
DR. NANCY FOSTER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM HANDBOOK

OFFICE OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES



2012

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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Cover Photo

A silhouette of a research diver below a dive boat at Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico. Photo: Emma Hickerson, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries





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WELCOME

Congratulations! You are now a part of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Team. As a recipient, you have joined the ranks of more than 40 current Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars and alumni across the country and globe. We are excited to work closely with you to ensure you have a meaningful and productive scholarship experience that helps create a pathway to your future. Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars have gone on to become premier research scientists and serve as key staff, for many governmental agencies including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

As the administrator of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries works hard to ensure the best scholarship program possible by working closely with individual scholars to help mentor and foster collaborative experiences for each student. Through hands-on research, policy, and education, national marine sanctuaries provide a classroom away from universities and colleges to allow for students to experience real world science in some of the United State's most pristine special places.

This handbook will serve as a guide for your two- or four-year experience in the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program. It lays out for each scholar how to report out, our expectations, and what it means to be a Dr. Nancy Foster Scholar. We hope that this guide serves as a tool, but that you also actively participate in the program and contact program managers at any time with questions you might have. Full contact information for all of the program managers is at the end of this handbook.

Once again, congratulations! We look forward to your participation in this prestigious program.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Basta
Director
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE DR. NANCY FOSTER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

History of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program

On June 27, 2000, Dr. Nancy Foster, the former NOAA assistant administrator for Oceanic Services and Coastal Zone Management for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Director of the National Ocean Service (NOS), died at her home in Baltimore, Maryland after a year-long battle with cancer. Dr. Foster's early understanding of marine ecosystems and their conservation, and the need to consider the interdependent roles of organisms in marine ecosystems, set her apart as a pioneer and visionary. This perspective laid the foundation for her 23-year tenure with NOAA, and brought a quality and strength to the agency unequalled in its history.

Throughout her career, Dr. Foster was well respected as a personal supporter of mentoring, a champion of diversity, and an advocate of fair and equal treatment of all people in the workplace. She personally touched the lives of hundreds of employees because she understood the strength and vision that could be awakened in others by believing in, and recognizing their unique talents and contributions. She regularly reached out to institutions that historically served minority students, making it a personal goal to open doors and create linkages. In an April 2000 letter to Dr. Foster, Vice President Al Gore wrote, "You have pioneered an impressive national strategy for environmental management and served as an outstanding role model for women scientists across America."

In 2000, within months of her death, the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program was introduced in Congress and signed into law on November 13, 2000. A tribute to her life's work and passion, this program was introduced by Senator Hollings (D-SC) with co-sponsors Snowe (R-ME), Kerry (D-MA), Stevens (R-AK), Inouye (D-HI), Breaux (D-LA), and Cleland (D-GA). The program was introduced by Representative Saxton (R-NJ-3) with Representative Farr (D-CA-17) as the co-sponsor in the House of Representatives. This scholarship is named for Dr. Foster in tribute to her outstanding contributions in advancing NOAA's mission through her excellence in leadership, mentorship and her life long passion for marine science.

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program provides support for independent graduate-level studies in oceanography, marine biology, or maritime archaeology (including all science, engineering, social science and resource management of ocean and coastal areas), particularly to

women and minorities. This program is administered through the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries as mandated by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Currently, there are 48 Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars who have graduated or are still part of the scholarship program.

About NOAA

NOAA was formed under the Department of Commerce on October 3, 1970, through a conglomeration of three existing agencies that were among the oldest in the federal government. They were the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, formed in 1807; the Weather Bureau, formed in 1870; and the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, formed in 1871. Currently, NOAA is made up of six line offices — the National Weather Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Ocean Service, Office of Ocean and Atmospheric Research, National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service, and the Office of Program Planning and Integration.

NOAA plays several specific roles in society, the benefits of which extend beyond the U.S. economy and into the larger global community:

- *A Supplier of Environmental Information Products* — NOAA supplies information to its customers and partners pertaining to the state of the oceans and the atmosphere. This is clearly manifest in the production of weather warnings and forecasts through the National Weather Service, but NOAA's information products extend to climate, ecosystems, and commerce as well.
- *A Provider of Environmental Stewardship Services* — NOAA is also the steward of U.S. coastal and marine environments. In coordination with federal, state, local, tribal, and international authorities, NOAA manages the use of these environments, regulating fisheries and marine sanctuaries as well as protecting threatened and endangered marine species.
- *A Leader in Applied Scientific Research* — NOAA is intended to be a source of accurate and objective scientific information in the four particular areas of national and global importance identified above: ecosystems, climate, weather and water, and commerce and transportation.

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, part of NOAA's National Ocean Service, manages the National Marine Sanctuary System, a network of fourteen marine protected areas that encompass more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington State to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

Our national marine sanctuaries embrace part of our collective riches as a nation. Within their protected waters, giant humpback whales breed and calve their young, temperate reefs flourish, and shipwrecks tell stories of our maritime history. Marine sanctuary habitats include beautiful rocky reefs, lush kelp forests, whale migration corridors, spectacular deep-sea canyons, and underwater archaeological sites. Our nation’s marine sanctuaries can provide a safe habitat for species close to extinction or protect historically significant shipwrecks. Ranging in size from less than one square mile to 137,792 square miles, each sanctuary site is a unique place needing special protections. Natural classrooms, cherished recreational spots, and valuable commercial industries—marine sanctuaries represent many things to many people.

Since Congress passed the National Marine Sanctuaries Act in 1972, the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has worked cooperatively with the public and federal, state, local, and tribal officials to promote conservation while allowing compatible commercial and recreational activities. Increasing public awareness of our marine heritage, scientific research, monitoring, exploration, educational programs, and outreach are just a few of the ways the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries fulfills its mission to the American people.



Chapter 2

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Selection Process

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program is authorized at 16 U.S.C. §§ 1445 and 1445c-1 to recognize outstanding achievement in oceanography, marine biology or maritime archaeology (including all science, engineering, and resource management of ocean and coastal areas) particularly by women and members of minority groups. The scholarship supports independent graduate-level research through financial support of graduate studies in such fields. Gender and minority status are not considered when selecting award recipients. However, special outreach efforts are employed to solicit applications from women and minorities. Scholarships are distributed by disciplines, institutions, and geography, and by degree sought. Individuals who are U.S. citizens and are applying to or have been accepted to a graduate program at a U.S. accredited institution may apply. Scholarship selections are based on academic excellence, letters of recommendations, research and career goals, and financial need. Applicants must have and maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average each academic term and cumulatively. Applicants must also maintain full-time student status for the duration of the appointment. The program is administered through the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and is funded annually with 1% of the amount appropriated each fiscal year to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries to carry out the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Accessing Your Award

The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries will send electronic notification to each successful applicant with instructions on how to view the terms of the award. Scholars are able to access scholarship money from the Grants Online system. Grants Online is an E-Government initiative to create an automated tool that will support the grant evaluation, award, management, and operations process.

Scholars will accept, access, and report on their scholarship using the Grants Online system. **See Chapter 3, “Accessing Your Award,” for full details.**

Components of the Scholarship

Research Collaboration

Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship recipients will also be required to participate in a research collaboration project at a NOAA facility during their scholarship. Master's degree candidates will be supported for one research collaboration opportunity, and doctoral candidates will be supported for up to two research collaboration opportunities over the duration of the scholarship. The research collaboration opportunity is designed to allow scholars to participate in research activities for four to six weeks at a field office of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, or other NOAA program offices. Recipients may be required to complete background screenings for access to NOAA facilities, pursuant to the security requirements at each NOAA facility.

Reporting Requirements

Scholars are required to maintain certain academic standards to remain eligible for the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship. In addition scholars must provide annual reports and a final report. These reports include both academic and financial information. **See Chapter 4, Program Requirements and Reporting for more information.**

Representing the Foster Program and ONMS

Students who receive the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship are expected to act as ambassadors for NOAA, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, and the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program. This includes representing the program, acting as mentors to future scholars, and providing feedback on your experience. **Please see Chapter 6, “Role as a Scholar,” for more information.**



Photo: G.P. Schmahl, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary



Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries

Chapter 3

ACCESSING THE AWARD



Grants Online

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offer a variety of competitive and non-competitive grants or awards to various communities including States, universities, and non-profit organizations. Prior to the advent of Grants Online, the processing of grants was a paper-based task involving time-consuming human interactions and program polices to process the grants and to ensure the awarding of the grant is given to the most qualified applicant for a competitive award, and for qualified designated applicants of non-competitive awards.

As part of its strategy to move scientifically and operationally into the 21st century, Grants Online was developed. Grants Online is an E-Government initiative to create an automated tool that will support the grant evaluation, award, management, and operations process. Grants Online significantly streamlines and unifies grants processing throughout all of NOAA, allowing the agency to increase efficiencies related to mission goals.

Grants Online allows Grantees to:

- Accept Awards electronically.
- Manage user roles for individuals within their organization.
- Submit post-Award Action Requests, Performance Progress Reports, and Federal Financial Reports.

Grants Online operates in a web environment. As such, you will be required to use an internet browser to login to the system. No software is required for installation. As Grants Online is web-based, you may access the system anywhere at anytime provided that you have internet access. Logins and passwords are required and will be relayed to you once you are authorized for access.

Your first step in beginning the management of your award is to access Grants Online to accept your award. The url for Grants Online is: <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. Information on accessing Grants Online, logging in to Grants Online, and a general overview to the navigation features can be found at: <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>.

Additional training resources can also be found at:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/gol_training.html.

Please take some time to review these websites so you can easily navigate the Grants Online system and make sure to bookmark this address as you will be using it a lot!

How to Use Grants Online

During your award period you will be using Grants Online for a variety of reasons. Listed below are some of the main actions you may be doing:

- Submitting your financial and progress reports
- Viewing your ASAP account
- Requesting a reimbursement for funds
- Requesting an Award Action Request (no cost extension)

1) Submitting your financial and progress reports into Grants Online – Once you enter into the Grants Online system using your username and password, you can search for your award by using the Award tab located at the top of the screen. You can search for your award using either your name or your award number. Once you have submitted this request, you should see under the search results an active link that will take you to your Grants File page. Scroll to the bottom of this page you a list of all reports that have been submitted or are currently due. All of these tabs will have active links that will take you directly to the report page.

Progress report – If you are submitting your progress report, you will be required to provide a brief description of the progress in the open text box and attach a word or .pdf document of your progress report. The required additional information, such as letters from your professors, report cards, current and projected budget estimates, can all be attached here as well.

Financial report – If you are submitting your end of the award period financial report, the active link will direct you to the SF-425 form. Some of the boxes will be pre-populated with information, but much of it will you have to fill in yourself.

2) Viewing your ASAP account – You can access an up to date status of your ASAP account by logging in to Grants Online and searching for your award to access your Grants File page. In the drop down action menu, you will find a View Accounting Details option, which will take you directly to an outline of your account with all of the current obligations (all of the amendments to your award) and all of the disbursements (the amount of money that you have used).

3) Requesting a reimbursement for funds – If you need to request an additional amount of money that is above the amount that has been obligated to your account through the yearly amendments and you have approval to do so, you can request a reimbursement through Grants Online by submitting the SF-270 form. You can request that the helpdesk put in a place holder on your Grants File page for this form. Once it has been created, you can fill it out to submit a request.

4) Requesting an Award Action Request – An award action request is any action that changes your award terms or your project during the course of your award. Examples of Award Action Requests are- No Cost Extensions, Early Termination for Convenience, Extension to Close Out (of the award), Change in Scope (of award), and Pre Award Costs. Many of the Award Action Requests will not pertain to your type of award, but the ones listed above are the most common. To request any of these actions, you can search for your award, navigate to your Grants File page, and in the drop down menu, select the Create an Award Action Request. This will take you to a page that has all of the options, each option is an active link that will take you directly to the details page where you will be required to submit information pertaining to your request.

For a no cost extension, you will need to submit this request 30 days prior to the end of your award period and will need to provide a justification and a current budget.

Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP)

Once you have accepted your award through Grants Online, the process of enrolling you in the Department of Treasury’s Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) begins, this is essentially a bank account set up by the Department of Treasury for the funds from you award.

You will be required to send specific information to the Enrollment Initiator, like your social security number and contact information. Once this information is received, you will be required to initiate your ASAP enrollment process by filling out an Enrollment form located in the Grants Online system. Instructions on where to find this form in Grants Online can be found at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/Quick%20Reference%20Guides/Grantees_Quick_Ref_Guide_409.pdf.

After this data is entered into ASAP by the Enrollment Initiator, you will receive a user id via e-mail and a password will be sent via the Post Office by the Department of Treasury. After the Enrollment process is completed by you, NOAA is notified by e-mail from ASAP that the process is complete. Recipient profiles are then set up in the Department of Commerce accounting system (CBS) and accounts are created in ASAP. This takes 1 – 2 business days.

After the set up process is complete, the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) will be provided authorization to release the funds in the. The following day, the certifying officer in the Finance Office retrieves the authorization and performs the certification after reviewing the required supporting documentation. Once certification is completed funds are released to you in the ASAP system. For additional information on ASAP, please go to:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/grantsonline/Documents/ASAP_Enrollment_and_Certification.pdf

Allowable Costs

Your Grant File includes information on Circular No. A-21, “Cost principles for educational institutions (OMB Circular A–21).” Circular No. A-21 is located in [Appendix A of 2 C.F.R. Part 220](#). This document is associated with your Grant File located on the Grants Online system. You are responsible for reviewing this document. This Circular establishes principles for determining allowable costs of grants, contracts and other agreements with non-profit organizations.

Allowable costs are those costs that are reasonable; allocable to the award activity; consistently treated using the appropriate, generally accepted accounting principles; and they must conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in the applicable cost principles or the award as to types or amounts of cost items.

For the 2012-2013 academic year, the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship provides support up to \$42,000, which is made up of the following: a 12-month stipend of \$30,000; an annual cost-of-education allowance of up to \$12,000; and up to \$10,000 support for a four- to six-week research collaboration at a NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuary facility. A maximum of \$94,000 may be provided to Master’s students (up to two years of support and one research collaboration opportunity) and up to \$188,000 may be provided to Doctoral students (up to four years of support and two research collaboration opportunities).

The annual stipend (which consists of the full scholarship award) is paid directly to the scholar. For periods lasting less than 12 months, stipends will be prorated. **The stipend is not to be used as a research grant.**

Tuition and Academic Fees:

Tuition (including fall, winter, spring and summer) and academic fees may be negotiated between the academic institution and the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship program manager at NOAA prior to the receipt of funds. This negotiation is intended to leverage scholarship funds and enhance opportunities for scholarship recipients. In those instances in which tuition and academic fees are not totally waived by the academic institution, the education allowance is an amount equal to the tuition and fee not waived (but not to exceed \$12,000) will be paid directly to the scholar for remittance to the academic institution. If tuition and fees are reduced or waived by the academic institution, then that portion of the education allowance not needed (i.e., up to \$12,000 in the case of a total waiver) will be retained by NOAA for future scholarships. No money will be paid directly to the student from the education allowance for purposes other than the payment of tuition, fees, and education costs including but not limited to books required for courses. Health insurance is an allowable education cost if it is directly billed on the tuition statement.

Stipend:

At its discretion, each academic institution may supplement a scholar's stipend from institutional funds in accordance with the supplementation policy of the institution. Students cannot claim coverage for allowable stipend expenses from more than one source, i.e. if an academic institution provides supplementation for an expense, a student cannot claim that the Dr. Nancy Foster-related stipend was used on that expense. Examples of allowable stipend costs are utilities, car insurance, food, rent/mortgage, and incidentals. An estimated expense sheet outlining stipend costs will be due at the end of each academic year. You are responsible for paying Federal and state taxes on your stipend. There is an estimated taxes workbook that you can request from the IRS which may be helpful. Some Scholars report that they pay taxes quarterly. Consult the IRS website for more information.

Research Collaboration:

The amount of the award provided for support for a four- to six-week research collaboration at a NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuary facility may be used toward allowable costs such as: travel to and from the NOAA facility, housing, per diem, laboratory costs, research vessel support, and instruments while conducting research at the NOAA facility. Scholars are required to provide their own health insurance coverage during the research collaboration.

Receipt of any prospective funding is contingent upon the availability of funds from Congress, satisfactory performance, continued relevance to program objectives and will be at the sole discretion of the Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce is not liable for any obligations, expenditures, or commitments which involve any amount in excess of the Federal amount presently available. The recipient will be responsible for any and all termination costs it may incur should prospective funding not become available. No legal liability will exist or result on the part of the Federal Government for payment of any portion of the remaining funds which have not been made available under the award. Notifications affecting funding or notice of non-availability of additional funding for prospective years will be made only by the Grants Officer. The amendment to obligate prospective funding available shall be made on Form CD-451, "Amendment to Financial Assistance Award," prior to the expiration of each year's activities.



Photo: G.P. Schmahl, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary



Photo: Mike White, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Chapter 4

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING

Program Requirements

Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship recipients must have and maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) each academic term. Applicants must also maintain full-time student status for the duration of the scholarship. If the requirements outlined above are not met, the student will be dismissed from the scholarship program pending review of the case.

To maintain eligibility in the program, scholarship recipients are required to provide:

1. **Certification of Enrollment:** Please send proof of enrollment indicating full-time status at the beginning of the school year to the fosterscholars@noaa.gov email account. This must be an official signed enrollment from the university/college registrar. This needs to be emailed or mailed to the address listed in the contact section by **September 30th**.
2. **Transcript:** At the **end of each term**, please upload to Grants Online an unofficial transcript to ensure the 3.0 GPA requirement is met.
Photo: Michael Carver, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Photo: Mike White, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
3. **Annual Report:** Please submit a progress report to Grants Online annually (**due May 31st**) that includes the following items:
 - a. **Scholar Activities:** organizational memberships, volunteer activities, etc.
 - b. **Accomplishments:** publications, presentations, etc.
 - c. **Academic Progress:** course work completed, candidacy exams, etc. Please include a timeline to graduation for your degree.
 - d. **Research Progress:** status of field work, data analysis, thesis/dissertation preparation, etc.
 - e. **Academic Advisor Certification:** A signed letter from your advisor on academic institution letterhead to NOAA indicating that you are satisfactorily completing requirements of your academic program. This may be emailed from your advisor's email address to fosterscholars@noaa.gov. Please have your academic advisor email a copy of the signed letter on academic letterhead. You are responsible for uploading this to Grants Online as part of your program requirements. [Note: The letter from your academic advisor should be typed on

academic letterhead, signed with an ink pen, and scanned as a PDF if the advisor plans to email it. If the academic advisor plans to mail in the letter, the same requirements (excluding the scanned PDF) apply.]

- f. **Contact Information:** Please provide current contact information including: address, preferred email address, and telephone number. This is our only way to get a hold of you, so it is extremely important that this information is up-to-date. Please do not wait until the end of the year if you have new information.
 - g. **Research Collaboration:** Please provide an update on your plans for your research collaboration, including estimated costs for the collaboration, and an outline of planned activities. If you have finished your collaboration, please provide your final report on your collaboration with a budget of final accounting costs.
 - h. **Budget Spreadsheet of all Costs (Tuition, Stipend, Research Collaboration):** Please provide a breakdown for each funding category of the scholarship including how you are using the funds in each of the categories. This enables us to justify to Grant's Management Division the funds are being spent by each scholar are allowable.
 - i. **Applicable Receipts:** Please upload to Grants Online the following: tuition, books, insurance, and other bills that help us to understand how your scholarship funds are being used as documented in the above spreadsheet.
 - j. **Graduation Plans:** If you are graduating in the current year, please send an email to fosterscholars@noaa.gov with the dates of your defense, thesis submission, and graduation by **March 1st**. If you are planning to request a no-cost extension, we will also need an email requesting the extension so we can work with you on how to do the paperwork in Grants Online. No-cost extension paperwork must be submitted in Grants Online prior to the award expiration.
- 4. Final Report:** Please submit a final report to Grants Online at the end of your scholarship (to be determined with the Program Director) that includes the following items:
- a. **Accomplishments:** a list of all of the activities successfully completed during the scholarship including presentations, ambassador activities, organizational memberships, volunteer activities, etc. This should include all of your post scholarship plans, especially regarding NOAA careers and interactions.
 - b. **Transcript:** Please provide a final OFFICIAL transcript indicating the degree earned, if applicable. Please send this to the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program address listed in the contact section. This may also be sent electronically from the College or University directly to the fosterscholars@noaa.gov e-mail address.

- c. **Thesis/Dissertation:** All scholars are required to submit a copy of their master's thesis or PhD Dissertation upon completion of their degree. Your account on Grants Online will not close until this has been uploaded and accepted by the Program Manager.
- d. **Research Collaboration Report:** Please upload your final research collaboration report to Grants Online.
- e. **Final Evaluation:** Please upload your final evaluation of the program to Grants Online. This includes questions specific to your review of the program, what you have learned, etc. The evaluation document will be provided to all of you prior to your graduation date.
- f. **Final Total Budget:** Overall budget spreadsheet for all federal funds used through the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program.

Important Dates:

1. **Certificate of Enrollment** — **September 30th** of each year emailed to fosterscholars@noaa.gov.
2. **Transcript** — End of each term uploaded to Grants Online.
3. **Annual Report** — **May 31** of each year uploaded to Grants Online.
4. **Graduation Plans** — **March 1** of year of graduation
5. **Final Report** — **Date to be determined post final award date.** This must be discussed with the Program Director in the final year of your scholarship.



Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries



Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries

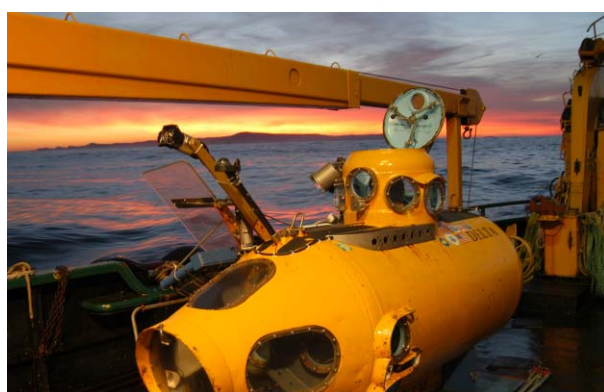


Photo: Robert Schwemmer, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Chapter 5

RESEARCH COLLABORATION

As a Dr. Nancy Foster Scholar, you are required to conduct a research collaboration in coordination with an office of the National Marine Sanctuary System before the end of your grant award. The intent of the collaboration is to increase your exposure to NOAA and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, broaden the scope of your academic studies, provide opportunities for hands-on learning experiences and applied use of your skills and knowledge.

You are encouraged to explore topics and areas of research that are not directly in line with your specific thesis or dissertation research; however, this is not a requirement.

Note: Ph.D. candidates are eligible to conduct a second collaboration depending on time, availability, and funding levels of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program. This second collaboration is not a requirement and approval for these additional collaborations will be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis.

Funding, Budgeting, and Accounting

- Your maximum allowance for the research collaboration is \$10,000.
- The primary purpose for this allowance is to cover travel-related expenses to and from the NOAA facility, housing, and per diem. Additional allowable expenses include laboratory costs, research vessel support, instruments and consumable supplies while conducting research at the NOAA facility.
- You are responsible for coordinating your own travel within this allotment, including airfare, per diem, lodging, and rental car if necessary.
- All expenses must be identified in complete budget proposal and accompany your collaboration proposal. This budget must be approved by Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship program coordinators prior to the start of the collaboration.
- You must submit all travel receipts for the research collaboration travel in the annual report covering the period during which the collaboration took place. Only receipts in your name are permissible. At the completion of the research collaboration, you must submit a trip report to the fosterscholars@noaa.gov email indicating your accomplishments during the research collaboration.
- If you design a research opportunity that requires travel funds beyond the allocated \$10,000, costs exceeding \$10,000 will not be reimbursed and you will be responsible

for securing the additional funds. In those instances, you must demonstrate that you have obtained the additional financial support to cover added travel costs before your research opportunity will be approved.

Timeframe

- Research collaborations should run for approximately four- to six-weeks over a single continuous period. Variations from these guidelines (extended or discontinuous time frames) can be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis.
- Collaborations can be conducted at any point during the calendar year, but summer months are typically favored due to scheduling against academic calendars and field research opportunities. Exact timing will be dependent upon the scholar's academic and research schedule and the schedule of staff at the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries field sites and the type of work being proposed for a given collaboration.
- The collaboration should be designed around an experience with a single office and mentor; however, multiple locations may be considered.
- The collaboration should be based on an approximate workload of 40 hours per week.
- Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars may not be enrolled in lecture course work at the same time as their research opportunity, but may be enrolled full-time in research units/credits. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Support for Collaboration Activities

Offices — Most research collaborations will take place in the field site office of a national marine sanctuary. In such cases, the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries will provide a work space on site, phone, and computer, if necessary. Depending on the nature of the planned work, some training may be required in order to access and use IT equipment. This will be addressed once you are onsite at the location of your collaboration. Recipients may be required to complete background screenings for access to NOAA facilities, pursuant to the security requirements at each NOAA facility.

ID badges — Depending on the NOAA office hosting you, a NOAA ID badge may be required for access to and around the facility. Obtaining these badges will be coordinated at the location of your collaboration. Provided the collaboration and/or requirement to access NOAA facilities does not run longer than 90 days, you will not need to obtain a Common Access Card (also called a CAC card). Recipients may be required to complete background screenings for access to NOAA facilities, pursuant to the security requirements at each NOAA facility.

Vessels — All scholars can request and in some cases plan for, participate in and conduct activities aboard NOAA research vessels and Office of National Marine Sanctuary small boats. In such cases, scholars and the mentor must coordinate with the sanctuary operations coordinator. You must also sign a revocable license specific to the planned activities that addresses issues of liability, security, and propriety. Contact Mitchell Tartt to develop and process the revocable license. Recipients may be required to complete background screenings for access to NOAA facilities and vessels, pursuant to the security requirements at each NOAA facility or vessel.

Snorkeling — Should your collaboration incorporate snorkeling or breath-hold diving activities, there are unique requirements that must be addressed (e.g. swimming and watermanship assessments, on-water support and supervision, etc.). Planning for these activities must be coordinated between your mentor and the local Unit Diving Supervisor, and approved by Mitchell Tartt.

Diving — Should your collaboration incorporate scuba diving activities, there are many requirements that must be addressed, including approval by Mitchell Tartt, the local NOAA Unit Dive Supervisor, and the NOAA Diving Program. Approval to conduct diving operations as part of a research collaboration can be time consuming depending on the circumstances of the proposal and the status of your diving credentials. It is STRONGLY recommended that you begin planning these activities as soon as possible.

Planning

- Research collaboration opportunities are offered and coordinated on a first come first serve basis. It is recommended you initiate planning and discussions six to nine months ahead to allow sufficient time to explore options and accommodate the schedules of staff and field activities.
- Your proposal should be finalized and approved one month before the research collaboration begins.
- To initiate the planning and coordination process, contact Mitchell Tartt, and refer to the websites listed below to explore possible opportunities and needs across the National Marine Sanctuary System. First review the science needs assessment, then, for topics you want to explore for your collaboration, refer to the sanctuary condition reports and management plans for the relevant sanctuaries and topics.

ONMS Science Needs Assessment

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/assessment/>

ONMS Condition Reports

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/condition/>

ONMS Management Plans

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/mpr/>

The basic steps in developing and completing your research collaboration are:

1. Contact Mitchell Tartt to initiate discussions;
2. Consult the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Science Needs Assessment, management plans, and condition reports;
3. Identify your desired time frame;
4. Identify potential research topics and locations;
5. Verify interest and availability of sanctuary superintendent and research coordinator;
6. Identify the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries mentor. Note: the mentor must be a NOAA federal government employee;
7. Draft proposal;
8. Submit proposal for final approval by mentor, Mitchell Tartt, and Kate Thompson;
9. Initiate and conduct collaboration;
10. Weekly reporting — Submit weekly summary of work schedule and activities completed;
11. Final report — At the conclusion of your collaboration, provide a short presentation to staff at the hosting field site office. This report will also serve as the final report for your collaboration.

Proposal Format

The proposal for your research collaboration must include the information listed below. Please be concise and brief in your language. There are no minimum or maximum requirements for amount of content. However, well-constructed proposals are typically 2-4 pages in length.

Submit your initial drafts to Mitchell Tartt for review, comment, and approval.

Headers to use in your proposal include:

- Your name
- Date submitted
- Proposed duration and dates of collaboration
- Location (NOAA office and address)
- Project title
- Overview of planned work (brief description, no more than one page)
- Duties/responsibilities — Briefly describe the work and activities planned for your collaboration
- Deliverables/products — List and describe all deliverables/products to be completed by the end of the collaboration

Relevance of work and deliverables to you, the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholar — Briefly describe how the planned work benefits you, your academic studies, and your research, if applicable.

- Relevance of work and deliverables to NOAA and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries — Briefly describe how the planned work and deliverables benefits NOAA and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and how it will be applied by the office.
- Required prerequisites or advance preparation requirements — Define any prerequisites or preparatory work that must be completed prior to the commencement of the collaboration.
- Itemized budget — Provide a budget table that defines all planned expenses to be charged against the collaboration allowance. This will be used to verify and authorize reimbursements
- Onsite mentor — Provide the name, address, email, phone number of your onsite mentor

Approval and Clearance

Research collaboration proposals must be agreed upon by you, the NOAA mentor, the sanctuary field site superintendent or office director, and Mitchell Tartt.

All research collaborations must be approved and cleared by Mitchell Tartt before the collaboration can commence.



Photo: Paulo Maurin, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program



Photo: Laura Francis, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Chapter 6

ROLE AS A SCHOLAR

Representing the Program

As a recipient of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship, you become a recognized member of the NOAA community. NOAA provides significant financial resources to help you pursue your independent graduate studies, as well as the staff expertise to assist you with your research along the way.

As an extended member of the NOAA community, we expect you to:

- Follow all guidance provided to you by the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship program coordinators;
- Participate in all assessments (e.g., evaluations, surveys) of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship program;
- Be a mentor for future Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars;
- Respond to requests for information (e.g., summaries of recent research and activities) from Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship program coordinators in a timely manner;
- Become an active member of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship online alumni network;
- Represent NOAA in positive light; and
- Consider a NOAA career in your future pursuits.

Alumni Network

There are more than 40 current and alumni Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars across the country, and we would like to establish an online alumni network for you to share your research and experiences with each other. An online alumni community will provide an opportunity to keep everyone connected and to have a designated place online to: 1) shine a spotlight on Dr. Nancy Foster Scholar accomplishments; 2) highlight NOAA career opportunities; 3) share interesting science articles and reports related to your research; 4) provide necessary updates to all alumni; 5) post photos of scholars and their research in action; and 6) notify scholars when surveys and evaluations will be forthcoming and need to be completed.

We anticipate working with all of the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars to define what this online alumni community will look like and what platform we plan to use. We encourage you to become an active member of our alumni community online!

Chapter 7

EVALUATION

Program Evaluation

The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is institutionalizing a program-wide evaluation plan to ensure that all education programs are being assessed for effectiveness against stated program goals and objectives. Therefore, all education programs must be currently evaluated or have an evaluation plan in place. Each program evaluation plan must include standardized questions from our toolbox of questions, in addition to utilizing additional questions that are optional.

The awardees will be asked to complete a questionnaire to evaluate the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program. The questions will be used to gather information about the level of knowledge, skills and behavioral changes that take place with Dr. Nancy Foster Scholars before and after the scholarship program. These questions focus on ocean literacy concepts and awareness of national marine sanctuaries.

The five-point scale that is used with these questions is based on current reviewed literature on assessing impact and a recognized method of capturing this data. This information will be collected before the scholars initiate their collaboration with the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and again after the collaboration is completed. The Office of Management and Budget approved survey items are located in the Appendix.



Photo: Steve Lonhart, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary



Photo: Robert Schwemmer, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Chapter 8

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Information

All correspondence should be directed to the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship email address:

fosterscholars@noaa.gov

Contact the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Team members at the following phone numbers:

Kate Thompson

Program Manager
(301) 713-7245

Seaberry Nachbar

Grants Online, ASAP, Evaluation
(831) 647-4204

Mitchell Tartt

Research Collaboration
(301) 713-7284

Tracy Hajduk

Program Support
(301) 713-7279

Claire Fackler

Online Alumni Network
(805) 963-3238 ext. 18

The mailing address for all Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship correspondence is:

Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
N/ORM 6 SSMC 4 11th Floor RM 11146
1305 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20901

APPENDIX

Pre-approved Evaluation Questions

- The health of the ocean and the actions of humans are inter-connected (Knowledge/Awareness Ocean Literacy)

Method — *5 point scale* - “I Strongly Agree/ I Agree/I neither Agree nor Disagree/ I Disagree/ I Strongly Agree”

- The National Marine Sanctuary System helps to protect marine and Great Lake ecosystems. (Knowledge/Awareness ONMS)

Method — *5 point scale* - “I Strongly Agree/ I Agree/I neither Agree nor Disagree/ I Disagree/ I Strongly Agree”

- I would like to be involved in activities that focus on marine and/or Great Lakes conservation, protection and restoration. (Aspirations of Conservation/Stewardship)

Method — *5 point scale* - “I Strongly Agree/ I Agree/I neither Agree nor Disagree/ I Disagree/ I Strongly Agree”

- I will consider the health of the ocean and of marine wildlife in my decision-making. (Behaviors/activities)

Method — *5 point scale* - “I Strongly Agree/ I Agree/I neither Agree nor Disagree/ I Disagree/ I Strongly Agree”



AMERICA'S UNDERWATER TREASURES