Call for Joint EDF-Cornell Post-doctoral Fellow Proposals

Letters of Intent due: Dec. 19, 2018
Full proposals due: Jan. 11, 2019

The David R. and Patricia D. Atkinson Foundation has generously provided funds for six 2-year post-doctoral fellows to continue the record of collaboration between Environmental Defense Fund and the Atkinson Center. The first round fellowships will commence in spring 2019. There will be two RFPs for three projects to be supported with a post-doctoral fellow. EDF staff and Atkinson Fellows will jointly submit funding requests. Priority will be given to research that has an identifiable pathway to impact and an emphasis on actionable results.

Program Objectives

The Joint EDF/Atkinson Postdoctoral Fellowships are intended to both infuse EDF’s research with energy and innovation and the Atkinson Center’s work with greater application by:

• Stimulating original cross-disciplinary research and development of impactful solutions that address the world’s most pressing environmental challenges;

• Developing and deepening collaboration between the Atkinson Center and EDF in order to speed the creation and implementation of viable sustainability solutions; and

• Building a cohort environmental scientists with the intellectual skills and experience to create effective, workable solutions to the most serious sustainability and environmental questions.

Program Structure

• The fellowships carry a salary of $65,000 per year, full EDF employee benefits, and up to $8,000 per year for research/travel/publication-related expenses.

• The fellowship term is two years. The second year is contingent on performance and on mutual agreement between the fellow, the advisers, EDF, and the Atkinson Center.

• Fellows are expected to participate fully in the Atkinson Center/EDF Knowledge to Impact Professional Development Training Program and related Atkinson/EDF activities during the fellowship.

• Fellows can spend variable portions of their fellowship period at EDF, with external collaborators, in other relevant facilities, or at Cornell as dictated by their research.
• All fellows will have access to Cornell facilities, including library resources and the career services provided by Cornell’s Office of Postdoctoral Studies.

• The fellows will spend the majority of their time conducting the research proposed and guided by their EDF and Atkinson Center mentors. They should spend a minor portion of their time on other EDF program or Cornell laboratory work. However, the fellows should be afforded up to 20% of their time to complete research and/or manuscripts emerging out of their dissertations or previous research.

Summary

• We seek competitive proposals for three 2-year post-doctoral positions that will advance joint Cornell-EDF research efforts relevant to informing policy and practice. Only applications involving collaborations between staff at both EDF and Cornell are eligible. The fellowship program is intended to give recent PhDs the opportunity to conduct meaningful research to advance their careers while obtaining valuable insights into working at the science-policy interface — something that they often do not gain in academia.

• Proposals will be reviewed quickly by combined Atkinson Center and EDF personnel. Funds will be available on April 1, 2019; research must commence by July 1, 2019. Funding is available for post-doc salary and up to $8,000/yr to support research costs; the proposal should address how any additional research costs will be met.

• A second RFP for the second set of three 2-year post-doctoral positions will be distributed in spring 2019.

Application Process

Deadlines
EDF and Atkinson co-PIs should submit a letter of intent (LOI) to file a proposal using this [online LOI form](#) by Dec. 19, 2018. The LOI process allows time for submitting teams to develop their ideas and assists the joint Atkinson/EDF review committee review process.

Proposals not to exceed three pages must be submitted using this [online form](#) by Jan. 11, 2019 outlining your request. Proposals received after Jan. 11th will not be considered. Proposals should include:

• Research topic that the postdoctoral fellow would focus on
• Why the research has the potential to be transformative
• Primary location where the fellow will be housed (EDF or Cornell) and why
• Mentoring plan specific to the topic and area of research
• Anticipated work products (e.g., publications, collaborations, presentations).
• Hiring plan – how will qualified prospects be recruited

Criteria for Selection
• Degree to which the proposal offers opportunities for new science/economics that will be valued and publishable in the relevant field within the available budget and timeframe
• Degree to which the work proposed is integral to development of clear path of knowledge to action
• Availability and qualifications of the co-PIs to mentor the postdoctoral fellow
• Timing and plan for recruiting candidates, and for orienting them to relevant EDF and AC programs once onboard.

The AC/EDF Committee will review and respond to your proposal in early February. If your proposal is selected, you will have until July 1, 2019 to fill the position. The timeline for hiring is as follows:

• A final (EDF) job description and active job posting by Feb. 20, 2019.
• A check-in on March 22, 2019 with Doria to see how the hiring process is progressing.
• A check-in on May 15, 2019 with Doria to see how close you are to candidate selection. If at this time you are not far enough along in the hiring process the Committee will determine if the postdoctoral position will be awarded to another project.
• The postdoctoral fellow is hired before July 1, 2019.

Co-PIs awarded post-docs will report annually on progress and any presentations, publications, or other products of the research. Co-PIs will also report on any additional funding for the project obtained during or after the post-doctoral fellowship, so this information can be reported to the Foundation.

Contacts for questions:
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