

Knauss Fellowship: Applications and Selection

Sea Grant Week, 2016





The Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship provides a unique educational and professional experience to graduate students who have an interest in ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources and in the national policy decisions affecting those resources.

Graduation Ceremony for the 2015 Knauss Fellows with Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, NOAA Administrator

Yearly Cycle

February	Applicants submit packages to their state Sea Grant programs
March	State Sea Grants review applications, submit up to 6 applications to NSGO All packages reviewed by three reviewers, and scored based on the stated criteria
April	National Reviewers receive applications All packages reviewed by three reviewers, and scored based on the stated criteria
May	Review panel
June	Notifications sent to state Sea Grants, all applicants notified
November/ December	Placement Week
February	Start of the fellowship

Student Application Components

Letters of Recommendation (2 letters, with 1 from major advisor)

Personal statement (1000 words max)

Resume (two pages max)

Official Undergraduate and Graduate Transcripts

List of classes and plans for Spring/Summer/Fall 2018

Selection Factors

The legal basis for selecting
fellows

(1) **Recommendations and/or endorsements of student (15%)**: Endorsement/content of the letter from the applicant's major professor, and the second letter of recommendation.

(2) **Academic record and statement of career goals and objectives of student (45%)**: Quality of the applicant's personal education and career goal statement (30%); Strength of academic performance (15%).

(3) **Additional relevant experience (40%)** related to: diversity of education, extracurricular activities, honors and awards, and interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills. For the Knauss Sea Grant Fellowship Program, relevant experience would be in marine or aquatic-related fields.

Building a Strong Application

Personal Statement

1000 words maximum - STRICT LIMIT

12 pt font, please!

State a Leg/Exec preference

What the student brings to the fellowship, and what they expect to gain from being a fellow

Statement of career/life goal

Sarah Vallez
University of Mountains
Montana Sea Grant

“The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever.”

Or

“My objective is to be selected for a position as a 2053 Knauss Fellow in the Executive Branch because...”

This document demonstrates the student’s written communication skills

- Grammar and typos!

Explanation of volunteer/outreach activities

Address any red flags for reviewers

- Failed class, missing year, low GPA, etc.

Explanation of policy experience or interest

~~Mention Host offices~~

- We cannot guarantee host offices from year-to-year
- It looks bad if a finalist mentions specific host offices in their statement - no guarantee they’ll end up there

Resume

Cannot exceed 2 pages

Highlight the diversity of activities, classes, extracurricular awards, and volunteer activities. These are categories that reviewer seek out.

Education

- Schools, Majors, Thesis titles, GPAs, Graduation dates

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- In press, in review, published
- In prep are taken with a grain of salt

Presentations

- Oral and Poster

Non-Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Op-Eds, white papers, blog posts

Outreach

- Volunteer, mentoring responsibilities, student gov't positions

Awards and Honors

- Separate section!
- Explain awards if unclear (why selected, what was the award?)

Sarah Vallez
University of Mountains
Montana Sea Grant

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What makes a strong application

Follow FFO requirements exactly - 2 LOR, 2-page resume, 1000 word personal statement

Addressing any shortcomings

- Low GPA, failed class, missing year(s) of work

What makes a strong application

Solidly addressing the “Additional Relevant Experience” section of the scoring criteria

- **Additional relevant experience (40%)** related to: diversity of education, extracurricular activities, honors and awards, and interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills. For the Knauss Sea Grant Fellowship Program, relevant experience would be in marine or aquatic-related fields.

Easy-to-find information - Awards, Accomplishments

What makes a strong application

Was the Goal Statement specific, direct, and concise while discussing what the applicant would bring to and gain from the Knauss Fellowship? Was a career or life goal stated?

Did the applicant have volunteer and extracurricular activities?

Did the recommendation letters demonstrate knowledge of the applicant and his/her abilities? Did they know the applicant more than as a participant in a class? Was the 2nd letter from a diverse activity (not from 2 professors working in one lab)?

Did the applicant have a diverse background including a diversity of classes (balanced and appropriate coursework)?

What was the strength of the academic achievement?

How much marine and aquatic science and /or policy experience did the applicant have?

Was the publication record relevant to the applicant's career stage?

Are acronyms defined?

Are there misspelled words and/or grammatical errors?