

2014 Dow Doctoral Sustainability Fellows Program

Overview

The goal of the Dow Doctoral Fellows Program is to create a lifelong *Community of Scholars* devoted to developing and implementing innovative ideas in pursuit of sustainability. Each year, the program provides a select group of outstanding doctoral students with the resources and opportunities necessary to become sustainability leaders in academia, business, non-profit organizations, and government. The group is selected to represent a balance of interests to enhance the interdisciplinary nature of the collaboration. Through a mix of financial support, intellectual exchange, interdisciplinary collaboration, and social activities, we seek to create cohorts with the ability to understand and effectively communicate the complex and interdisciplinary nature of sustainability.

As a recipient of this honor, each Dow Fellow receives up to \$50,000 to help support his/her doctoral-level research and studies. Fellows are required to engage in monthly seminars and related activities designed to share and expand research perspectives and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, including collaborations with Dow Post-doctoral and Masters/Professional Fellows.

Nominations must come only from U-M faculty members on behalf of their advisees and each faculty member may nominate only one of his/her advisees per year.

Requirements and Guidelines

1. Student Eligibility:

- a. Doctoral students actively pursuing interdisciplinary research addressing sustainability issues in any U-M Department, Interdisciplinary Program, School or College that has an approved doctoral program.
- b. A student is eligible for only one Dow Doctoral Fellowship award.
- c. Upon commencement of the fellowship in May 2014, an applicant must:
 - i. Have completed at least two semesters of graduate-level coursework toward earning the doctoral degree
 - ii. Have at least pre-candidate status
 - iii. Intend to complete all doctoral degree requirements no earlier than April 2016
- d. Fellows must reside in the Ann Arbor area for the duration of the Fellowship period (see section 6-a).
- e. Applicants cannot hold appointments with work obligations at other academic institutions during the fellowship period.
- f. Students with funding already in place from other sources are eligible to be nominated for a Dow Doctoral Fellowship (see section 4-b).
- g. Eligibility is contingent upon written declaration of matching financial support from the department chair or school/college dean using the matching support form (see section 5).

2. Selection Criteria:

Applications will go through an independent review and will be rated according to the following criteria:

- a. Degree to which the research proposal is relevant to sustainability
- b. Interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of the proposed work
- c. Potential for impact resulting from the proposed research
- d. Scientific/technical merit of the research proposal
- e. Productivity and quality of applicant's prior research and experiences
- f. Demonstrated qualities/accomplishments that show potential for sustainability leadership
- g. Desire for interdisciplinary balance in the cohort

3. Appointment Period:

- a. The appointment is for a minimum of 24 months, although Fellows are strongly encouraged to remain active in the program throughout their time at U-M and beyond.
- b. The appointment term will be effective September 2014.

4. Award:

- a. The Fellowship provides up to \$50,000 to help support the Fellow's research.
 - i. No more than \$25,000 will be awarded during any 12-month period.
 - ii. If desired by the Fellow, the award can be dispersed over a time period that exceeds 24 months, as long as the Fellow remains active in the program during the period of his/her award.
 - iii. Dow support may be used to cover tuition, registration fees, stipends (up to the equivalent of a 50% GSRA for the students' home department), health insurance, and research-related expenses that are pre-approved by the Program Director.
- b. Fellows who already have funding from other sources, or who acquire such funding during their time in the program, can defer, without penalty, their Dow funding until after their other funding sources expire, or decline funding altogether. Deferring or declining funding does not impact participation in the Fellows program.
- c. Fellows completing their doctoral degree prior to using the funds will have their Dow support reduced on a prorated basis in accordance with comparable Rackham policies. Specifically:
 - i. A Fellow is eligible to receive support covering tuition, registration fees, and health insurance for the term in which the student defends his/her dissertation up to the amount remaining in the student's Fellowship account.
 - ii. Dow support of stipends ends the month in which a student defends unless the student provides compelling reasons as to why stipends should continue. The Program Director will review these requests to make a final decision.
 - iii. Unexpended funds remain the property of the Dow Fellows Program.

5. Matching Requirement:

- a. Dow awards are contingent on additional support that increase the level of total support to at least the equivalent of a 50% GSRA appointment in the student's home department (i.e., stipend and health insurance for 24 months, tuition for four terms, and the appropriate stipend).

- b. Support previously committed to the student for the time period in which support from the Dow Fellowship is granted, including tuition support, may count toward the match.
- c. Support must be verified by the department chair or school/college dean using the matching support form available on the application website. ***Failure to provide and document such support will lead to the application being rejected without review.***

6. Fellows Requirements and Responsibilities:

- a. Fellows must reside in the Ann Arbor area for the duration of the academic year during the Fellowship period. Reasonable absences for field work may be permissible, but must be disclosed to and approved by the Program Director in advance. Awards may be revoked if the Fellow fails to fully disclose and seek approval for field work absences. Even if absences are approved, awards may be deferred during the time of the field work. Extended absences are not permitted under any circumstances during the first semester of the Fellowship period (Fall 2014).
- b. Throughout the appointment period, fellows must actively pursue completion of degree requirements (i.e., be enrolled in the U-M program cited in their application)
- c. Fellows must actively participate in the program seminars that occur monthly from September through April.
 - i. Fellows who are unable to attend a seminar must notify the Program Director in advance.
 - ii. While participation in 100% of monthly seminars is strongly encouraged, participation in 75% of monthly seminars is a program requirement.
 - 1. Failure to meet this requirement may result in a revocation of the fellowship.
 - 2. Participation will be evaluated each semester.
- d. Fellows must present their research as part of the program seminars at some point during the Fellowship period.
- e. Following each seminar, all Fellows are required to participate in an online discussion. Each month, one fellow will be designated to monitor and compile the responses, present them at the next monthly seminar, and lead the discussion.
- f. Fellows must engage in a collaborative project during the course of their Fellowship period. Fellows can either: a) Write an article and/or be on the editorial board for the *Michigan Journal of Sustainability*; b) Be a team member in the Dow Distinguished Awards for Interdisciplinary Sustainability competition; c) Petition the Program Director to conduct a self-determined project that includes collaboration with at least one other Fellow. Examples of successful past petitions include creating a new course ("Sustainable Neighborhoods in Detroit"), a journal article for "Sustainability Science" and the creation of the *Michigan Journal of Sustainability*.
- g. Fellows may be asked to present their research to other program stakeholders at some point during the fellowship period. Fellows are expected to oblige such requests.

7. Faculty Advisor Responsibilities:

- a. The faculty advisor(s) of the Fellow must be willing to serve as a reviewer on future Fellowship review processes
- b. Advisors are encouraged to participate in Fellowship activities, such as the annual dinner at the end of the Winter semester.

Application Procedure

Required Application Materials: Student nomination packages must be submitted on-line at <http://sustainability.umich.edu/education/dow/doctoral> and must include the following:

1. An “Intent to Apply” accessible at the URL above **by February 3, 2014**. This submission triggers requests for the faculty advisor nomination letter as well as the recommendation (see 3 & 4 below).
2. A completed on-line submission form at the URL listed above, consisting of a single PDF file that includes:
 - a. A statement of educational goals and planned research of no more than 1000 words written by the student. This statement must:
 - i. Clearly describe the student’s planned research and how it relates to sustainability.
 - ii. Explain how participation in the Dow Doctoral Fellows program will enhance the student’s ability to pursue and engage in impactful sustainability work.
 - iii. Describe how the student’s research extends beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. (Note: One of the major purposes of these fellowships is to encourage cross-disciplinary study with potential impact. Research efforts that are confined to a single discipline are unlikely to receive funding through this program.)
 - iv. Clearly communicate to an interdisciplinary faculty review panel that the student’s work has the potential for great scholarly significance and impact. Adequate scholarly references should be included, but will not count towards the 1000 word limit.
 - b. A brief curriculum vitae describing the candidate’s:
 - i. Educational background
 - ii. Major awards and honors received
 - iii. Membership in professional organizations (if applicable)
 - iv. Complete list of publications and presentations (accepted, submitted, etc.)
 - v. Outreach efforts
 - c. Transcripts of all graduate and undergraduate coursework. Unofficial transcripts are acceptable.
 - d. Matching Financial Support Form (available at the http://graham.umich.edu/media/files/dfp-matchingfunds_sc_2014.pdf) with all required signatures
3. Nomination letter from the student’s U-M faculty advisor that explains why the student is a strong candidate for the Fellowship, and verifies that the student is in good standing and making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the doctoral degree. Advisors must also confirm that students are not planning finish their doctoral studies prior to April 2016. Nominators will be asked specifically to comment on the applicant’s communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. Nominators will be sent a direct URL to submit letters confidentially once the Dow Program receives the student’s “Intent to Apply”.
4. One letter of recommendation from a second individual familiar with the student’s work. Recommenders will be asked specifically to comment on the applicant’s communication and interpersonal skills. Recommenders will be sent a direct URL to submit letters confidentially after the Dow Program receives the student’s “Intent to Apply”.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

5pm, **February 3, 2014** for "Intent to Apply"

5pm, **February 17, 2014** for full application.

EXPECTED AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT: April 30, 2014

NOTE: All applications will be handled confidentially.

Please refer to <http://sustainability.umich.edu/education/dow/doctoral> for additional details on the program.