

AERS STUDENT SMALL RESEARCH GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Purpose

The mission of the Atlantic Estuarine Research Society (AERS) is to bring together students, scientists, managers, and educators from the states of DE, MD, NC, NJ, PA, and VA and Washington, DC to discuss estuarine and coastal environmental issues and policies. It is our intent to foster broader interest in our environment by increasing public awareness of current issues.

The intent of the Student Small Research Grant Award is to encourage and reward students with a clear research question and approach by defraying the costs of pursuing their stated goals. Eligible research will be relevant to the overall mission of AERS and reflect excellence in academic rigor and student potential. Further, this award will add value to students beyond meetings, encourage and reward excellence in student research scholarship, and strengthen the scientifically rigorous reputation of AERS.

Grant

The grant offers up to \$2,500 in research support to any student enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program. We strongly encourage applications from students based or conducting research in estuaries in the Mid-Atlantic region (Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and North Carolina). Funds may be used for purposes such as covering travel to field sites, the purchase of scientific equipment or supplies, and student salaries. Purchase of materials for unrelated projects, indirect costs, or to attend scientific conferences outside of AERS will not be supported.

Who can apply?

To apply, you must:

- Be an undergraduate or graduate student with an interest in estuarine scientific research, who is currently enrolled at an educational institution.
- Our society is based in the Mid-Atlantic area. Applications are welcome from students anywhere within the United States, although we strongly encourage applications from students based or conducting research in the mid-Atlantic region.
- Execute original research. Literature reviews will not be considered, though meta-analyses and synthesis papers that introduce original questions, research, data analyses, concepts, or new perspectives will be considered.

Please note - family members of the Grant Selection Committee, the Executive Committee, or of our major donors are not eligible to apply. Only one (1 proposal) is permitted per applicant. Previous award winners are ineligible.

Instructions

To complete the application, please complete the cover letter and grant template. A completed application also includes a recommendation letter submitted independently by the letter writer. Applicants are responsible for confirming that their letter writer submitted a recommendation by the due date.

File 1 - Cover letter attached as a pdf document submitted by the applicant. Please name this document "Student last name_cover letter".

1. A cover letter
2. Abstract – 2,500 character limit (including spaces)

File 2 - Grant Template attached as a separate pdf document submitted by the applicant. This file should include numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 below. Please name this document "Student last name_grant proposal".

1. Two-page grant proposal describing the research that will be done with the grant. Include:
 - A. Title
 - B. Introduction - A brief overview of the research topic, with reference to appropriate literature
 - C. Aims - What is the hypothesis and how will you test it?
 - D. Materials and Methods - How, where, and when the proposed research will be conducted
 1. The applicant must address where and when the research will be conducted, if site access has been secured, and if the applicant has access to vehicles and/or boats to complete the work.
 - E. Expected Results - Expected outcome for the research activities
 - F. Significance of the Proposed Research - How will doing this research improve or add to the general knowledge of estuarine research?
 - G. Statement on how this grant will help you complete the proposed research and how it will help advance your career.
2. References cited (no page limit). Applicants may chose any reference style, but all references must be consistent in style.
3. One page budget and justification, including Total In-kind support (include vehicles, boats, laboratory equipment, and supplies that are available for the applicant to use without cost to the applicant) and Total Project Cost
4. A Curriculum Vitae (CV), including educational information, GPA, prior presentations, and publications (No page limit).

All submitted materials must be single spaced, Arial font, 11 point, with 1-inch margins and single line spaces. All documents must be collated into two PDFs (File 1 Cover Letter and File 2 Grant Proposal) and sent as two files.

File 3 – Letter of Recommendation (to be submitted by the recommendation letter writer)

1. One letter of recommendation (preferably from the research advisor) to be submitted to the AERS email (aersscience@gmail.com) by the letter writer by the application deadline. Please ask your recommendation writer to title the email: "Letter of Recommendation for AERS Student Research Grant"

Applications must be submitted by email to the AERS email (aersscience@gmail.com) by March 3, 2024. Please include "AERS Student Research Grant" in the subject line of the email.

Recipients of the grant will be informed in person at the business meeting at the spring meeting and by email.

The grant applications will be judged on criteria such as completeness, relevance to the field of estuarine science, originality, rigor, feasibility, justification, impact on career, and potential contribution to AERS.

Awardee Responsibilities

The awardee will be required to write a 1-2 page final report sent available to AERS. The report should address how the provided funding advanced the project and what the importance of the awardee's science is in a bigger picture context. The awardee will be invited to present progress (preliminary results) at the upcoming Spring AERS meeting. The awardee will be required to write a synopsis or article to be included in the AERS News.

Cover Letter for the AERS Student Research Grants

Applicant's Name:

Applicant's E-mail Address:

Applicant's Home Institution:

Name of Academic Advisor:

E-mail Address of Academic Advisor:

I am an: Undergraduate Student PhD Student Masters Student

Current Year of Study:

Anticipated Graduation Date (Month & Year):

Project Title:

I certify that all of my answers are true to the best of my knowledge:

Signature:

(Please note – Typing your full name above will substitute for your signature)

Date:

Project Abstract (2,500 character limit, including spaces):

AERS Student Research Grant Proposal Template

Grant Proposal (2 page limit)

- Title
- Introduction
- Aims
- Materials and Methods
- Expected Results
- Significance of the Proposed Research
- Impact

References Cited (no page limit)

Budget and Justification One page budget and justification, including Total In-kind support (include vehicles, boats, laboratory equipment, and supplies that are available for the applicant to use without cost to the applicant) and Total Project Cost

Use the following categories if applicable:

- Reagents and supplies
- Equipment
- Travel
- Publication costs
- Miscellaneous

Example budget justification and template:

All travel will be in accordance with University travel regulations and mileage will be charged at the current rate on the date of travel. Travel estimates are based on costs that were incurred on previous projects of a similar nature for federal and state agencies. We anticipate seven total 185-mile sampling trips visiting two separate collection sites to take place in 2024 (one trip per month from March through October 2024). We anticipate using a personal vehicle for these trips as there will be no departmental vehicles regularly available. Travel estimates are for milage only.

Supply and expense items categorized as project specific are for expenses that specifically benefit this project, are reasonable and necessary for the performance of this work, and can be readily allocable to this project. \$2,000 in Funds are requested to include the purchase of DNA processing kits (DNA extraction reagents, PCR reagents, and Sanger sequencing expenses inclusive) for field collected samples.

Additional materials for the project not listed in the budget below will be provided by the xxx Lab.

Item	Cost per Item	Amount Needed	Total Cost
Mileage to field sites	\$0.67 per mile (IRS rate)	185 miles per trip x 7 trips	\$867.65
DNA preparation and sequencing fees	\$10 per sample	200 sample pools (5 cysts each)	\$2000
Total Amount Requested			\$2867.65

Curriculum Vitae (CV) (no page limit). Include at least the following categories:

- Educational information (including GPA)

- Positions, Honors, and Awards
- Prior presentations
- Publications