

## Graduate Research Fellowship

### *Expectations*

The purpose of the Graduate Research Fellowship is to support exceptional students who are engaged in research that furthers the goals of Virginia Sea Grant (VASG) by providing resources for their academic expenses, as well as professional development and outreach support. The fellowship aims to foster the growth of our fellows – we want fellows to remain exceptional 5, 10, 15+ years after their fellowships and provide them with the skills to be successful in science policy, management, industry or other fields. In order to meet these goals, VASG provides opportunities to engage in training, outreach, and other relevant activities. This document outlines our expectations for fellows, advisors, professional mentors, and VASG regarding engagement with the fellowship program.

### EXPECTATIONS OF FELLOWS

Fellows are expected to interact regularly with VASG and other fellows, as time allows. This includes:

- Comport yourself in a responsible and accountable manner at all times, and comply with the requirements outlined in the fellowship award terms and conditions.
- Attending an orientation meeting at the beginning of the fellowship.
- Maintaining regular communication with VASG and providing periodic updates on your fellowship activities, including notifying VASG if any changes or challenges arise during your fellowship.
- Attending VASG's events and participating in professional development activities. VASG offers a series of opportunities each year, and fellows are expected to participate in at least one annually.
- Supporting the VASG Communication Center's efforts to publicize your research and fellowship activities. Fellows are encouraged to submit blog posts and share story ideas.
- Participating in an exit interview and evaluation at the conclusion of the fellowship.
- Remaining engaged with VASG and future fellows after the fellowship (e.g., requests for information on your current position, sharing reflective insight to help improve the fellowship program, and coaching or providing advice to future fellows).

Fellows are expected to work alongside their mentor to execute their plan, including:

- Regular, substantive interactions with your mentor throughout the fellowship.
- Being responsive to your mentor's communications and suggestions for outreach activities, products, and professional development opportunities.
- Completing activities or products outlined in the outreach plan.
- Updating VASG on your progress, and any challenges or change to the outreach plan.

Fellows are expected to manage their grant funding, with assistance from their faculty advisor(s) and institutions, to include:

- Completion of annual progress reports, and a final report at the conclusion of the fellowship.
- Monitoring your budget, and notifying VASG of any substantive budget changes.

In Collaboration With



The following timeline may help fellows plan:

*Summer:* Orientation meeting (year 1); VASG site visits (year 2); Fellow networking activity

*Fall:* Professional development activity; Virtual fellow roundtable

*Winter:* Professional development activity; Virtual fellow roundtable (reporting overview)

*Spring:* Annual report due; Professional development activity; Exit interview (year 2)

## EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY ADVISORS

Beyond traditional advisor duties, VASG expects that faculty advisors will also:

- Support your student's engagement with their professional mentor.
- Support their participation in VASG professional development activities.
- Attend VASG events, as your schedule allows.
- Allow your student to assist in managing his/her fellowship grant, including oversight of the budget and annual reporting. While the advisor is the PI and responsible for oversight, this provides the fellow experience with these administrative tasks.
- Support the VASG Communication Centers' efforts to publicize the activities of your student.
- Notify VASG of any important developments or concerns with the proposed research or outreach.
- Provide VASG with feedback on the fellowship.

## EXPECTATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

VASG recognizes that mentors volunteer their time, and supports realistic engagement with the fellows as your schedule allows. This includes:

- Regular interactions with your fellow, as negotiated and outlined in a written plan.
- Substantive mentorship and feedback to the fellow.
- Reasonable expectations of your fellow's activities and products, recognizing that the fellow's primary goal is his/her academic progress and success.
- Attending VASG events, as your schedule allows.
- Notifying VASG of any important developments or concerns with the fellow's outreach.
- Providing VASG with feedback on the fellowship.

## VIRGINIA SEA GRANT'S ROLE

In return, VASG pledges to:

- Maintain realistic expectations and flexibility for our fellows' involvement in VASG activities, recognizing that research and academic success are priorities for our fellows.
- Maintain regular communication with fellows, advisors, and mentors.
- Provide support and guidance, this includes supporting the growth of the fellow's professional network, budget inquires and other requests.
- Publicize each fellow's accomplishments in online stories, and support your communication activities (including blog posts and multimedia products).
- Continuously improve the fellowship program based on feedback and evaluations.