



Transdisciplinary Graduate Fellows Program (TGFP)

Request for Applications for the 2022 Cohort

Description of the Program

The Transdisciplinary Graduate Fellows Program (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 provides graduate students the opportunity to work as a team 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 2022 TGFP program will run *virtually*.

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

- A \$5,000 fellowship paid out in two \$2500 installments – one at the beginning of the fellowship period in January 2022 and one at the end of the fellowship period in August 2022
- Professional development in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, community engagement, and team science
- Networking and opportunities to present in front of 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 10-13, 2022
- Attend and participate in twice-monthly, seminar-style virtual meetings that provide an opportunity for project check-ins and professional development
- Collaboratively develop final projects with one's teammates and community partner
- Participate and present at in a final virtual TGFP Symposium in late-August 2022

Community Partner

The community partner for the 2022 TGFP is the Capital Area Sustainability Partnership (CASP), a regional collaboration network of governments, non-profits and academia dedicated to promoting best practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social responsibility. It is a volunteer consortium for practitioners of beyond-compliance sustainability practices in Mid-Michigan, promoting positive community change and operational improvements through education, collaboration, and resource development.

Our community partner will work with a team of three to four fellows on a topic to be determined in partnership. The team and community partner will work collaboratively to create a meaningful research plan for the topic area during the January 2022 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 a community partner 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, and round two will involve a 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 partner. The team will consist of three or four 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 community partner's interests

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 2022 TGFP".

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

- A cover sheet including:
 - Title: “TGFP Application for 2022”
 - Your full name
 - Your graduate program title (and other graduate programs, if applicable)
 - Your year in graduate school during Spring 2022 – *priority will be given to graduate students who are not completing their degree in 2022*
 - The name of your faculty advisor
 - 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 this year’s community partner
- Your current CV
- One letter 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 reference 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 ***December 3, 2021***. Applicants will be notified by ***December 8, 2021*** if they have moved on to the interview round, with interviews taking place between ***December 10 and December 14, 2021***. Final notifications will be made on ***December 17, 2021***, with acceptances due by ***December 21, 2021***.

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