. These will include community engagement and collaborative work with design studios.

Applications must be received by midnight **June 10th, 2015, submitted online or delivered electronically to** alexander.felson@yale.edu.

Applications submitted after June 10th will be considered based on availability.