



# The University of Texas at Austin College of Natural Sciences

## 2024 STENGL-WYER GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION

### REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Submission Deadline: October 9, 2023 at 5:00PM CT

#### DESCRIPTION

The [Stengl-Wyer Graduate Fellowship](#) funds doctoral candidates pursuing dissertation research on the diversity of life and organisms in their natural environments, across many disciplines within the College of Natural Sciences (CNS), including ecology, evolution, molecular and cellular biology, plant biology, neuroscience, marine science, and other relevant areas. 2024 Stengl-Wyer Graduate Fellowship recipients will receive the following:

- A 12-month stipend of \$36,000 beginning September 1, 2024 and ending August 31, 2025
- Full tuition and fees for the one-year appointment
- Health insurance
- A \$2,000 allowance that may be used to cover research and travel expenses

#### ELIGIBILITY & QUALIFICATIONS

Eligible applicants must be in candidacy for a doctoral degree in a CNS graduate program pursuing research on the diversity of life and organisms in their natural environments at the time of application. Applicants should intend to commit a minimum of 9 months of the one-year award as a Stengl-Wyer Graduate Fellow. Applicants must demonstrate a record of intellectual distinction and evidence of scholarly achievement, as evidenced by publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals, presentations at national or international scientific meetings, or other comparable achievements. Successful applicants should also demonstrate independence and creativity in their proposed research projects. Preference will be given to applicants whose proposed projects broaden the scope of research in CNS and further the Stengl-Wyer Endowment's mission to explore the diversity of life and the interactions between organisms and their natural environments.

## EXPECTATIONS OF AWARDEES

Stengl-Wyer Graduate Fellows are expected to devote themselves full-time to research and scholarship and intend to commit a minimum of 9 months in the position. Fellows may not serve as Teaching Assistants or accept other UT employment during their fellowship tenure. A Stengl-Wyer Fellowship may not be combined with other university fellowships such as a recruitment or continuing fellowship. Deferment of a Stengl-Wyer Fellowship will not be allowed. Stengl-Wyer Fellows must reside locally and be regularly present on campus (unless fieldwork or other research-related activities require their absence).

Although the bulk of the Fellow's time will be devoted to their own research, analysis, and/or writing, each Fellow is expected to contribute towards the communication of biodiversity science to the public. Suitable contributions will typically require less than one week of time for preparing and carrying out the activity. For example, this might be a talk in the "Science Under the Stars" sequence, organizing a table at "Explore UT", or a similar event. Fellows are also expected to participate in regular meetings covering professional development and research topics with the community of Stengl-Wyer Fellows, Scholars, or guests.

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

All application documents should be formatted using 1-inch margins and no smaller than 11-point font. Recommended fonts are Arial, Georgia, Helvetica and Times New Roman. The following documents are all required and must be submitted by the application deadline:

1. **Lay Summary:** In 200 words or less describe for a general audience the proposed project and its potential impact on the understanding of the diversity of life and interactions between organisms and their natural environments.
2. **Research Project Description** (3 pages maximum; including figures, excluding citations): Describe your research project, your progress to-date and in particular the research activities that will be undertaken during the fellowship year. Emphasize the novel aspects and potential impact of your research project. Briefly discuss how you intend to contribute to the communication of biodiversity science to the public through teaching and/or outreach.
3. **Bibliography/References** (no page limit): List sources in a document separate from your project description.
4. **Short-form Curriculum Vitae** (2 pages maximum): Provide a list, including dates and appropriate citations for all publications, talks and presentations at conferences, or talks at other institutions. Provide a list of research, academic, and professional

awards and honors, including dates. Provide a list of outreach and other activities that demonstrate evidence of scientific creativity, productivity, and commitment to leadership and service.

5. **Research Advisor Letter of Support:** The applicant's dissertation research advisor must submit a letter of support confidentially per the Instructions for Research Advisor section below. The applicant is responsible for communicating the instructions and submission deadline to their research advisor.

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applications must be submitted through Competition Space, UT's online submission interface. To apply:

1. Visit <https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1907493>
2. Click the "Apply" button on the Competition Space page.
3. This will take you to a login screen. External applicants should create an interface account by clicking the "Register" button toward the bottom of the page. Follow the instructions to create an account. Applicants with an existing UT EID and password should login using the "University of Texas Web Login" button.
4. You will be taken to an online application form. Complete the form and upload the required application components. Click "Submit Application" at the bottom of the page. You also have the option to save a draft and return later to submit your application.

The Lay Summary, Research Project Description, Bibliography/References, and Short-form CV should be combined and uploaded as a single pdf and submitted by the **application deadline of 5:00 PM CT on October 9, 2023.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH ADVISOR**

The applicant's research advisor must submit a letter of support describing the applicant's accomplishments, potential for development as an independent scientist, their creativity and drive, and their capacity to anticipate and address challenges. Describe how the proposed project is distinct from the current projects and long-term research program of your lab. Briefly describe the applicant's estimated defense and graduation timeline.

The letter should be submitted confidentially by the applicant's research advisor via email to [swe@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:swe@austin.utexas.edu) and should be received by the **application deadline of 5:00 PM CT on October 9, 2023.** Letters of support must remain confidential, and the applicant must not be copied on the email.

## REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by a standing faculty committee using the following criteria:

- **Intellectual merit:** Consider honors, awards, scholarships, leadership and service activities, and other non-traditional recognition or distinction.
- **Evidence of research accomplishments:** Consider publications, presentations at scientific meetings, reports, and other achievements and contributions to research.
- **Letter(s) of support:** Consider accomplishments, especially in the context of obstacles, and potential for development as an independent scholar.
- **Research project:** Consider novelty, creativity, scope, and potential impact of the proposed research project. Evaluate evidence for independence of the applicant, for example the extent to which the project is distinct from advisor's existing projects and long-term research program.
- **Scope of research:** Proposed research should align with the program's mission of supporting research into the diversity of life and organisms in their natural environments. Projects that broaden the scope of research in CNS within the program mission are welcome.
- **Teaching/Outreach:** Are potential outreach activities discussed in a meaningful and convincing manner?

## KEY DATES

Submission window opens: September 5, 2023

Submission deadline: October 9, 2023 at 5:00 PM CT

Announcement of awardees: December 2023

Award Start Date: September 1, 2024

Award End Date: August 31, 2025

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Program questions should be directed to the Strategic Research Initiatives Program

Manager: [swe@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:swe@austin.utexas.edu)

Application submission interface questions should be directed to CNS Strategic Research Initiatives: [CNS\\_SRI@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:CNS_SRI@austin.utexas.edu)

*The form and timing of Stengl-Wyer Graduate Fellowship awards is subject to change in subsequent years.*

*The content of this announcement is relevant only for 2024 applications and awards.*

*The University of Texas at Austin, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.*