



2021 Stephen H. Schoenholtz Water Undergraduate Research Fund

Request for Applications

An endowed fund, the Stephen H. Schoenholtz Water Undergraduate Research Fund, has been established to provide support for the Bachelor of Science undergraduate degree program in Water: Resources, Policy and Management within the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation in the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech.

The interdisciplinary requirements for the Water: Resources, Policy, and Management degree will prepare students well for employment or graduate school in the rapidly growing field of water resources. Scientific and policy analysis of water resources, quality, and conservation are essential for development of sustainability plans in both the public and private sectors. Recipients of the Stephen H. Schoenholtz Water Undergraduate Research Fund will have a genuine opportunity for students to “claim their role” through active engagement in undergraduate research experiences.

Undergraduate research involves and empowers students in hands-on learning, enhances student learning experience by building relationships with faculty, provides effective career preparation, and stimulates interest in graduate education. In addition to personal benefits such as growth in analytical and critical thinking skills, undergraduate research can be fun, creative, and rewarding and can help students find their passion.

Competitive research funding is available each year for one to two undergraduate students enrolled in the Water: Resources, Policy, and Management degree program. Applications are invited for all areas of water resources-related research including science, policy, and management aspects of water. Interdisciplinary work is highly encouraged. The maximum funding amount is about \$3,000. Applicants must be enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in the Water degree program.

A faculty member acting as the main research supervisor and mentor must sponsor the student. The faculty member does not have to be directly affiliated with the Water degree program and can be from any college at Virginia Tech. By sponsoring a student and serving as a research mentor for the student’s project, the faculty member is committing to working with the student. The expected time commitment from the faculty mentor and student is 4 to 10 hours per week for a minimum of 10 to 12 weeks. The research can take place during fall, spring, or summer sessions, or span the entire academic year.

All projects should culminate in a final product (e.g., poster, report, contribution to a manuscript) to be determined by the faculty mentor and student. Students who receive

research funding are strongly encouraged to present their final project at Virginia Tech's Undergraduate Research Conference. Information about the conference can be found on the University Undergraduate Research website: <http://www.research.undergraduate.vt.edu>.

Applications will be evaluated based on innovation, intellectual merit, and likelihood of success. Factors such as how well conceived and organized the proposed activity is and clarity of writing will be strongly considered in evaluation of the application. The student will be also evaluated on past academic performance and suitability of the student for the project.

Reporting requirements are to be determined, but are likely to include an abstract for submission to the Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Conference, a final report, contribution to blogs or newsletters, and an interim progress report if the approved project is more than one semester.

To apply for the Stephen H. Schoenholtz Water Undergraduate Research Fund, ask a faculty member to sponsor you, agree on a project, complete the application, and submit a short research project description following the guidelines below. The deadline for applications is **November 13, 2020, at 5:00 PM** and the anticipated start date is January 4th or at the start of spring semester. The application materials (cover page, résumé, project description, and budget/timeline) should be compiled into one PDF document and submitted as an attachment to waterdegree@vt.edu. The subject line of the email must read: Schoenholtz Water Undergraduate Research Fund – 2021.

For questions, please contact Dr. Kevin McGuire (kevin.mcguire@vt.edu).