

WESTERN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS: 2017 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Application Deadline: Monday, March 6

Information Session: Monday, February 2, 4:30 pm | Sage 8a

Open Office Hours for Proposal Advice: Tuesdays 2-5 pm | Sage 8a

The Ucross High Plains Stewardship Initiative (UHPSI) invites students to apply for research fellowships for the 2017 summer field season. The Western Research Fellowship (WRF) seeks applicants interested in issues pertinent to land management in the Rocky Mountain West. Ideal proposals will target high-impact biophysical or social questions with management implications for *private* land management in the West. In addition to a generous financial award, fellows will be given access to a broad network of partner organizations and properties across the mountain west, as well as technical, logistical, and publication support.

UHPSI is a research program at Yale F&ES, with a field station at the Ucross Ranch, a 22,000 acre working cattle and sheep operation in northern Wyoming. Providing a comprehensive resource for western studies at Yale F&ES, UHPSI specializes in science-based solutions to issues of rangeland management. Working in close coordination with a network of ranchers, non-profits, government organizations, and academics, UHPSI hosts devoted faculty, PhD and master's students, supported by a full-time research staff. While much of our research takes place through the lens of spatial ecology and remote sensing, we're engaged in projects ranging from grazing system analysis, to best practice development for wool markets, and K-12 education. Find out more about our research programs at highplainsstewardship.org.

The Award

WRF awards range from \$2,000 to \$6,000. Fellows also receive a stipend covering attendance at the WRF summer retreat. Applicants are encouraged to apply for matching funds from other sources. In addition to financial support, fellows receive technical, logistical, and publication support throughout the field season and academic year.

Once awarded the WRF, fellows are required to:

1. Complete research as proposed;
2. Attend the mid-summer fellows retreat at the Ucross Ranch in Wyoming;
3. Participate in the Western Research Working Group in the 2017-2018 academic year;
4. Submit an academic, technical, or popular publication to UHPSI

25% of awarded fellowship funds will be withheld until a completed manuscript of the proposed work is presented to and accepted by UHPSI staff in Spring of 2018.

Eligibility

Current F&ES graduate (master's and early program doctoral) and Yale College Environmental Studies students who will be enrolled in the Fall of 2017 are eligible to apply.

Proposal Evaluation

- Proposals will be evaluated by a UHPSI fellowship committee according to requirements outlined below and more broadly on the relevance of the proposals to on-the-ground western land management.
- Proposals focused on management issues in the Rocky Mountain West are given top priority, although proposals dealing with analogous domestic/international landscapes will be considered.
- Applicants with exceptional proposals will be invited to interview prior to award.
- The committee will work quickly to inform applicants of decisions following the application deadline.
- Applicants should attend the WRF informational session, and contact UHPSI with questions:

Charlie Bettigole | Program Director | charlie.bettigole@yale.edu

Kristofer Covey | WRF Lead | kristofer.covey@yale.edu

Application Preparation

A. Project Proposal (Two Page Limit)

- a. **Problem statement, research questions, and objectives** - Define the problem you propose to examine and explain why it is important. Your research questions and objectives should develop logically from the problem statement. Be realistic about what you can achieve in the time frame that you have to conduct your research. Applications must explicitly describe research products, whether peer-reviewed, popular, or technical publication.
 - b. **Literature review.** The literature review should show how your proposed research fits into the larger applied/theoretical frameworks within the field of study. As the WRF is directed towards land management in particular, please review how previous research has influenced on-the-ground decision making processes.
 - c. **Field site selection and justification** - Describe your field site and explain why it is an appropriate location in which to pursue your research questions. If you are working on either privately or publicly owned land, describe your relationship with the landowner and any access constraints that may exist. Letters from field hosts are required, and should be explicit in describing their role, particularly with respect to private lands and facilities access, permitted activities, additional support provided, and the rationale for host involvement.
 - d. **Methodology** - Make a clear and realistic connection between your research questions and the methods and analyses that you will use to answer them. Be specific and concrete about what methods you will employ once you get to your field-site.
 - e. **Personal qualifications and research collaborations** - Describe what relevant technical skills you possess. Describe any planned collaboration or affiliation with other researchers or organizations, local or otherwise. It is critical that proposals meet with the approval of an F&ES faculty member. Applicants should provide letter(s) from academic advisors supporting describing the rationale and importance of the proposed work.
- B. **Research Schedule (One Page)** - Describe your timeline for accomplishing the activities described in your proposal. Make sure to budget four days for the WRF retreat at the Ucross Ranch in early July.
- C. **Budget (One Page)** - Please list all significant project expenses, including airfare, field transportation, room and board, equipment, supplies, stipends for field or research assistants, lab work, and other research expenses.
- D. **CV/Resume**
- E. **Unofficial F&ES Transcript**

Proposal Submittal Checklist

Submit all materials electronically to *charlie.bettigole@yale.edu* by March 7th at 5 pm:

- Two-page Research Proposal
- One-page Research Schedule
- One-page Budget
- Letter from host landowner/organization
- Letter from Yale University academic advisor
- CV/Resume
- Unofficial Transcript
- IRB approval if dealing with human subjects: IRB approval Funds will not be awarded until IRB waivers/approvals are received.