

## FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

**Two climate adaptation graduate fellowships** are available for a project entitled “*Supporting cost-efficient adaptation planning in the North Atlantic*”, a collaboration between the Sea Grant programs from Maine to Virginia and the NOAA North Atlantic Regional Team.

### Background

Climate change has emerged as a significant threat to coastal areas around the world. It is widely accepted that changes in global climate will result in a variety of significant environmental, social, and economic impacts. Coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and sea-level rise, and coastal communities will need to adapt to climate change in order to protect people, property, and the environment. The capacity of coastal communities to effectively adapt to climate change depends on their ability to develop and implement feasible strategies that address unique local and regional factors.

A wide variety of resources are available to assist coastal areas in developing their approach to climate change adaptation. However, it is unlikely that a single set of guidelines can adequately address the full range of adaptation needs at the local and regional levels. This project seeks to address some of the unique regional issues facing coastal communities throughout the North Atlantic including anticipated physical, social, economic and environmental impacts, existing resources and guidelines for climate change adaptation, current approaches to climate change adaptation planning, and challenges and opportunities for developing adaptation strategies.

While climate is a “hot topic”, descriptions of doom and gloom worst-case scenario conversations are not likely to be productive, and there is difficulty in engaging communities without solutions. The outcome of this project will be a package of adaptation scenarios drawn from regional case studies identifying relatively low cost solutions adapted by neighboring communities, providing a new tool to enhance engagement and outreach capacity. This project will target local municipal officials in the North Atlantic region in an effort to provide them with real-world examples from other towns and counties’ efforts to increase their resiliency to hazards, including sea-level rise, inundation, flooding and storm surge.

### Tasks

Our project will build off ongoing efforts in climate change adaptation, with an emphasis on identifying cost-efficient adaptation mechanisms and potential funding sources for local decision-makers.

Task 1: Existing resources and guidelines for climate change adaptation, current approaches to climate change adaptation planning, and challenges and opportunities for developing adaptation strategies will be inventoried.

Task 2: A number of case studies will be identified in both the New England and Mid-Atlantic sub-regions, analyzed, described and re-packaged to aid the transfer of best practices (and not-

so-best practices) among local officials throughout the region in order to facilitate development of a peer to peer network, and place-based strategies.

### Specific details

Candidates will be selected by, and report to, a steering committee composed of interested Sea Grant, NOAA, academic and other partners. The fellows be housed within an academic institution under the direct (day-to-day) supervision of an appropriate major advisor.

One fellow will be selected for New England, and one from the Mid-Atlantic region. Their work will focus on their respective sub-region, but it is expected that the fellows will communicate regularly.

The graduate fellowships, in the amount of **\$10,000** each, will be for the period of January to September 2012. In addition, each fellow will have a **\$2,000 travel budget** to cover the costs associated with gathering and packaging information from towns and communities in the different states of each sub-region.

### Application materials

Applicants must provide the following:

- A two-page personal statement describing interest in climate change adaptation and related experience (1" margins and 12 point font).
- A two-page resume.
- A letter of support from the student's major advisor describing (1) his/her commitment to oversee the fellowship, and (2) the student's ability to perform the tasks described above in the time frame required.
- A copy of the student's unofficial undergraduate and graduate transcripts.

The application materials must be submitted electronically to Sylvain De Guise, Director, Connecticut Sea Grant ([sylvain.deguise@uconn.edu](mailto:sylvain.deguise@uconn.edu)), using "fellowship application" in the subject line, by 5:00 Eastern time on December 13, 2011. Results of the selection process will be announced by January 15, 2012.

### Selection criteria

Selection will be made on the basis of personal interest and experience (including enrollment in a graduate program relevant to the objectives of the fellowship), academic performance, and advisor's commitment to the process and support of the graduate student's ability to meet the expectations of the fellowship.