

## Gulf Research Program Early-Career Research Fellowship

### Education Research Track

### Application Questions and Review Criteria – Award Year 2024

**This document provides an overview of the application questions and their associated review criteria for this application cycle. We highly encourage our applicants to thoroughly examine both the application questions and the respective review criteria while formulating their responses.**

**Gulf Research Program mission:** Develop, translate, and apply science, engineering, and medical knowledge to enhance offshore energy safety, environmental protection and stewardship, and human health and community resilience in the Gulf region in ways that empower its citizens.

**Track Goal:** Contribute to the advancement of science, STEM, and environmental education by considering the impacts of incorporating place-based education or establishing sense-of-place\* in formal or informal learning environments.

*\*Sense of place describes the wide range of connections between people and places that develops based on the place meanings and attachment a person has for a particular setting. For the purpose of this opportunity, sense of place may include research terminology such as place-based education (PBE) or learning, identity of place, placemaking, and/or pedagogy of place.*

## Application Questions:

### 1. **Relevance Essay (1000-word limit)**

Using language for a lay audience, explain how your research has contributed to and will continue contributing to the Education Research Track Goal: “The advancement of science, STEM, and environmental education by considering the impacts of incorporating place-based education or establishing sense-of-place in formal or informal learning environments.” In your response, include:

- Describe what learning environments your research focuses on in the Gulf of Mexico or Alaska, and what strategies your research uses to advance STEM and environmental education by establishing sense-of-place.

- Describe how your research is addressing the impacts of building or establishing a sense-of-place within educational opportunities. How will your research explore these impacts as it relates to the educational system of one or more state or locality within the Gulf of Mexico region or Alaska?

## **2. Research Essay (2 parts, total 2000-word limit)**

The Gulf Research Program Early-Career Research Fellowship funds people, not projects. Therefore, your research portfolio statement should include information about your research portfolio as a whole, not a specific project. We encourage you to write your research portfolio statement in a way that is understandable to a scientifically literate lay reader and to make the best use of the space provided by utilizing the entire word count, rather than uploading images, diagrams, or figures. The use of references should be minimal and only when absolutely needed. If references are included, they will be counted toward the total word count, and we do not have a preference as to citation style.

- A description of your relevant research and projects to date.
- A description of future work and the research goals you hope to accomplish in the next two years.

## **3. Special Skill Essay (2 parts, total 600-word limit)**

Working toward establishing a sense of place in educational settings requires experience studying or working in the region or “place” to understand its unique communities/populations and the challenges and opportunities they face.

- Understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the “place” or region. Describe experiences you have had working in or studying one or more state or locality within the Gulf of Mexico region or Alaska.
- Describe the communities/populations you have studied or worked with, including any experiences you have had with historically disadvantaged, overburdened, or marginalized communities in the Gulf of Mexico region or Alaska.

## **4. Personal Growth and Mentoring Essay (3 parts, total 1250-word limit)**

- How will the mentoring provided by the fellowship help you to address your career goals and challenges? What is your strategy to be a productive mentee? (400-word limit)
- How will you know when you have achieved professional success in your career? What skills or characteristics do you need to work on in order to achieve this success? (350-word limit)
- Select one of the following questions to respond to as you reflect on your educational and research journey.
  - How have your lived experiences, educational journey, and/or understanding of the world shaped your identity as a scientist and an early-career researcher? (500-word limit)

OR

- ii. If applicable, we invite you to share your lived experiences of overcoming barriers related to your identity in your academic journey, along with the strategies you employed to overcome these challenges. These experiences could pertain to various aspects such as culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, or religion. (500-word limit)

#### **5. Submission of 5-page CV and Mentor Essay**

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

The Early-Career Research Fellowship application review for the Human Health and Community Resilience track will be conducted in two stages. Applications will first go through an eligibility review conducted by Gulf Research Program staff. Applications that are eligible will proceed to the second review stage focused on relevance, merit, and impact and will be reviewed by at least three peer reviewers during this stage.

### **Eligibility Review**

- Is the applicant a current federal employee?
- Is the applicant affiliated with a non-federal U.S. institution that has a valid tax ID number?
- Did the applicant complete their eligible degree (PhD, ScD, EngD, MD, DrPH, EdD, DSW, etc.) on or after January 1st, 2014?
- Does the applicant appear to currently hold a permanent and fully independent position as an investigation, faculty member, clinician scientist, or scientific team lead in industry or academia? (A postdoc is not considered a fully independent position.)

### **Relevance, Merit, and Impact Review**

#### **Relevance (25%):**

- Applicant's relevance essay demonstrates how their prior and future work will contribute to: the advancement of science, STEM and environmental education by considering the impacts of incorporating place-based education or establishing sense-of-place in formal or informal learning environments.

#### **Technical Merit of Current Work (25%):**

- Applicant demonstrates strong technical merit and research skills in past work.
- Applicant demonstrates potential to make a unique or significant contribution to the field of study and/or towards the goal of the track.

- The quality, range, and quantity of publications is appropriate for the applicant's discipline and career stage.
- Applicant demonstrates ability to secure funding through research grants/contracts.

**Potential for Impact, Personal Growth and Resilience (15%):**

- Applicant demonstrates a sense of self as a learner and problem-solver, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.
- Applicant demonstrates initiative within their institution and their field.
- Applicant demonstrates evidence of pursuing or generating opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities; self-reflection over past successes and failures; and awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses.

**Communication Skills (10%):**

- Applicant communicates complex ideas well in written formats, application materials are well-organized and cogent, and writing is free of grammatical and syntax errors.
- Application materials convey an understanding of context, audience, and purpose; materials are responsive to the questions asked.

**Special Skill (20%):**

- Applicant demonstrates experience working in or studying the Gulf of Mexico region (at some level of granularity) and a clear understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the "place" or region.
- Applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of the unique opportunities and challenges facing the communities/populations in the Gulf of Mexico region or Alaska; and may demonstrate experience working with historically disadvantaged, overburdened, or marginalized communities.

**Mentorship (5%):**

- Mentor and applicant have shared goals and understanding of applicant's strengths and identified areas for growth.
- Mentoring plan is realistic and feasible; objectives for mentoring relationship are specific and achievable.
- Mentoring plan is holistic and goes beyond the requirements of tenure and promotion.