



2021 ASPPH/EPA Environmental Health Fellowship Program Announcement

ASPPH GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAMS

ASPPH ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

2021 Fellowship Opportunities ASPPH/EPA Environmental Health Fellowship Program

Program Announcement

The ASPPH/EPA Environmental Health Fellowship Program is supported through a cooperative agreement between the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ASPPH is the only national organization representing the deans, faculty and students of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accredited member schools of public health and other programs seeking accreditation as schools of public health.

The goal of the ASPPH/EPA Environmental Health Fellowship Program is to provide professional training and opportunities for early-career public health professionals to be involved with EPA on current and emerging environmental public health needs. EPA leads the nation's environmental science, research, education and assessment efforts. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. EPA is the country's primary developer of environmental policy and rule-making decisions. ASPPH/EPA Fellows train under nationally recognized experts who work to protect human health and the environment.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this program, applicants must have received their Masters or Doctorate degree prior to the beginning of the fellowship (no later than August 2021) or within the last five years (no earlier than May 2016). Graduate degrees must come from an ASPPH member graduate school or program of public health accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). (For a list of ASPPH members, see www.ASPPH.org.) All applicants must be U.S. citizens or hold a visa permitting permanent residence ("Green Card") in the U.S. to be eligible for the fellowship program.

Certification in Public Health (CPH) preferred. (www.nbphe.org)

Period of Performance

Fellowship positions are full-time opportunities for a period of **one year** (estimated start is November 1, 2021).

Location

Fellows will be placed in various EPA offices, most of which are located in the Washington, D.C. area, but may also be located in any of several EPA laboratories, regional offices, or centers throughout the country. Applicants will be notified of exact assignment locations during the final selection phase and matching process. Selected fellows are required to relocate to the fellowship location. A \$1,000 relocation allowance will be provided for selected fellows who do not already reside in the assignment location.

Funds Available

The annual training stipend for the fellowship positions is **\$60,471** for **Masters** level candidates, and **\$73,626** for candidates with **advanced graduate degrees** (MD, PhD, DrPH, JD, etc.). The fellowship training stipend is intended to cover all personal living expenses.

In addition to the fellowship training stipend, fellows will have access to a \$10,000 “general fellowship allowance” that is intended to offset the cost of health insurance premium expenses incurred during the one-year fellowship period. The “general fellowship allowance” may also be used to cover approved project-related travel, training, journal subscriptions, association dues, etc. A public transportation allowance of \$1,200 will also be provided. Fellows who do not already reside in the assignment location will receive an allowance of \$1,000 to offset the costs for relocation. Fellows who are assigned outside of the Washington, DC area will also receive a travel allowance to cover the costs associated with attending the mandatory Orientation Program, when offered in-person.

Expected Benefits

The Program provides leadership training in environmental science, research, education, and assessment efforts. Examples of possible ASPPH/EPA Fellow experiences include:

- Collaboration with leading experts in the fields of environmental health, toxicology, epidemiology, environmental health, social and behavioral sciences, biology, and risk assessment on important current and emerging public health issues like water and air safety, children’s health, green jobs and workforce development
- Participation in projects on cross-cutting health assessment issues
- Exposure to environmental research laboratories and specialized equipment
- Attainment of skills, experience, and knowledge to enhance careers as a public health researchers and practitioners
- Collaboration with environmental health experts inside and outside EPA
- Observation of the development of science policy guidance at the Agency level
- Participation in workshops
- Visits to research laboratories and field sites

Application Procedure

Applicants may select **up to three** “Fellowship Training Areas” in which they are most interested in fulfilling a fellowship. (See Section 12 to view Fellowship Training Areas) Final placements will be made during the last stage of the selection process.

Applications are to be completed online through the ASPPH Fellowship Online Application System at <https://fellowships-internships.aspph.org>. The materials needed to complete an application are detailed on the application form. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Please see Section 11 for detailed application instructions.

Applications must be **submitted electronically** no later than 11:59 PM Eastern Time on:

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess the applicant’s ability to participate in the fellowship program.

| <u>Evaluation Criteria</u> | <u>Maximum Points</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Quality of Essay | 40 |
| Strength of Credentials | 25 |
| Previous Experience | 25 |
| Recommendations | 10 |

Objective Review Committee

In March 2021, ASPPH will convene an independent review committee consisting of public health professionals from the academic and practice communities. Reviewers will not review applications for candidates from schools with whom they are affiliated. The committee will score the applications based on the above-mentioned criteria. Applicants may be contacted by the committee for additional information and/or clarification of information relevant to the application.

Panel Review Committee

Applicants who receive top tier objective review scores, will be invited to interview with a Panel Review Committee via virtual format. ***This interview is mandatory for all applicants who wish to be considered for final placement in the Program.*** Interviews will be conducted ***virtually*** and are expected to occur in mid-April 2021. Following completion of the interviews, the Panel Review Committee will decide which applicants will move forward to the final review and matching phase.

Final Review


The final review of fellows will begin in late-April 2021. During this process finalists will be contacted by EPA staff, via telephone, for further interviews. A “matching” process will allow both the applicant and EPA staff to determine which applicants are best suited for fellowships within the participating EPA labs/offices affiliated with the Fellowship Training Areas to which the applicants applied. ***It is not guaranteed that all applicants who reach this phase will be placed in fellowship positions within EPA.*** Final placements will ultimately be determined by successful matches of applicants to available opportunities. Formal offers for fellowships are expected to be made beginning in early-June 2021.

Application Instructions

The ASPPH Fellowships Online Application System is the centralized application service for applicants from an ASPPH member-accredited school of public health. ASPPH offers this Web-based application to make the application process easy and convenient. You may begin your search and application immediately by clicking the link below:

<https://fellowships-internships.aspph.org>

The system is a secure website. To begin an online application, please create an account by clicking the "Sign up" link directly underneath the Login section. Signing up is free and easy. A password will need to be created to protect and save the account for future access. All information is transmitted through a secured server and is kept confidential until the application is submitted. An application is only reviewed by ASPPH staff after it has been submitted.

Please read carefully the instructions that appear throughout the online application system. After submission, applicants may edit applications by clicking on the pencil icon () in the “My Status” section at any time prior to the application deadline. The application may be edited as necessary at any time prior to the application due-date. If this is done, applicants must then resubmit the application before the deadline passes in order to be received and reviewed by ASPPH.

The following information/documents will be needed to complete the online application:

- Faculty Advisor name, phone number, and email address, if you have not yet graduated

When you submit your application, the system will generate an email to your Faculty Advisor asking them to verify your expected graduation date.

- Resume/CV (PDF only)

- Name, phone number, and email address for two References who will write your letters of recommendation

When you submit your application, the system will generate an email to your two References asking them to upload their letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation must be on official letterhead with an original signature and include the name, degree(s), title, institution, and contact information of the reference.

- One essay per position applied to (1500 word max; PDF only)

Explaining your interests, strengths and qualifications for the fellowship and how it will benefit your long-term career plans in the field of public health. A separate essay must be submitted for each "Fellowship Training Area" to which you apply.

- Unofficial Graduate Transcripts (ASPPH Member School or Program of Public Health only; PDF only)

If you are offered and accept a fellowship position, you will be required to provide an official graduate transcript.

IMPORTANT: Please note that the Online Application System will not generate the email to your Faculty Advisor or References until you click the "Submit" button in Step 5 of the application. Saving the application for later submission will not generate these emails. The deadline for your Faculty Advisor and References to submit their portions is the same as the application deadline below. Therefore, you should not wait until the last day to submit your application, because your Faculty Advisor and References will not have time to complete their sections. You will be able to submit early in the system to generate the emails, and then re-open and edit the application as needed for completion. Any applications not submitted or not completed by the deadline will not be reviewed, and the applicant will not be eligible.

Applications must be submitted electronically, through the Online Application System, By **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Thursday, February 11, 2021.**

Fellowship Training Areas for 2021

When applying to the ASPPH/EPA Environmental Health Fellowship Program, **you are allowed to select at least one, but no more than three, of the following Fellowship Training Areas in which you would be most interested.** Please select those Fellowship Training Areas that align most closely to your own personal skills and interests. Ultimately, specific fellowship project goals will be developed by each individual fellow, with the guidance of EPA mentor(s), in line with the objectives and activities of the host EPA lab/office, and the career objectives of the fellow. Projects will be self-directed by the fellow and will not include work that is typically done by EPA staff for the benefit of EPA. As program participants in an EPA-funded grant, ASPPH/EPA Fellows are not employees of EPA and cannot be assigned EPA work, but rather will participate in learning activities and research activities that will foster their professional development.

The themes and programmatic subcategories given below provide illustrations of public health-related activities that EPA is empowered to work in under its governing legislation. The lists are intended to serve as guides to applicants in deciding where they might best fit within the agency. It does not represent the universe of available opportunities. Further, there is not guarantee that Fellows will be able to work on projects in the areas listed below. ASPPH offers this information as a way to stimulate ideas among applicants about the kind of projects they might wish to pursue while participating in a fellowship at EPA. In addition, fellowship placements can potentially include cross-cutting programs such as Homeland Security and health research.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-001: *Sustainable Communities*

Many offices within EPA have a mission that includes activities relating to sustainable communities. Here is a representative listing of some of these program areas, which may provide opportunities for interested Fellows:

- The intersection of public-health and ecosystem services;
- Tools for assessing the status of local natural resources and their benefits to human health;
- The use, management and communication of health and environmental indicators and challenges for presenting environmental health indicator information to the public; and
- Analysis of indicators for sustainability and measures of impacts of community actions on health and the environment.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-002: *Safe and Sustainable Water and Public Health*

The topic of drinking water includes diverse program areas that relate to public health including efforts to prevent contamination of drinking water at the source as well as issues pertaining to delivery systems and access. Here are just a few active programs that may be of interest to Fellows:

- Watershed protection programs;
- Traditional and innovative strategies for water quality and enforcement programs; and,
- Issues related to drinking water resources.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-003: *Children's Environmental Health*

Fellows interested in children's environmental health may find opportunities among the following ongoing projects in EPA, which are representative of the kind of work EPA is doing to support the health of the Nation's children:

- Communication and education challenges and approaches for conveying environmental health issues to the public;
- Environmental health risk assessment and science policy analyses related to children's health in Agency actions, including the potential for unique exposures, hazards, health effects, and health risks in children during development.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-004: *Social Science/Environmental Justice*

The theme of environmental justice permeates several regulatory areas within EPA. In addition, the agency has embraced the contributions that can be made by the social sciences in resolving issues of environmental inequity. This list illustrates the kind of projects Fellows might work on.

- Role of social and natural science data in improving understanding of the linkages between factors such as demographics, health and environmental risk exposure, and socio-cultural perceptions of environmental responsibility in the promotion of community resilience or sustainability;
- Intersection of environmental justice and sustainability;
- Social dimensions of addressing environmental health disparities in the systems-context of economic-environmental-social axes;
- Social dimensions of decision-making approaches and governance; and,
- Innovative outreach for historically underrepresented communities,
- Innovative interventions to improve indoor environmental conditions in low income/multifamily housing.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-005: *Air Quality*

Air quality remains an important issue within EPA and offers numerous topics with public health implications. Here are a few possible project areas that support EPA's mission:

- Monitoring approaches for meeting air quality initiatives;
- Evidence-based, public health protective levels of air toxins; and,
- Intersection of energy and air (energy efficiency, indoor air quality and public health issues).
- Indoor air toxics (radon, environmental tobacco smoke) interventions and policies.

Fellowship Training Area # EPA-21-006: *Safe Chemicals*

EPA employs a variety of strategies under several statutes to ensure the safety of chemicals. These include:

- Participating in in Systematic Review (including methods development) and Study Quality Evaluation;
- Identifying and characterizing the health hazards and risks of chemicals found in the environment;
- Assessing toxicity values for health effects resulting from chronic exposure to chemicals;
- Controlling the risks of new chemicals before they are introduced or reintroduced into commerce;
- Evaluating chemicals already in use;
- Developing and implementing regulatory and other actions to eliminate or reduce identified chemical risks; and,
- Making public the data necessary to assess chemical safety to the extent allowed by law.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The preceding statements for potential projects are intended to describe general activities associated with each fellowship training area. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all activities, skills, or efforts associated with each fellowship.
- It is possible that multiple positions could be filled under a single Fellowship Training Area. It is also possible that no fellowship opportunities will be available in a Fellowship Training Area. (i.e., it is not guaranteed that a fellow will be placed under each of the Fellowship Training Areas described above.) Final placements for all Fellowship Training Areas will be determined during the final review and selection phase of the application process.