

Opportunity Title: EPA Fellowship in Understanding how Ecosystems, goods, and services connect to human health

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-ORD-CPHEA-PHESD-2024-06

Organization U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

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A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. All transcripts must be in English or include an official English translation. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations. Click [here](#) for detailed information about recommendations.

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

Application Deadline 12/6/2024 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description *Applications may be reviewed on a rolling-basis and this posting could close before the deadline. Click [here](#) for information about the selection process.

EPA Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is available at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Research and Development (ORD), Center for Public Health Environmental Assessment (CPHEA), Public Health and Environmental Systems Division (PHESD) in Durham, North Carolina.

Research Project: This pre-doctoral research opportunity aims to examine and explore connections between ecosystems goods and services improvements and human health, with the goal of better informing decision makers for policy and public health practice.

Characterizing, accounting for, and documenting the cumulative health benefits of ecological restoration and community revitalization remains a key challenge for environmental and social sciences. Exposure to greenspace or improved local environments is generally well-associated with multiple health endpoints, such as improved cardiovascular and mental health, particularly in underserved areas or in communities experiencing environmental justice issues. Yet the strength of observed associations varies considerably across studies, as does the range of mediating and moderating factors considered, leaving uncertainties. Accordingly, there is a need to further examine the strength and quality of the relationships, including intermediate variables, between improved environments and real-world public health outcomes, particularly at the project or community scale, where things like population health, patterns of use, access, neighborhood characteristics, and lifestyles or culture may have a strong mediating impact on observed associations between health-oriented policy interventions and beneficial health endpoints.

The research participant will have the opportunity to collaborate with the EPA Principle



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Investigator and a team of colleagues on projects focusing on “beneficial outcome pathways” between ecosystems goods and services and health. Projects may include systematic reviews around questions of beneficial use impairments and their removal, what mediates and moderates health benefits and benefit pathways of neighborhood greening initiatives/amenity improvements and for whom, and how does the process from remediation to revitalization of contaminated or blighted sites impact human health. Projects may also include epidemiologic data analysis examining proximity and access to potentially beneficial (e.g., greenspace) and contaminated (e.g., brownfields) sites, and how changes in the statuses of these sites might impact health outcomes.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, potential research activities may include the following:

- Participating in systematic reviews and conducting meta-analyses.
- Developing beneficial outcome pathways framework(s).
- Developing criteria for and conducting risk of bias analyses.
- Conducting quantitative or qualitative data analysis, documenting statistical code and interpretation of results.
- Conducting and documenting quality assurance and review of data analysis and databases.
- Participating in report preparation, presentation and summaries of the data.
- Presenting at professional meetings data analyses; and 8) collaborating in authoring manuscripts or reports.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Kristen Rappazzo (rappazzo.kristen@epa.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: Fall/Winter 2024. All start dates are flexible and vary depending on numerous factors. Click [here](#) for detailed information about start dates.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year and may be renewed upon EPA recommendation and subject to availability of funding.

Level of Participation: The appointment is part-time, 20 hours per week.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. A travel/training allowance will be provided to the candidate to present project-related research data and results at scientific meetings (e.g., conferences and workshops). Click [here](#) for detailed information about full-time stipends.

EPA Security Clearance: Completion of a successful background investigation by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is required for an applicant to be on-boarded at EPA.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and EPA. Participants do not become employees of EPA, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained

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through ORISE.

ORISE offers all ORISE EPA graduate students and Postdocs a free 5-year membership to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA).

The successful applicant(s) will be required to comply with Environmental, Safety and Health (ES&H) requirements of the hosting facility, including but not limited to, COVID-19 requirements (e.g. facial covering, physical distancing, testing, vaccination).

Questions: Please see the [FAQ section](#) of our website. After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.EPA.ORD@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should have received a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields or be currently enrolled in a doctoral program in one of the relevant fields at an accredited university. Degree must have been received within 60 months of the appointment start date.

Preferred skills/experience:

- Knowledge of epidemiological analysis techniques (e.g., regression, causal inference methods), non chemical stressors, ecosystem goods and service improvement and valuation, and social and environmental exposures.
- Skills or experience with applied research, community engaged research, and planning/revitalization (e.g., greening of urban spaces for community benefit) would enhance the research experience.

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or currently pursuing.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Communications and Graphics Design** ([3](#))
 - **Earth and Geosciences** ([21](#))
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([14](#))
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#))
 - **Mathematics and Statistics** ([5](#))
 - **Social and Behavioral Sciences** ([30](#))