

Opportunity Title: USDA-Forest Service Internship in Forest Pathology on Needle Blight in Southern Pine Species
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-FS-SRS-2025-0044

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-FS-SRS-2025-0044

How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click APPLY.*

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. 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. At least one recommendation must be submitted in order for the mentor to view your application.

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

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Application Deadline 4/25/2025 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description *Applications will be reviewed on a rolling-basis.

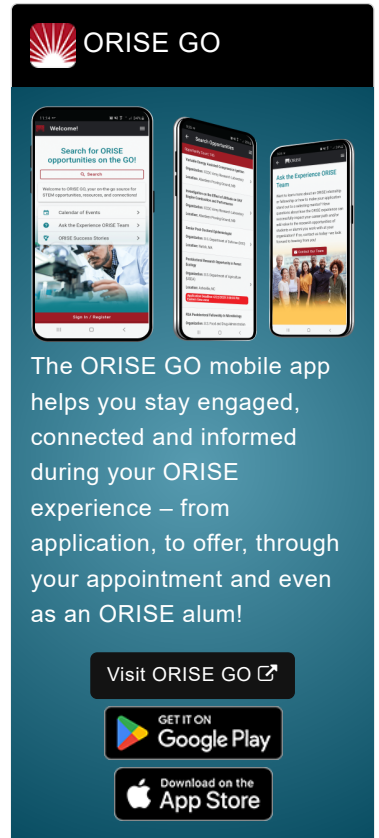
USDA Forest Service Office/Lab and Location: Fellowship opportunities are available with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) within the Forest Service Southern Research Station (SRS) located in Pineville, Louisiana.

At the heart of the USDA Forest Service's mission is their purpose. Everything they do is intended to help sustain forests and grasslands for present and future generations. Why? Because their stewardship work supports nature in sustaining life. This is the purpose that drives the agency's mission and motivates their work across the agency. It's been there from the agency's very beginning, and it still drives them. To advance the mission and serve their purpose, the USDA Forest Service balances the short and long-term needs of people and nature by: working in collaboration with communities and our partners; providing access to resources and experiences that promote economic, ecological, and social vitality; connecting people to the land and one another; and delivering world-class science, technology and land management.

Research Project: The research project will focus on characterizing factors that are associated with high severity levels of brown spot needle blight, caused by the pathogen *Lecanosticta acicola* in several southern pine species. This project will integrate field-based measurements, including site





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factors, tree health, weather parameters with molecular approaches that allow for detection of the pathogens as well characterize the microbial communities associated with various site factors and tree health.

Participants are Research Interns at USDA-FS Southern Research Station stationed in Pineville LA. The assigned research area will focus on addressing brown spot needle blight incidence on southern pine species in the southeastern United States. This research is part of a larger team investigating increasing severity and mortality of loblolly pine from brown spot needle blight. Evaluations will include collecting needle samples from various locations in the southeast, conducting site surveys, and performing molecular biology techniques, including DNA extractions, microbial sequencing, and associated analyses.

Learning Objectives: As a result of this training, participants will improve their skills in molecular diagnostics, morphological characterization of fungal pathogens, integration of disease and climate data, sample preparation and analysis, and scientific writing.

Mentor: The mentor for this opportunity is Rabiou Olatinwo (rabiou.o.olatinwo@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: March 2025. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for six months but may be extended upon recommendation of USDA Forest Service and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend is \$5000/month plus health insurance.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

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 USDA Forest Service. Participants do not become employees of USDA, USDA Forest Service, 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 through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process please email ORISE.USFS.SRS@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

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Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a bachelor's or master's degree in the one of the relevant fields (plant pathology; crop protection, or a related scientific discipline).

Preferred skills/experience:

- If not plant pathology, then a related scientific discipline that includes at least 20 semester hours in basic botany or plant science, and 10 semester hours in plant pathology.
- At least one year of specialized experience related to this internship in addition to the degree above OR;
 - a master's degree in Plant Pathology OR;
 - two full years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to such a degree.

Point of Contact [Justina](#)

Eligibility • **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only

Requirements • **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree.

- **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([8](#))