Natural Resource, Environmental, & Ecological Economics Postdoctoral Fellowship 2017

Deadline:
Dec 05, 2016

Overview

Please note: late applications will not be accepted.

December 5, 2016, 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)

The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC), located in Annapolis, Maryland, invites applications for two-year postdoctoral fellowships to begin in August 2017.

The SESYNC Postdoctoral Fellowship Program brings early-career scholars to SESYNC to:

- Undertake individual research projects,
- Participate in the Socio-Environmental Immersion Program, which immerses scholars in Theory foundational to understanding socio-environmental systems, and
- Enhance their collaborative network, computational skills, and understanding of how science can inform policy and how scientists can engage policy makers.

Fellows will undertake research projects that advance understanding of socio-environmental systems. Applicants must propose synthesis research projects as part of their applications, and are encouraged to review the SESYNC website for illustrations of socio-environmental synthesis research topics. We encourage proposed projects that are interdisciplinary, but we also welcome applications that are primarily focused on applied or theoretical economics related to environmental outcomes, behavior, or policy. Economic analysis of specific topics including – but not limited to – ecosystems, development, trade, agriculture, forestry, land use, and water resources are consistent with SESYNC’s mission.
SESYNC emphasizes synthesis research, an approach that accelerates knowledge production by distilling or integrating existing data, ideas, theories, and methods to draw more reliable or generalizable conclusions and to reveal novel areas of study. Synthesis often involves merging large and/or heterogeneous data sets from multiple sources, researchers, or fields of inquiry, as well as critical analysis in evaluating arguments and interpreting evidence. It can employ a diverse array of theoretical and methodological approaches (e.g., statistical/mathematical, structured case studies comparison, scenario studies, game theory, organizational theory, simulation/computational modeling, remote sensing, etc.).

A key element of successful postdoctoral fellowship applications will be the identification of specific research questions and how they will be addressed using synthesis methods. Applications should identify the sources and accessibility of existing data and the theoretical and analytical methods to be used. **Prospective fellows should not propose projects that require extensive collection of new data.** SESYNC offers substantial computational support and training opportunities for fellows. Therefore, successful applicants need not have experience in all of the technical aspects of their analyses.

Fellows will participate in the Socio-Environmental Immersion Program. Unique among environmental postdoctoral programs, a learning component of the SESYNC Immersion Program will steep participants in theory foundational to understanding socio-environmental systems. The core of this experience is engagement with material and people from diverse disciplines that are relevant to research on socio-environmental systems. This takes the form of interactive workshops and lectures by visiting scholars and policy-makers, discussions motivated by videos or thought-exercises, and activities or projects designed or requested by the fellows. Immersion activities for 2017-2018 will consist of structured 2-day events approximately every 2 months. SESYNC’s weekly seminar series also provides additional opportunities to engage with visiting scholars. The SESYNC Postdoctoral Socio-Environmental Immersion Program provides the freedom and support to do cutting-edge synthesis research while increasing capacity to collaborate across disciplinary divides. It provides opportunities to help Fellows chart their own academic and professional path in a vibrant environment focused on actionable science for a more sustainable future.

Fellows have the additional opportunity to participate in a wealth of Center activities as observers or as active participants. Applicants are encouraged to visit [www.sesync.org](http://www.sesync.org) for a list of the diverse projects supported by and underway at SESYNC.

**Co-Development of Research Project**

Applicants awarded a postdoctoral fellowship will be asked to identify and work with a Collaborating Mentor, who will function as a project mentor to co-develop the research. Applicants should identify three prospective Collaborating Mentors in their application for the position. An applicant’s recruitment of a specific mentor prior to the application is encouraged, but not required. SESYNC must approve all potential Collaborating Mentors to ensure they understand the commitment they are
making to your progress and success. Collaborating Mentors cannot be the fellow's current or former advisors or individuals with whom the candidate has published.

**Selection Criteria**

Postdoctoral applications will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- Explanation of how the proposed research will advance understanding of socio-environmental systems or the potential for the project to contribute to the solution of socio-environmental problems
- Novelty, creativity, and/or urgency of proposed activities
- Feasibility of producing meaningful synthetic research within a two-year time frame, including identifying and showing ability to access appropriate data and methods
- Applicant qualifications and experience
- Potential to contribute to and benefit from other research activities at the Center
- Explanation of interest in interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary research

**If invited, candidates must be available for interviews at the January 2017 American Economic Association (AEA) annual meeting** [2] or for an in-person interview at SESYNC between December 15, 2016, and January 31, 2017.

To be eligible for the fellowship, prospective fellows must have received their PhD within the past four years: no earlier than June 15, 2013, and no later than July 20, 2017. If the applicant has not received their PhD at the time they submit their application, a letter from their graduate advisor or a committee member must also be submitted with the final application. The letter should verify expectations for date of degree completion. Candidates who are offered a fellowship but do not complete their PhD by July 20, 2017, will have to reapply.

**Postdoctoral Support**

Appointments will be through the University of Maryland, and **fellowship awardees must be based full-time at SESYNC's facilities in Annapolis, Maryland**. Fellows may have the opportunity to spend part of their time at the offices of our partner organization, **Resources for the Future** [3], located in Washington, D.C.

The SESYNC postdoctoral fellowship provides an annual stipend, full University of Maryland employee benefits, and a small annual travel allowance to attend meetings or to meet with collaborators.

Postdoctoral fellowships are awarded for a maximum of two years and include structured mentoring programs and opportunities in ongoing Center activities.

Collaborating Mentors will also receive support to travel to SESYNC to work with the fellow.

**Components of an Application**

Include the following as a single PDF, using single spacing, 12-pt type fonts, and 1-inch margins.

Applications that do not submit the correct components will not be reviewed. Applications, as well as reference letters, must be received by SESYNC by December 5, 2016, 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

[1] Cover Sheet (1 page)

- Descriptive title (“SESYNC Postdoc:...")
• Short title (25 characters max)
• Name and contact information
• Date of PhD defense (If the defense has not yet occurred, applicants need a letter from their graduate advisor or committee member verifying the expected date of completion. Candidates who are not expected to complete their PhD by July 20, 2017 will be removed from competition.
• Project summary (250 words), appropriate for the public and to be posted on the SESYNC website
• Keywords (up to 5 keywords different from those used in the title)
• Potential conflicts of interest with members of the SESYNC Scientific Review Committee [4] or Leadership Team [5](A conflict of interest will not disadvantage your application. Rather, we need this information to follow proper review protocol)

[2] Research Proposal (5 pages max, including references)

• Problem statement: Clear and concise statement of the project goals including specific research questions and how the project will advance understanding of socio-environmental systems
• Methods to be used for the synthesis project.

[3] Status of Synthesis Material (1 page max)

• Type of material (datasets, models, case studies, theories, etc.)
• Location and accessibility of material


If applicable, briefly describe any anticipated needs for cyberinfrastructure support. This information should include descriptions of data sets to be used during this project; new data sets or software/databases to be developed; high performance computing needs; required data aggregation or fusion; and visualization software needs. Applicants should review SESYNC’s Cyberinfrastructure Support Information & Policies [6] and are encouraged to contact SESYNC cyberinfrastructure staff [7] prior to submission if the project’s needs are beyond the scope of services outlined in these documents.

[5] Interdisciplinary Goals (~1/2 page)

In a paragraph of 300 words max, describe one or two topics and/or methods outside your area of expertise about which you would like to deepen your knowledge. One of SESYNC’s strengths is its diverse interdisciplinary culture, which provides many opportunities for such growth. For example, a development economist studying small-holder farming could learn social network analysis to explain how relationships change market access.

[6] List of 3 Potential Collaborating Mentors

[7] Full CV of the Applicant

Please include names and contact information for two references.

Letters of Recommendation

Please arrange for two references to provide a letter of recommendation regarding your:

• Background,
• Ability to carry out the independent research as proposed, and
• Ability to engage in collaborative research as part of the SESYNC community.
These letters should be submitted directly by the recommender, separately from your application, via email to: postdoc.application@sesync.org. All letters of recommendation must be submitted by the application deadline of December 5, 2016 at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). Only two will be included in your application file. If more than two are sent, we will include the first two received.

Application & Submission Process

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF file with all sections in the following order:

1. Cover Sheet
2. Research Proposal
3. Status of Synthesis Material
4. Anticipated Cyberinfrastructure Needs
5. Interdisciplinary Goals
6. List of 3 Potential Collaborating Mentors
7. Full CV of the Applicant

International applicants should review visa requirements before applying.

The deadline for applications for fellowships beginning August 2017 is December 5, 2016, 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

To submit your application, please click here.

Questions?

Please contact SESYNC at: postdoc.application@sesync.org

SESYNC encourages applications from groups underrepresented in SESYNC research, including scholars from developing countries, participants from underrepresented U.S. minorities (African Americans, American Indians including Native Alaskans, Hispanics, and Native Pacific Islanders), and persons with disabilities (for more information on such efforts: www.nsf.gov/od/broadeningparticipation/bp_portfolio_dynamic.jsp).

The University of Maryland is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Minurities and Women Are Encouraged to Apply

Source URL:
https://www.sesync.org/opportunities/research-fellowships-postdoctoral-fellowships/natural-resource-environmental

Links
[7] mailto:msmorul@sesync.org
[8] mailto:postdoc.application@sesync.org