

NCKRI Scholar Fellowship Program
FY 2019/2020

Deadline: Friday, October 4th, 2019

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) invites proposals for FY19/20 student scholarships in support of cave and karst research.

Application deadline: Oct. 4th, 2019, 5:00 PM Pacific Time

Background and Goals

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) is a non-profit government-supported institute headquartered in the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Its goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research, education, environmental management, and data acquisition and sharing.

In 2019, NCKRI initiated a fellowship program to support cave and karst research by exceptional graduate and undergraduate students. NCKRI expects to award four fellowships in FY19/20, two to undergraduate applicants (\$2500 each), and two to graduate applicants (\$5000 each).

This funding opportunity is made possible by generous support from the National Park Service.

Application Criteria

Undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled at any academic or research institution in the United States are invited to apply.

- 1. Clear relevance to cave and karst science:** NCKRI's goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research; thus, the research described in the proposal should be clearly relevant to cave and karst science. Basic and applied research in any field of cave and karst science will be considered.
- 2. Research addressing the priorities of the National Park Service (encouraged but not required):** Funds for the NCKRI Scholar program are made possible by generous support from the National Park Service. Therefore, projects addressing fundamental scientific questions or management applications in caves within the National Park System are encouraged. Proposals for work in a national park should include a letter of support from an appropriate authority at the park.

3. **Outreach:** Each project must include an outreach component. Examples of appropriate outreach projects are instructional programs in a K-12 setting, video presentations of research posted on an institutional or NCKRI video channel, collaboration with a show cave or museum (including the NCKRI museum), college-level outreach initiatives, or collaboration with an artist. The awardee should expect to spend a total of 5-10 hours on outreach in addition to preparation time.

Finalists will be selected based on scientific merit and quality of the proposal, alignment with cave and karst science and NCKRI research priorities, and strength of the personal statement. Previous recipients are not eligible for a second NCKRI scholar award.

Reporting

Awardees will be featured on the NCKRI website and annual report, and will be required to provide a conceptual summary and a figure of their proposed research for the NCKRI website and report before any funds are disbursed.

A final report will be due to NCKRI after one year (2-3 pages, 2-3 figures), including a list of any presentations and publications resulting from the research. Reports will be archived on the NCKRI website, summarized in the NCKRI annual report, and possibly published as part of NCKRI's Report of Investigation series.

After one year, and upon submission of the report, recipients are eligible for up to \$500 for publication fees or travel support to present at national or international conferences.

To Apply

Applications consist of a research proposal, personal statement, and letter of support from the student's primary research advisor.

Please fill out the required fields in our online application system by October 4th, 2019, 5 p.m. Pacific Time, and upload the following two required documents.

- 1) Proposal document, which should include following sections as a single merged pdf:
 - a. Title and summary (300 words maximum) on a single page, used as a cover page.
 - b. Proposal document, describing the research objectives/hypotheses/questions and approach. **2 pages maximum** (1-inch margins, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or equivalent font).
 - c. Optional: A single figure (and brief caption) may be included as an additional page. The figure caption should be of appropriate length, and should not be used to fit in additional text to the proposal.
 - d. Literature cited (2 pages maximum).

- e. Itemized budget and justification including salaries, supplies, equipment, etc. (1 page total).
- 2) Personal statement, which includes the following sections as a single merged pdf:
- a. Personal statement (1 page) that describes educational and career goals, and experiences that motivate those goals. The statement should include a description of the student's interest in cave and karst science.
 - b. A curriculum vitae (2 page limit), which includes a list of current and previous academic institutions (with current GPA for each institution).
 - c. Unofficial transcripts from the applicant's current institution.

The letter of support from the student's primary research advisor letter must be received by the application deadline (October 4th, 2019). Reference letters should be sent as a pdf attachment to Judith.McShannon@nmt.edu, with the applicant's name in the subject line of the email (last name, first name). Letters should explain the referee's relationship to the applicant, and comment on their academic and research potential. For undergraduate applicants, letters should also describe a mentoring plan for the student.

Applications without a letter of support will not be considered complete. Additional information not specifically solicited (e.g., press clippings, extra letters of reference) will not be considered with the application.

Questions

Please direct any questions about submission to Judith McShannon (Judith.McShannon@nmt.edu, 575-835-6940). Other questions about this RFP should be directed to Daniel Jones, NCKRI Academic Director (daniel.s.jones@nmt.edu, 575-835-5049).