



Utah State University ECOLOGY CENTER

ECOLOGY CENTER GRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS for MS and PHD STUDENTS (FY 2018-2019)

The Ecology Center invites proposals from MS and PhD students pursuing Ecology degrees to support thesis/dissertation research at up to \$2,000 for MS research and \$5,000 for PhD research. Research awards are offered for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

The research awards will be competitive and selection will be based on scientific merit, quality of the proposal, and relevance to the field of ecology. These awards are intended for Ecology graduate students who do not have other forms of support for the research they propose. The proposal should be no longer than 4 pages (including figures and tables, but excluding literature cited and budget) and should be signed by the major professor certifying that it is the student's work.

Eligibility:

Students must be in the second year or later of their graduate program during 2018-2019 and must be in residence at USU (apart from conducting research elsewhere). Students who already have received one research award may request support for a second year. Requests for a third year of Ecology Center research support will be considered only if more funds are available than are exhausted by competitive proposals from students who have not yet received two years of support. Students requesting a second or third research award must also submit a progress report of no more than 4 pages. The progress report should be substantive, containing data/results and inferences, and should describe how past Ecology Center funds have been used to advance the student's degree work.

Proposal Format:

The proposal should focus on the research that will be completed with the requested funding. It should also make clear how this work fits into the overall thesis or dissertation.

The proposal should include the following sections:

- Applicant: Name, Degree sought, Major department, Major Professor, Professor's department
- Degree Information: Start date and anticipated completion date of degree program.
- Proposal Title
- Introduction: Sketch the background and rationale for the research, citing appropriate literature. Describe the significance of the research.
- Research Objectives/Hypotheses: Describe what specific hypothesis/hypotheses are to be tested or what specific scientific questions are to be addressed.
- Research Methods: Describe how the research hypotheses will be tested and evaluated or how research questions will be explored and answered (e.g., sampling or experimental designs, statistical and sampling methods, how the analyses will be used to draw conclusions about the hypotheses or questions, timeline for data collection and project completion).
- Literature Cited
- Itemized Budget and Budget Justification: Describe how the research funds will be used and provide an itemized categorical budget. The budget needs to be sufficiently detailed for a reviewer to understand how funds will be used to achieve the specific goals described in the proposal, thus justifying the expenditures. Also list all other sources and amounts of support available for your graduate program, including assistantships. Ecology Center Graduate Research Awards cannot be used as an assistantship or to purchase computers (desktop, laptop, tablet, etc.) or software. Awards can be used to hire field assistants, to purchase research supplies, and for travel to field research sites. The Ecology Center has a separate program that provides funds for travel to professional meetings to present results, and travel for this purpose cannot be included in Graduate Research Awards.

Submit one printed copy to the Ecology Center Office (NR 314) and one electronic copy to lauren.ikerd@usu.edu.

Deadlines:

Tuesday, February 13, 2018, 4:00 p.m. – Proposal due in Ecology Center office.

Monday, March 12, 2018 – Awards announced.

July 1, 2018 – Funding commences.

June 30, 2019 – End of funding period; unspent funds will be returned to the Ecology Center. **Awards should be fully expended by June 15.**