The Tufts Institute of the Environment (TIE) is an interdisciplinary university-wide institute that initiates, facilitates, and promotes environmental education, research, and outreach toward a sustainable future.

TIE is devoted to advancing and disseminating knowledge about the many ways human activity affects the environment. Recognizing the interdependence of human welfare, animal health, and ecological integrity, TIE focuses on environmental research, technology, policy development, and education.

Please note this change from previous RFPs: The 2014 RFP has a 2-track system of applications with differing timelines for Doctoral and Master’s students.

Grant Objectives

- To financially support graduate students conducting environmental research
- To recognize and provide greater visibility for stellar graduate students and their work in environmental fields
- To encourage interdisciplinary graduate-level environmental research at Tufts

Grant Description

Matriculated graduate students continuing with their studies in the 2014-2015 academic year at any Tufts University graduate program or professional school are eligible to apply for a TIE fellowship to conduct an interdisciplinary environmental research project. The project must be independent research and not otherwise possible without TIE funding. Preference will be given to proposals likely to result in publication or a presentation at the professional level.

Applicants must identify a faculty member who will serve as a mentor for the duration of the project. This faculty member must provide a letter of support for the applicant’s project, to be included in the proposal. Note that this fellowship is NOT intended to support a faculty member’s ongoing research project. The proposed project should be initiated, conducted, and completed by the applicant, although its subject matter may be related to faculty research. Projects can be expanded or completed with additional funding from other sources, but projects should not be contingent on receipt of other funds.

If the proposed project requires or would benefit from a Tufts undergraduate research assistant, the application should reflect the specifics of the proposed involvement. Additionally, applicants can outline areas in which an undergraduate may propose a complementary project. In both cases, the undergraduate’s role is eligible for funding through the TIE Fellowship. Applications for research projects involving more than one graduate student will also be considered.

Evaluation Criteria

- The research project is interdisciplinary.
- The problem or issue addressed is significant and timely.
- The solution or approach that the applicant plans to explore or develop is appropriate to the problem.
Applicants are highly encouraged to identify more than one faculty mentor from different departments to strengthen the interdisciplinarity of the research project. The project relates directly to TIE’s mission. The student has relevant and exemplary qualifications. The budget meets TIE guidelines on expenditures (see “Funding Restrictions” below). Expenses must be in a range deemed appropriate by the fellowship selection committee. The proposal is well written and referenced, and conforms to the format guidelines. Applicants are highly encouraged to include undergraduate research mentorship in their proposals, where possible. All permits (IRB, country-specific permits, etc.) for research need to be in place by March 1, 2014—PhDs will not have funds released if they don’t have permits by March 1, 2014; Master’s students will not be allowed to submit applications until all permits are in hand.

The TIE Fellowship selection committee will select the best proposals that adhere to these evaluation criteria, with the goal of a fair distribution of funds among different schools.

Funding Restrictions

TIE Environmental Graduate Student Fellowship funds will be available by May 15, 2014, with the fellowship terms extending from June 1, 2014 ending May 31, 2015. TIE will provide up to $6000 per student based upon the submitted budget for each proposal.

Funds may be used for personal stipends, travel to conduct research, data collection and analysis, wages for research or field assistants, and non-capital supplies needed to collect and analyze data. Personal stipends may not exceed $3000. Funds may not be used for travel to conferences or for capital equipment purchases, such as computers or other durable equipment. Loans of computers or other equipment may sometimes be arranged through TIE.

TIE expects that the work completed with the fellowship will be part of the student’s course of study (e.g., an applied learning experience, directed study, thesis or dissertation research) and that the fellowship funds will not overlap with or replace other funding available to the student for the project.

Submission Deadline

Incomplete and late submissions will not be considered. Electronic submissions are strongly preferred.

Doctoral Students: Proposals are due at the TIE office by 11:59am on Monday, November 25, 2013. Master’s students: Proposals are due at the TIE office by 11:59am on Monday, February 17, 2013.

Doctoral applicants will be notified by December 20, 2013. Master’s applicants will be notified as of April 1, 2014. TIE reserves the right to adjust the requested budgets of successful applicants when offering Fellowship awards. Upon acceptance of the TIE Fellowship funds awarded, you agree to fulfill the requirements of the Fellowship listed below.
Method of Submission: Electronic submission of the proposal to theresa.silver@tufts.edu is required. Transcripts and letters of recommendation which are not available in electronic format may be mailed to Theresa Silver, Tufts Institute of the Environment, 210 Packard Ave, Medford, MA 02155. Please note that electronic submission of supporting documents is preferred, where possible.

Requirements for the successful completion of this Fellowship include:

1. Attendance at five specific events: an orientation lunch in May 2014, a fellows retreat in September 2014, a formal recognition dinner in Nov/Dec 2014, attendance at one or more presentations given by other TIE fellows during the academic year, and a follow-up meeting with the new class of incoming fellows in May 2015.
2. Electronic submission of a poster describing the project and preliminary results by Nov 20, 2014.
3. Electronic submission of a final project report, poster (if available), and description of budget expenditures by May 31st, 2015. A publication, thesis, or dissertation based on the fellowship-funded research may be accepted in lieu of the project report.
4. A presentation of the results to the greater Tufts community during the 2014-2015 academic year. The Program Coordinator must be notified at least 2 weeks in advance of the presentation.
5. Participation in ongoing evaluation of TIE Fellowship program and collaboration with TIE’s Communications Specialist to develop a communication piece of your research for a public view.
6. Acknowledgment of TIE’s support for research completed during the fellowship must be provided for any form of dissemination, including, but not limited to, publication, poster or oral presentation, and website posting.

To see more info about past Fellows and projects, please see our website at:
http://environment.tufts.edu/research/tie-fellowships/

For general information and questions, contact:
Theresa Silver, Office Assistant
Tufts Institute of the Environment
Miller Hall, 210 Packard Avenue
Medford, MA 02155
Tel: 617-627-3645
Fax: 617-627-6645
Email: theresa.silver@tufts.edu
Web: http://environment.tufts.edu

Content and Form of Proposal Submission
Application items (excluding résumés and transcripts) are to be written in Times New Roman 12pt font. Pages should be numbered and single-spaced, with 1-inch margins.

1) Cover Page (not to exceed one page)
The Cover Page contains basic information on the project and the member(s) of the research team. Items to be included are:
- Project title
- Departmental and school affiliations of student(s) and faculty advisor(s)
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- Student contact information (student ID #, telephone number, mail, and email addresses)
- Faculty advisor contact information (telephone, email, and campus address)
- Total amount of funding requested from TIE
- List of previously awarded TIE grants (including travel grants)
- Executive summary (not to exceed 300 words) on the proposed research, expected accomplishments, and how the project aligns with TIE’s mission

2) Proposal Narrative and Methodology (not to exceed three pages)
The Proposal Narrative must include and accurately describe in detail:
- Brief summary of previous research on this topic (including list of peer-reviewed publications)
- Objectives and rationale
- Problem or hypothesis to be studied and why it is timely and significant
- How the project relates to TIE’s mission of interdisciplinary environmental research
- Specific approaches, well-developed methodology, and types of data analysis to be used to meet the stated objectives
- Clear, concise statement of expected outcomes
- A statement of the student’s long-term educational and career goals, and how this project contributes to these goals as well as to the student’s current program of study

3) Proposal Appendices
These appendices must be included in the grant proposal (additional appendices are not permitted):
- A list of references used in the proposal narrative
- The applicant’s résumé or CV (not to exceed two pages)
- A current Tufts transcript (an unofficial copy is acceptable); if the student has been at Tufts less than one year, an unofficial transcript from their undergraduate or previous graduate study must accompany the proposal in addition to the current Tufts transcript
- A detailed budget itemizing all expenses for the proposed project, and including all sources of funding.
Please download budget template from: http://environment.tufts.edu/research/tie-fellowships/
- A statement of other teaching or research stipends or other fellowships that applicant has received, or for which s/he has applied, to fund graduate studies at Tufts
- Two letters of recommendation, including at least one letter of support from a faculty mentor. Letters of recommendation can either be sent directly to theresa.silver@tufts.edu or included in submission from the applicant.