



**Los Angeles**  
Center for Urban Natural  
Resources Sustainability  
**Rooted in Research**

# Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability Science Fellowship Application 2018

Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability | El Pueblo de Los Angeles, 125 Paseo de la Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012; Submit your application [here](#)

## ABOUT

The Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability (The LA Urban Center) operates through a partnership among the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Urban Ecosystems & Social Dynamics Program; the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, State & Private Forestry, Cooperative Forestry: Urban and Community Forestry; the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation & Parks; and City Plants. The partners work jointly to oversee the center to promote urban natural resources stewardship, adaptive management, and science delivery. The LA Urban Center's mission is to serve as a "Research Destination Hub" where environmental, urban ecosystem, urban natural resource, and socioeconomic studies will enhance the urban forests, urban waterways, urban wildlife, green infrastructure and lives throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The LA Urban Center is a physical place to focus research activities and communication as well as a hub in the network of relationships among a growing community of scholars, policy makers, cooperators and their facilities focused on urban natural resources sustainability.

## PURPOSE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The LA Urban Center's science fellowship provides research and science-delivery opportunities for graduate students from a diversity of academic disciplines and sociodemographic backgrounds. Selected Fellows conduct projects that contribute to the core mission and vision of the LA Urban Center. Fellows receive a stipend of \$5,000 and are required to develop and deliver a presentation summarizing findings to date at the spring 2019 Fellows Seminar. As a final product, fellows submit a brief technical report as well as a product for a more general audience, showcasing main findings. These materials may be displayed in the LA Urban Center office, or during seminars or outreach events hosted by the Center. In this call for proposals, we are seeking to fill two fellowship slots, addressing key priority areas. One aims to capture research that evaluates, synthesizes and adds to existing work on urban waters and urban forestry programs in Southern California. The other asks applicants to propose a research topic that aligns well with the LAUC's research area priorities.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR FELLOWS

- **Exploring** – Each Fellow is expected to conduct and provide a literature review **or** accompanying annotated bibliography related to their project.
- **Researching** –The urban waters and/or forestry fellow will develop research questions in close collaboration with LAUC partners, aimed at synthesizing and supplementing existing work. The second fellow will develop an original research question and project related to the Fellow's ongoing work within the general topic parameters provided in the Research Areas section on page 4.
- **Contributing** – Each Fellow is expected to secure a research mentor whom the Fellow will spend time working on data collection and professional development. This may vary considerably for each project, but Fellows should expect to commit up to 100 hours over the course of the fellowship working with their mentor. These interactions will serve as an opportunity

for Fellows to develop relationships with researchers and practitioners in their area of interest. More than one mentor may be of help depending on the complexity of the work proposed, or the breadth across topics. Suggested mentors include professors at the graduate student's university, a research expert at a nonprofit or organization that has appropriate expertise for the proposed work, or a scientist from the Pacific Southwest Research Station. Anticipated end users of the proposed research might provide supportive input. Mentors are essential to the proposal development, thus need to be identified and engaged early in the process. As a part of this expectation, the fellow is required to meet a minimum of three times with Dr. Nora Davis, a USFS's Pacific Southwest Research Station scientist stationed at the LAUC office in Los Angeles. Each one-hour meeting will occur seasonally – one in summer, fall and winter, in preparation for the spring seminar – specifically, by September 22<sup>st</sup> and December 21<sup>st</sup> of 2018 and by March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, respectively.

- **Sharing** – Each Fellow will develop and present their research findings in spring 2019 as part of the LA Urban Center's Fellows seminar. Seminar presentations will be recorded and posted to the LA Urban Center's website. Also required is a brief (5 page maximum) technical report capturing the main research questions, methods and findings of the work, as well as a product for a more general audience that showcases main findings (e.g. a [storymap](#), [interactive photo](#), [video](#), or flyer). All three deliverables (presentation, technical report and product for general audience) must be submitted to City Plants, no later than June 15, 2019.

## WHAT CAN FELLOWS EXPECT FROM THE FELLOWSHIP?

- **Funding** – \$5,000 fellowship award. Fellows will receive a stipend through LA Center partner City Plants. Payments are for completed phases of the selected project, in keeping with the written agreement between the selected Fellow and City Plants. Final payment will be made after the Fellow presents work at the 2018 Fellows Seminar, hosted by the LA Urban Center.
- **Mentoring** – Mentorship will be provided from the Fellow's research mentor and the LAUC's in-house researcher, who will assist with networking and support from industry partners, enhancing project visibility and career development.
- **Linking** – Access to local organizations, community groups, and industry practitioners.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be currently enrolled in an accredited graduate degree program and must submit the following online [here](https://tinyurl.com/LAUrbanCenterFellowship) at <https://tinyurl.com/LAUrbanCenterFellowship>

1. A 1-page statement of interest describing (1) your proposed research topic, including proposed approach (methods) and a timeline of deliverables, (2) why you are interested in your proposed research topic, (3) what you hope to learn from this fellowship, and (4) how this fellowship fits into your professional or academic goals; (double sided allowed, single spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins, required)
2. A CV or resume;
3. Two letters of recommendation (one of which should be from a faculty member at your institution who may be able to provide guidance during this fellowship);
4. A statement of intent from the Fellow's research mentor, providing the mentor's name, title, institution, and contact information (note this statement of intent should indicate the mentor's expressed commitment to work with the fellow throughout the life of this project if awarded); and
5. A current unofficial transcript to document current enrollment, focal areas, and progress in your graduate studies;
6. *Optional*: If you have an active study that you believe fits this fellowship please provide an abstract of that ongoing work and how you would augment that work through the fellowship if selected.

## RESEARCH AREAS

In this call we are accepting proposals that address one or the other fellowship outlined below. Please ensure that your proposal clearly indicates how the focal topics will be addressed in sufficient detail for the research committee to evaluate the merit of your proposal as a stand-alone document.

**Focused Fellowship on Urban Waters & Urban Forestry.** Los Angeles is home to an award winning Urban Waters Federal Partnership (see [here](#)). This fellowship would aim to address research questions within and beyond this partnership, for instance, by exploring the complementary story of the San Gabriel River system, or more broadly the important role of urban forestry in storm water management.

Southern California is also home to a strong community of nonprofits, cities and government agencies dedicated to protecting and enhancing the urban forests of Southern California. Many recent efforts have been made to evaluate the state of the urban forest. This project would explore and synthesize existing data and inventories, convene the partners interested in this work, and expand on it by capturing new data from cities and regions that are currently not represented.

**Open Fellowship.** This fellowship asks applicants to propose a research topic that aligns well with the following research priorities:

- Green infrastructure – relative habitat value of native and non-native species of trees and or plants; trees with greatest capacity to improve air quality; best management practices for tree planting for multiple benefits; designs for stormwater use to maintain trees-scalable to cities; sustainable planning indicators
- Forest health – the effects of drought alone or in partnership with tracking and mitigation of infested urban trees; forest health considered from an urban systems approach; tree species selection and capacity
- Environmental justice-green space and public health; green jobs & improving inclusivity; design of green spaces and parks in disadvantaged communities; best tree plantings in underserved communities; innovative approaches to engaging underserved communities to improve social and ecological resilience

**HOW TO APPLY: submit your application online by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at:**

<https://tinyurl.com/LAUrbanCenterFellowship>

## IMPORTANT DATES

- Application Due: April 30, 2018 at midnight PST (early submissions are encouraged)
- Applications Reviewed, Rated, and Telephone Interviews with Finalists Conducted by Research Committee: May 2–16, 2018
- Review of Research Committee Ratings and Selection by City Plants: May 17–24, 2018
- Applicants Notified: June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018
- Completion Date: The fellowship period will last until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. All research and any related projects must be completed no later June 15<sup>th</sup>, two weeks in advance of the fellowship period closing. Please indicate when you are available to begin the fellowship in the Desired Start Date section on the attached cover page.

It is also important to ensure that your submitted project is the one you wish to be evaluated on. We are unable to accept revisions or modifications to the proposal once submitted. Please note that in this round of Fellows we have no possibility for extensions of projects, thus, your application indicates you are able to complete the proposed work in full during the stated time period. Withdrawing post-selection will likely impact any future applications for funding you may wish to submit to the LA Urban Center. Former and or current fellows may apply, however, priority consideration is given to new applicants.

**QUESTIONS?** Please email Rachel O'Leary at [rachel.oleary@lacity.org](mailto:rachel.oleary@lacity.org)