



## 2021 NWF Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution Graduate Student Fellowship Request for Applications

**Topic:** Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution Fellow

**Location:** Any U.S. location

### **Background:**

National Wildlife Federation is the managing partner for the national Campus Race to Zero Waste (formerly RecycleMania) Program. A key component of the program is the CR2ZW competition, a college and university competition focused on helping campuses reduce their waste and improve their recycling on campus. CR2ZW is also launching a new recognition program for colleges and universities taking action to reduce the purchase and use of plastics on campus; the program will make its debut in late 2021. One of the major threats to wildlife is the increasing amount of plastic pollution that is ending up in our natural environment, specifically in our streams, rivers, bays and oceans. NWF would like to grow our engagement and impact to help campuses work toward zero waste and reduce their dependence on plastics by identifying zero waste campus leaders and sharing their best practices, as well as identifying campuses that are at the beginning of their journey of tackling waste on campus and providing them support to reach their goals.

**Goal of Fellowship:** Develop a campus list of zero waste and plastic reduction campus leaders in the U.S and summarize their efforts. Secondly, develop a campus list of schools with recycling programs and broader goals to reduce waste on campus that are not currently engaged with the CR2ZW program. These lists should be developed in accordance with the competencies listed below, ensuring that the innovations and contributions of leaders from historically underrepresented communities in the environmental community are represented.

### **Key Responsibilities**

- Register and maintain an active personal profile and presence on NWF EcoLeaders community, and promote to personal network
- Create project plan for a 4-6 month Fellowship term based on desired goal (stated above)
- Develop a campus list of zero waste and plastic reduction leaders (20-30 campuses) and summarize each campus's efforts based on a provided template. The summaries will be posted on the website and shared via social media.
- Develop a campus list of schools (75-100 campuses) that host recycling/waste reduction programs and have not engaged with the CR2ZW program.

### **Fellowship Program Requirements:**

- Participate in a Fellowship kick-off call - date TBD
- Participate in periodic phone check-ins with NWF staff about project status and responsibilities

- Submit biweekly project updates throughout the Fellowship detailing the progress you have made and plans for the duration of your Fellowship

### **Competencies:**

- Motivated by values of equity and responsibility to those most marginalized.
- Dedicated to deepening understanding of cultural and systemic racism and the intersectionality of multiple forms of social inequality.
- Demonstrates awareness of positional power and privilege (both personally and professionally) and its attendant impacts.
- Consistently brings a high level of empathy and social skills to work and interpersonal interactions
- Demonstrates awareness of the attributes associated with a white dominant culture and takes actions to dismantle hierarchies of oppression within that culture.
- Must be a strategic thinker, self-starter, well organized, strong communicator, and relationship builder.
- An entrepreneurial spirit, initiative and energy is critical to success.
- Must have a passion for and commitment to NWF's mission.

### **Perks and Privileges:**

- \$5,500 stipend
- Professional development resources, assistance, and networking
- Possibility of academic credit for successful completion of the project, as an independent study or integration of fellowship project into course curricula

**Eligibility:** Graduate students from any college or university within the U.S. are eligible to apply. Applications are invited from students in all disciplines and are not limited to environmental studies majors. Current and former employees of National Wildlife Federation and former NWF Campus Ecology Fellows are ineligible to apply. Former NWF interns are eligible to apply following one year from their final work date. The name on the application must be limited to **one individual** and the Fellowship reporting, training, or other requirements cannot be transferred to or shared with another student. Additional involvement should be noted in the proposal. The applicant must be enrolled in school through the duration of the 4-month grant period.

### **Grant Terms:**

The Fellowship is for a term of 4-6 months, depending on Fellow's schedule. The fellow will begin in May of 2021, with the specific date TBD. Fellows spend various amounts of time on their projects each week. The average amount of time spent is 10 hours weekly or 40 hours monthly. The time invested by each student is typically considerable, but it is also flexible to account for schoolwork and other commitments and the working style of each Fellow. Fellows will receive a stipend for their work. Any Fellowship-related expenses accrued during the Fellowship period should be covered by the stipend.

Payments are dispersed in two installments: First installment of grant awards are made within two weeks of awarding the fellowship and finalizing fellowship agreement. The second installment will be made by August 31, 2021. Grant funds may be distributed to the student directly (with submission of a W-9) or to an Administrative Office on campus (e.g. Research, Grants and Contracts Office, Financial Aid Office, Campus Sustainability Office) to the attention of the appropriate administrator. Grant funds may be taxable; consult your tax advisor for U.S. Internal Revenue Service reporting requirements.

## How to Apply:

1. Carefully review the information provided in this document.
2. Complete and submit the application form for the 2021 NWF Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution Graduate Student Fellowship, [HERE](#).
3. Submit an electronic letter of recommendation from your identified Advisor via PDF attachment to [Fellows@nwf.org](mailto:Fellows@nwf.org)

*All applicants must identify and work with an Advisor for the duration of the grant period. An advisor is a member of the staff, faculty, or administration on your campus who is willing to serve in an advisory capacity for the duration of the grant period. The advisor should be from the department on campus this is most closely related to your fellowship and can validate that the project is one that is supported by the department and/or campus.*

*Please secure an electronic copy of a letter of recommendation from the Advisor explaining the qualifications of the applicant and his or her role in advising the student and submit the letter as a PDF attachment via email to [Fellows@nwf.org](mailto:Fellows@nwf.org)*

## **The deadline to submit applications is April 21, 2021 by midnight.**

Applications are reviewed by a committee to determine which meet the selection criteria. All applicants will be notified of their status within one month of their application deadline.

### **Applications will be evaluated based on the following:**

- Demonstrated interest in and experience working within or with diverse constituencies
- Engagement with students, faculty, community organizations, and businesses
- Interest in conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Strong communication skills of applicant to build diverse constituency
- Initiative to overcome barriers and seek alternative avenues when necessary
- Proactive research and outreach to ensure project will successfully achieve the above
- Commitment to advancing environmental initiatives on academic, personal, and professional levels
- Desire to remain an active member in NWF after the conclusion of the Fellowship