



Colorado State University
WARNER COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Department of Ecosystem Science and Sustainability



EA-IRES: East African International Research Experience for Students – Fellowship Information and Application (due 5/12/17)

The Colorado State University (CSU) EA-IRES Fellowship, hosted by the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory (NREL) in the Warner College of Natural Resources and in partnership with University of Nairobi (UoN), Kenya, will provide five qualifying Colorado State University sophomores and juniors an opportunity to study dryland social-ecological systems in Colorado and Kenya. This one-year student-driven program begins with two semesters of training in Colorado on the basics of research, drylands and social-ecological systems and the writing of a research proposal, and culminates in a five-week field research experience in East Africa, Summer 2018. Travel and modest living expenses for the field experience will be covered by the fellowship, and fellows will receive an additional \$1,400 Fellowship Award. The EA-IRES program will include professional development, as well as cultural and social activities inside and outside the classroom both in Colorado and Africa. This program is funded by the National Science Foundation's International Research Experience for Students (IRES) program and will follow CSU's Office of International Programs' organizational, health and safety protocols.

The goal of the EA-IRES program is to give qualified undergraduate students an opportunity to build their experience and qualifications for conducting independent research. The program is geared toward students who would like to enter into scientific and research-oriented careers or to apply to graduate school once they have completed their undergraduate degrees.

Fellows will register for the SUPER program's ([Skills for Undergraduate Participation in Ecological Research](#)) first class (ESS 220 - 1 credit) and a drylands seminar course (ESS 495 – 1 credit) in Fall 2017. In Spring 2018 they will register for the second semester of SUPER (ESS 221 – 1 credit) and mentored research proposal development (ESS 298 – 2 credits). In Summer 2018 students will register for at least one credit *and optionally up to 5 credits* for their field research experience in Africa (ESS 495). **ALL EA-IRES program courses are mandatory.** The courses provide opportunities to engage in research, and to prepare a research proposal on a topic of social-ecological interest to be investigated in Africa.

The program in Africa will build directly on the fall and spring semesters and will take place in field locations with the assistance of several faculty partners/mentors from UoN. Students will travel as a group, and collaborative work will be encouraged.

Throughout the EA-IRES program, fellows will attend occasional mandatory meetings and possible weekend field trip(s) to build background knowledge and preparation for travel to Africa. It is a rigorous program of preparation that entails writing, repeatedly revising, and carrying out a professional research proposal and plan to meet the high standards (and timelines) of CSU and Kenya's National Commission on Science and Technology. All fellows will be formally trained in working with human subjects and conducting social science methods. Throughout the program, fellows will be expected to meet strict programmatic deadlines for writing and training and to communicate openly with the program leads.

2017-18 EA-IRES Fellowship Application – DUE by 5pm FRIDAY 5/12/17

Fellowship awards will be announced by Friday, May 26th.

The ultimate goal of this program is to give students a one-of-a-kind, transformational research experience that builds professional skills in preparation for future research and graduate school.

Students will be expected to participate actively with their cohort throughout the program; complete all program academic, writing, training, permitting and research requirements in a timely manner; and follow all health and safety protocols for travel in Africa. Following the conclusion of the field experience in Africa, Students will also be expected to: 1) create a comprehensive database of their research data for archive at CSU; 2) conduct analyses to test their research hypotheses; 3) write a professional-level contribution to a research report to be returned to stakeholders and submitted to NSF; and 4) create and present a professional research poster in Fall 2017 – Spring 2018. Existing EA-IRES fellows have presented at the National Council for Undergraduate Research (NCUR) national conference, the Front Range Student Ecology Symposium (FRSES) at CSU, the Center for Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium (CURC) at CSU, and the Department of Ecosystem Science and Sustainability (ESS) Spring Symposium at CSU. Other venues for presentation are also possible. ***Participation in the program is contingent on following University and program protocols and meeting program deadlines.*** Optional research or independent study credits may be taken in Fall 2017 and/or Spring 2018 to get credit for data analysis, oral and poster presentation preparation, report preparation or manuscript preparation.

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must demonstrate that they are:

- 1) US Citizens or permanent residents,
- 2) Current students entering their sophomore or junior year at Colorado State University, and
- 3) In good academic standing.

Applications are welcome from students studying in any college or department at CSU, with preference given to students in the Warner College of Natural Resources. **Students must demonstrate in their application package that the EA-IRES program and its focus on drylands and social-ecological systems is relevant to and will enhance their studies.**

****Please combine all application materials (other than letters of recommendation), including your 1) cover page, 2) a scanned copy of pages 3-4 of this application, 3) 2 essays, 4) resume and 5) transcripts into a single PDF with the title, “EA-IRES Application 2017-18 [your last name]”.**

Complete applications must be received by the deadline. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

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STUDENT INFORMATION

First Name _____ Last Name _____

CSUID# _____ Current CSU GPA (*minimum 3.25, to be verified*) _____

CSU Department and Major: _____

Class Standing for Fall 2017: _____ CSU Sophomore _____ CSU Junior

(Sophomores and Juniors *only* may apply, no exceptions)

Ethnicity (check all that apply) _____ African American _____ Caucasian/White

_____ Asian American _____ Hispanic/Latino/a

_____ Native American, Tribe Name _____

Applicant Essays – Two Essays Required

Two essays, each of 400-500 words (approximately 1 single-spaced page per essay) should be submitted with your application package. Include a cover sheet with your full name, CSUID#, the name of your undergraduate advisor, current phone number, and email. Each essay should also have a title:

Essay #1 - Describe your preparation and career goals as they relate to science and research and your choice to pursue the *EA-IRES: East African International Research Experience for Students Program* to focus on social-ecological systems and drylands. Please include information on prior research and cultural experience(s) (more is not necessarily better), problem-solving abilities, experience working as part of a group, and leadership. Given the rigorous and thorough research proposal-development process in this program, also discuss your reliability as a student under tight deadlines, your experience working through many revisions, and your personal drive.

Essay #2 - Discuss your thoughts and goals of traveling to Africa to learn from CSU and University of Nairobi faculty, as well as from local people who live in the communities in which we will be staying. What are your personal goals for this experience?

Résumé

A résumé of no more than two pages should be submitted, detailing your education, work experience, volunteer work, and other experiences relevant to your participation in EA-IRES.

Letters of Recommendation

Professional Recommendations – Submit one (1) letter from current CSU faculty, scientists or counselors on your academic background, interest in dryland social-ecological systems and/or African development, choice to pursue research in Africa, and your responsibility as a student (timeliness, reliability, communication, initiative, creativity, etc.). Recommenders should share their knowledge of your career goals, their impressions of your preparedness/suitability for this rigorous program and travel to Africa. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION!**

Personal Recommendation – Submit one (1) letter from a current or former employer (non-CSU), family member, teacher, mentor or individual who can speak to your suitability for this program.

Note: Each Letter of Recommendation must be submitted directly from the recommender by email (Subject line: EA-IRES [YOUR NAME] Recommendation) OR sealed in separate envelope and sent via mail, and **MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5pm FRIDAY, 5/12/2017.**

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Transcripts

Complete unofficial transcripts are required for all students (scans/copies are acceptable).

APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST – ALL MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE!

Note: Digital applications are preferred but not required. A single PDF file including this Fellowship Application, essays, résumé and transcripts should be sent by email - label files clearly with your name & EA-IRES.

- _____ Completed, signed and scanned EA-IRES Fellowship Application (pages 3 & 4 of this document)
- _____ Two Applicant Essays
- _____ Resume
- _____ Unofficial Transcripts
- _____ One sealed Letter of Professional Recommendation (sent by mail or to email below)
- _____ One sealed Letter of Personal Recommendation (sent by mail or to email below)
- _____ Submit or have on file a FAFSA listing CSU-Fort Collins for 2017-2018 <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- _____ Current U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident status
- _____ Current CSU student with sophomore or junior class standing at the beginning of Fall 2017

SELECTION CRITERIA

Fellows will be selected based on their academic qualifications and suitability for the program, as determined from their essays, letters of recommendation, and other application materials. ***Finalists may be requested to conduct a phone or in-person interview.***

We encourage applications from members of groups underrepresented in scientific fields and from those seeking culturally immersive experiences in the sciences. Selection criteria include:

- ✓ Benefit of the program for students given their skills and career goals
- ✓ Research/science background and prior cultural experiences/placements
- ✓ Ability to complete a 5-week field experience in Africa
- ✓ Evidence of independent, creative thinking and problem-solving
- ✓ Academic success, intellectual and personal leadership, communication skills, and enthusiasm
- ✓ Life skills, resourcefulness, reliability, timeliness, emotional maturity and self-driven nature

CERTIFICATION OF EA-IRES PROGRAM PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

I certify that all information for the EA-IRES Fellowship Application is correct and complete, and if found to be otherwise I will be removed from consideration. Further, if accepted as an EA-IRES Fellow, I understand that I will be required to:

- ✓ Complete all required Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 courses and proposal activities on schedule;
- ✓ Attend cohort meetings, and all pre-trip health and safety meetings in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018;
- ✓ Meet all travel requirements, including but not necessarily limited to: health insurance, immunizations, completion of Institutional Review Board requirements, registration with Study Abroad, and a passport valid through January 2019 (per host country requirements – you may apply for passport in Fall 2017);
- ✓ Travel to East Africa for five (5) weeks in Summer 2018 (location and dates TBD);
- ✓ Be culturally sensitive and thoughtful in behavior and dress while in Africa; and
- ✓ Present my work in the form of a stakeholder report and a poster presentation at CSU in Fall 2018

Signature: _____ Date: _____

COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5pm, May 12, 2017
PLEASE EMAIL (preferred), SEND, OR HAND-DELIVER TO:

EA-IRES Program
B-205 Natural and Environmental Sciences Building
Natural Resource Ecology Lab
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1499

by fax: 970-491-1965, or by Email: WCNR_ESS_info@Mail.ColoState.EDU (subject: EA-IRES Application)