



Transdisciplinary Graduate Fellows Program (TGFP)

Request for Applications for the 2021 Cohort

Description of the TGFP

TGFP is a key part of the mission of the MSU Center for Interdisciplinarity (C4I). C4I is a research center that works to advance interdisciplinary research and education at MSU while preparing the next generation of citizen leaders to address the most challenging questions of our time. The TGFP supports the educational mission of C4I by providing graduate students at MSU with cross-disciplinary training opportunities. The TGFP will provide teams of graduate students the opportunity to work with a community partner on a consequential problem while receiving training in transdisciplinary team research practice. By creating a community of practice involving university and community partners, the TGFP aims to train future transdisciplinary research leaders. The 2021 TGFP program will run *virtually*.

As participants in the TGFP, fellows will receive the following:

- A \$5,000 fellowship paid out in two installments – one at the beginning of the spring and one at the end of the summer of the fellowship period, January to August 2021
- Professional development in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, community engagement, and team science
- Networking with peers, leaders in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary practice, and community partners
- Support in producing outcomes that will have value for academic researchers and for the community partner

Fellows in the TGFP are expected to:

- Participate in the virtual TGFP intensive short course during Jan 4-7, 2021
- Attend and participate in twice-monthly, seminar-style virtual meetings that provide an opportunity for trouble-shooting and for professional development
- Collaboratively develop final projects with one's teammates and community partner
- Participate in a final virtual TGFP Symposium in mid- to late-August 2021 at which the final projects will be presented to the MSU community

Community Partners

The community partners for the 2021 TGFP are 1) the Arts Council of Greater Lansing (<http://lansingarts.org/>) and 2) the Food Bank Council of Michigan.

Each community partner will work with a team of three fellows on a topic to be determined in partnership. Teams and community partners will work collaboratively to create a meaningful research plan for the topic area during the January 2021 training week.

Selection Criteria

We are seeking MSU graduate students with a strong interest in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and a desire to collaborate with community partners to make a positive difference for the mid-Michigan area. Successful applicants will have experience working across disciplines and will be able to demonstrate an aptitude for teamwork. Selection will be based on two rounds of evaluation. Round one will focus on an evaluation of written materials, round two will focus on twenty minute in-person interview for selected individuals during the second full week of December.

The selection committee will comprise the C4I leadership and the community partners, Each selected team will consist of three graduate students, at least one of whom will be a graduate student in the College of Arts & Letters. Selection criteria will include:

1. Preparedness to succeed in a transdisciplinary environment (i.e., an environment that involves both academic and non-academic partners)
2. Preparedness to succeed in a collaborative, team-based environment
3. Relevance of a fellowship experience to the applicant's professional goals
4. Relevance of a fellowship experience to the applicant's research agenda
5. Success in the applicant's graduate program
6. Applicability of the applicant's skills to the relevant partner

How to Apply

Students should apply directly to the program by submitting all application materials in a single pdf. Attach the pdf to an email sent to C4I@msu.edu with the subject line, "Application for 2021 TGFP".

The application materials in the order they should appear in the pdf are as follows:

- A cover sheet including:
 - Title: "TGFP Application for 2021"
 - Your full name

- Your graduate program title (and other graduate programs, if applicable)
- Your year in graduate school during Spring 2021
- The name of your faculty advisor
- The community partner(s) with which you wish to work
- The name and affiliation of the faculty member writing the recommendation letter, along with their relationship to you
- A 1-page statement of intent that addresses the selection criteria above and describes your preparedness to work with the partner(s) you have identified
- Your current CV
- Two letters of support from a faculty member. The letter should indicate:
 - Their academic relationship with you
 - Their opinion of your ability to contribute to a team-based, transdisciplinary project
 - Their assessment of your ability to work closely with graduate students from other disciplines and with a community partner
 - Any details that bear on an assessment of your application in light of the selection criteria mentioned above

If the faculty references would prefer to submit their letter directly, please have them send their letters to C4I@msu.edu as a pdf attachment with the applicant's name in the subject line.

Deadline for all applications is ***November 30, 2020***. Applicants will be notified by ***December 7, 2020*** if they have moved on to the interview round, with interviews taking place between ***December 9 and December 14, 2020***. Final notifications will be made on ***December 16, 2020***, with acceptances due by ***December 21, 2020***.

If you have any questions about TGFP or C4I, please contact Michael O'Rourke at orourk51@msu.edu or 517-432-0751.