**2022 STENGL-WYER SCHOLARS COMPETITION**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

Submission deadline: March 16, 2022, 5:00 PM CST

**DESCRIPTION**

Recent Ph.D.s are invited to apply for distinguished postdoctoral positions to study the diversity of life and/or organisms in their natural environments at The University of Texas at Austin (UT), one of the top campuses in the country for this area of research.

Funded by the Stengl-Wyer Endowment, the Stengl-Wyer Scholars Program provides up to three years of support for talented postdoctoral researchers in the broad area of the diversity of life and/or organisms in their natural environments. Scholars may study any groups of organisms, at levels from genes to populations to communities to ecosystems, and may use any combination of approaches. Scholars will:

- conduct cutting-edge research over three years;
- have access to the outstanding core facilities at UT, including field stations, natural history collections, computational, imaging, and biomolecular facilities;
- reside locally and have a regular work space and presence on the main UT campus;
- primarily focus on research, but in one of the three years, also implement a teaching or outreach effort related to their interests and career goals;
- participate in biweekly meetings (luncheons) with other Stengl-Wyer Scholars, Fellows or guests; and
- receive career mentorship.

Scholars are expected to be independent and propose their own research project. Applicants should identify one or more faculty members from UT’s College of Natural Sciences (CNS) who will provide laboratory space and serve as mentor. Scholars will be encouraged to interact broadly and collaborate with other faculty, postdocs, and graduate students at UT. 2022 Scholar recipients will receive the following:

- $68,000 annual salary plus UT benefits
- $10,000 annual allowance for research and travel expenses
- Up to $3,000 relocation expenses

**ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible applicants must have completed a Ph.D. or equivalent degree by the projected start date and must not have exceeded 18 months in a postdoctoral position at the time of application deadline. Preference will be given to applicants whose proposed projects broaden the scope of research in CNS and are relevant to the Stengl-Wyer Endowment’s mission to explore the diversity of life and organisms in their natural environments. Additionally, preference will be given to applicants not already in residence at UT. Applicants who are non-US citizens or permanent residents must be eligible for J-1 Scholar visa.
status; the Stengl-Wyer Scholars program cannot support H-1B visa applications. CNS particularly encourages applications from individuals within populations traditionally underrepresented in our disciplines. Our goal is to provide all Scholars with an inclusive and supportive environment in which they may realize their intellectual potential. The project start date at UT should be between June 1, 2022 and May 31, 2023.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

All application documents should be formatted using 1-inch margins and no smaller than 11-point font. Recommended fonts are Arial, Georgia, Helvetica and Times New Roman. The following documents are all required and must all be submitted by the application deadline:

1. Lay Summary: In 200 words or less describe for a general audience the proposed project and its potential impact on the understanding of the diversity of life and interactions between organisms and their natural environments.

2. Curriculum Vitae: Provide a current CV including academic background and research experience.

3. Research Plan (4 pages maximum; including figures and excluding citations): Describe the independent project that the applicant wishes to develop or implement at UT. The Research Plan should be innovative but feasible and should be developed independently by the applicant. The applicant is encouraged to consult with the proposed mentor(s) about relevant UT facilities and infrastructure. Preliminary data are not required.


5. Scientific Impact Statement (1 page maximum): Describe the novel aspects and significance of the proposed project with respect to applicant’s prior work and the ongoing work in the potential faculty mentor’s lab. Describe how this work will make a substantial contribution addressing a major unresolved scientific question.

6. Letter(s) of Support: Submit letter(s) of support from one or more potential faculty mentor(s) within CNS (Integrative Biology, Marine Science, Molecular Biosciences, Neuroscience, Statistics and Data Science, Computer Science, Physics, Astronomy and other departments with programs relevant to the study of the diversity of life and/or organisms in their natural environments). Interdisciplinary projects linking to several research groups are encouraged, and UT faculty members from outside CNS may be included as co-mentors. Applicant must have made contact with the proposed faculty mentors by the time of submission. The applicant is responsible for communicating minimum letter content requirements and deadline to potential faculty mentor(s). At minimum, a faculty mentor letter of support must include the following:
   • Mentor agreement to provide laboratory and office space or other facilities as needed;
and

• Description of how the proposed research is distinct from ongoing work in the mentor lab/research program.

7. **Statement of Teaching or Outreach Interests** (2 pages maximum): Describe teaching and/or outreach efforts related to the applicant’s interests and career goals. Discuss previous teaching and/or outreach experience as well as activities you plan to execute while at UT.

8. **List of Referees**: Provide the names and contact information of three individuals who are familiar with the applicant’s qualifications, training, and interests and have agreed to submit reference letters. Applicant’s proposed faculty mentor(s) cannot be counted toward the three required references. Letters of reference must be submitted confidentially per the Reference Letters section below. Applicant is responsible for communicating submission instructions and deadline to referees.

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Applications must be submitted through CompetitionSpace, UT’s online submission interface. To apply:

1. Click the “Apply Now” button at the top right of this page or go to [https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1853555](https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1853555).

2. Click the “Apply” button on the CompetitionSpace page.

3. This will take you to a login screen. External applicants should create an interface account by clicking the “Register” button toward the bottom of the page. Follow the instructions to create an account. Applicants with an existing UT EID and password should login using the “University of Texas Web Login” button.

4. You will be taken to an online applications form. Complete the form and upload the required submission materials (as described above) and click “Submit Application” at the bottom of the page. You also have the option to save a draft and return to continue your application.

Applicant required documents should be combined and uploaded as a single pdf and submitted by the **application deadline of 5:00 PM CST on March 16, 2022**. This includes the applicant’s Lay Summary, Curriculum Vitae, Research Plan, Bibliography/Reference, Scientific Impact Statement, Letter(s) of Support, Statement of Teaching and Outreach Interests, and List of Referees.

**REFERENCE LETTERS**

Reference letters are required from three individuals who have agreed to submit letters on the applicant’s behalf. Referees should address an applicant’s qualifications, training, and interests; independence, ability of applicant to anticipate and mitigate challenges; creativity, and/or novelty of the proposed project.

Reference letters must be submitted by referees via email to the Stengl-Wyer Endowment Program Directors at swe@austin.utexas.edu and must be received by the **application deadline of 5:00 PM CST**.
on March 16, 2022. Reference letters should remain confidential, and the applicant must not be copied on this email. Applicant is responsible for communicating submission instructions and deadline to referees.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by an ad hoc faculty panel using the following criteria:

- **Record of intellectual merit**: Consider honors, awards, scholarships, leadership and service activities, teaching and outreach activities, and other non-traditional recognition or distinction.

- **Evidence of research accomplishments and research independence**: Consider publications, talks/presentations at scientific meetings, reports, and other achievements and contributions to research. Place particular value on creativity and impact of research.

- **Reference Letters**: Consider accomplishments, especially in the context of obstacles, and potential for development as an independent scholar.

- **Research project**: Consider independence, innovativeness, and scope of the proposed research project, including evidence that the project is distinct from the proposed mentor’s existing projects and long-term research program.

- **Scope of research**: Proposed research should align with the program’s mission of exploring research in the diversity of life and organisms in their natural environments. Projects that broaden the scope of research in CNS within the program mission are welcome. Consider how the application contributes to the overall scope of research supported by the Stengl-Wyer Endowment, given that a strong community of scholars will include diverse individuals who are working on a variety of research themes and are supervised by different faculty advisors.

- **Teaching and outreach**: Consider record of past activities. Consider proposed activities and the potential impact on UT and broader community, feasibility, and likelihood of execution. Consider how the proposed activities will contribute to diversity and inclusion in science.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

Announcement of awardees: May 2022

Award Start Date: After June 1, 2022 and before May 31, 2023

Award End Date: Up to three (3) years from award start date

Number of Awards: Up to three (3) Stengl-Wyer Scholars will be awarded per year

CONTACT INFORMATION

Program questions should be directed to the Stengl-Wyer Endowment Program Directors: swe@austin.utexas.edu
Application submission interface questions should be directed to CNS Strategic Research Initiatives: CNS_SRI@austin.utexas.edu

The form and timing of Stengl-Wyer Scholars awards is subject to change in subsequent years.

The content of this announcement is relevant only for Spring 2022 awards.

The University of Texas at Austin, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.