

Sustainability Fellowship Program

2021–2022

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

NISE Network’s Sustainable Futures initiative supports museums and similar cultural organizations in their efforts to integrate sustainability into all aspects of their institution, including decision-making, operations, programs, and community partnerships. The program uses a broad definition of sustainability, which aligns with the UN global goals. Through the 2021-2022 Sustainability Fellowship program, staff at 90 museums will participate in a series of online workshops to develop a sustainability-related project at their organization while developing relationships with a broader community of practice. Participating museums will receive a stipend to help cover their costs.

Activities and requirements

In 2021-2022, the Sustainability Fellowship will consist of three cohorts, each lasting approximately six months.

Program requirements include completing the following:

- Intensive online workshop, which is organized into nine 90-minute sessions over the course of approximately one month. During the workshop sessions, fellows will get to know the others in their cohort, learn about sustainability, share best practices, and develop project ideas to implement at their museums;
- Community of practice, which will include asynchronous posting on an online collaboration platform and five 90-minute follow-up sessions held each month after the workshop;
- Sustainability project, which they will develop at their museums to align with their organization’s mission and priorities, as well as previous experience with sustainability;
- Online report, which will describe their project and share their experience with the fellowship; and
- Online evaluation survey (optional), which will assist the project team in understanding the program impacts.

In addition to the benefits of the workshop and community of practice, participants will:

- Receive \$1,500 in participant support, payable to your institution, for use at your discretion for staff time, materials, or other expenses.
- You may also be invited to participate in an optional research project associated with the program.

Example projects

Projects can include public programs, educational programs, events, installations, or exhibits; partnerships with other community organizations related to sustainability initiatives; professional development for museum staff and volunteers; behind-the-scenes efforts to make museum operations and facilities more sustainable; and/or planning that will create a foundation for future sustainability efforts at your museum.

You do not need to have a clear idea of what your project will be when you submit your application. This program will allow you to work with peers, experts, and stakeholders at your institution to identify an idea that is feasible and desirable for your organization. The project does not need to be completed within the six-month fellowship: as long as you are able to make meaningful progress during the program period, that will satisfy the requirement.

Previous program participants have implemented a range of projects, which have varied according to their institution's priorities, capacity, and degree of previous experience with sustainability. Here are some examples to help you think about what might be possible and what you and your organization are interested in:

- A children's museum created a pollinator garden outside their building and museum visitors collected data at the garden to contribute to a citizen science project;
- A marine research lab created distance learning programs that highlighted sustainability goals and efforts;
- A science and technology museum incorporated sustainability ideas and principles into an upcoming special exhibition;
- A natural history museum provided staff professional development so that different departments could contribute to a museum-wide sustainability initiative;
- A nature center partnered with other organizations to advance climate action in their region;
- A children's museum created educational materials and developed community partnerships to encourage use of a nearby nature trail;
- A zoo looked at how they handle recycling and reuse of materials behind the scenes and found low-cost ways to improve the process; and
- A science museum examined how they create new exhibits and retire old ones and developed guidelines to make their exhibit life cycle more sustainable.

Timeline

The fellowship program will be organized into three cohorts in 2021-2022, each with around 30 participating organizations. A timeline of major activities for the application and for each cohort is provided below. Please note that these dates are approximate; we may shift them slightly as needed.

Application and awards (same dates for all three cohorts):

- Application due: March 15, 2021
- Awards announced: early April, 2021
- Confirmation of participation due from awardees: April 30, 2021

Cohort D, May–November 2021

Workshop activities

- Online workshop sessions, expected to run from May 19 to June 16, 2021
- Sessions are held on Wednesdays and Fridays, 2:00pm-3:30pm eastern

Project work

- May 2021 - November 2021
- Your project can extend beyond this period, as long as you will make meaningful progress within this time frame

Community of practice

- Asynchronous participation through an online collaboration tool, as needed/requested
- Monthly online check-ins with your cohort following the workshop

Reporting and evaluation

- Final report due November 2021
- Evaluation survey links provided June 2021 and November 2021

Cohort E, September 2021–May 2022

Workshop activities

- Online workshop sessions, expected to run from September 22 to October 20, 2021
- Sessions are held on Wednesdays and Fridays, 2:00pm-3:30pm eastern

Project work

- October 2021 - May 2022
- Your project can extend beyond this period, as long as you will make meaningful progress within this time frame

Community of practice

- Asynchronous participation through in an online collaboration tool, as needed/requested
- Monthly online check-ins with your cohort following the workshop

Reporting and evaluation

- Final report due May 2022
- Evaluation survey link provided May 2022

Cohort F, January–July 2022

Workshop activities

- Online workshop sessions, expected to run from January 12 to February 8, 2022
- Sessions are held on Wednesdays and Fridays, 2:00pm-3:30pm eastern

Project work

- February 2022 - July 2022
- Your project can extend beyond this period, as long as you will make meaningful progress within this time frame

Community of practice

- Asynchronous participation through in an online collaboration tool, as needed/requested
- Monthly online check-ins with your cohort following the workshop

Reporting and evaluation

- Final report due July 2022
- Evaluation survey link provided July 2022

Eligibility

The Sustainability Fellowship program is open to museum professionals who are currently employed by an eligible organization located in the United States of America (see below). Each organization may apply for one or two people to participate (i.e., an application can be for one individual or a team of two from the same organization). Under certain circumstances, individuals and organizations who have previously participated in the program are eligible to participate again (see below). Participating organizations will only receive one stipend, regardless of whether one or two individuals take part in the program.

Organizations

To be eligible to participate in the program, organizations must be:

- Museums and similar organizations, including: science museums, science centers, children’s museums, youth museums, natural history museums, world cultures museums, planetariums, zoos, aquariums, arboretums, botanic gardens, history museums, historic sites, art museums, and nature centers; and
- Located in the United States of America, in any of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau.

Please note that K-12 schools, afterschool programs, and libraries are not eligible to participate in the Sustainability Fellowship program. Organizations from outside the USA are not eligible to participate in the 2021-2022 program. Please consider downloading our free digital tools and resources if your organization does not meet eligibility criteria:

- Digital materials for hands-on activities and educational programs are available for free download at <http://www.nisenet.org/sustainability>
- Digital workshop materials from the 2019-2020 cohorts are available for free download at <http://www.nisenet.org/sustainability-fellowship>

Repeat participation:

- An organization that has previously participated in the Sustainability Fellowship program through NISE Network or Arizona State University is eligible to participate again in the 2021-2022 program, as long as you have an eligible staff member (see below).
- If your organization has participated in the past, you may apply as long as you plan to develop a new project or take on a new phase of work for a previous project.

Professionals

To be eligible to participate in the program, the lead applicant must be a professional that is employed by an eligible organization (see above). An applicant can apply to participate individually or along with one other person (i.e., as a team of two from the same organization).

- There is no preference for applications by one person or a team of two. It is up to your organization to decide what will best allow you to participate in the program and develop a successful project.
- In cases where two people apply as a team, they are both expected to participate in the full program, work on the same project, and share the \$1,500 in support. One person will take the lead as the primary applicant and will be ultimately responsible for completing program requirements.
- The lead applicant from an organization should be a staff member who is a regular employee. The second person on a team application may be another staff member, a volunteer, or an intern.

Repeat fellowships:

- Individuals who have previously participated in the fellowship program through NISE Network or Arizona State University are eligible to participate under one of two circumstances: If they are now employed at a different organization and will undertake a new project; or if they apply as a secondary team member with another person from their organization who has not previously participated in the program.
- If someone else from your organization has participated in the past, you may apply as long as you plan to develop a new project or take on a new phase of work for a previous project. We recommend connecting with the colleague who previously participated, if possible, to prepare your application.

APPLICATION

The online application can be found here:

<https://forms.gle/CVPozd1ajogBZ8oQ9>

The application is in Google Forms. The application questions are provided below so you can review them and prepare your responses prior to filling out the online form. We recommend working on your responses to the application questions in a word processing program, then pasting them into the online form when you are ready to submit. You will receive an automated confirmation when your application is submitted.

These materials are offered for planning purposes only. You must apply through the online application form.

Sustainability Fellowship applications are due March 15, 2021.

Application questions

Contact information

Lead applicant (required)

First name:

Last name:

Job title:

Email address:

Phone number, including area code:

Additional applicant (optional)

First name:

Last name:

Job title:

Email address:

Phone number, including area code:

Institution information

Institution name:

Address line 1:

Address line 2:

City/town:

State:

Zip code:

Institution website:

Which best describes your organization? Please choose one option.

- Science museum or science center
- Children's museum or youth museum
- Natural history or world cultures museum
- Planetarium
- Zoo or aquarium
- Arboretum or botanical garden
- Nature center
- Art museum
- History museum or historic site
- Other

Is there anything else you'd like to say about your organization? (Limit 200 words)

What is the approximate annual operating budget of your museum or organization?

- under \$250,000
- \$250,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1 million
- \$1 - \$2.5 million
- \$2.5 - \$6.5 million
- over \$6.5 million

Is there anything you'd like to say about your annual operating budget? (Limit 200 words)

Please categorize your organization's location.

- Urban - large city (> 250,000 people)
- Urban - mid-sized city (100,000 - 250,000 people)
- Urban - small city (< 100,000 people)
- Suburban (outside a city)
- Rural (in the countryside)

How many visitors does your organization typically reach each year at your facility (i.e., in years not affected by the pandemic)? Please enter numbers only. If you do not serve on-site visitors at your facility, please enter zero.

How many visitors does your organization typically reach each year at locations outside your facility (i.e., in years not affected by the pandemic)? Please enter numbers only. If you do not serve off-site visitors or do not have an estimate for the number of people served annually, please enter zero.

Interest in the Sustainability Fellowship program

Please briefly explain why you and your organization are interested in the Sustainability Fellowship. What do you hope to achieve in your museum and/or community through your participation in the program? * (Limit 200 words)

What previous experience do you and your organization have with sustainability? How will your participation in this program build on your prior work? (Please note that all levels of experience are equally welcome in the program.) * (Limit 200 words)

How will your organization support your work during the program? How will your organization be able to continue sustainability related work after the program is completed? * (Limit: 200 words)

Is there anything else you would like to let us know about yourself, your organization, or your application? (Limit 200 words)

Program dates

Please indicate which cohorts you can participate in. Please note that the general timeframe for each cohort is firm, but the exact dates might shift slightly.

Cohort D, May, 2021–November, 2021

The online workshop sessions for this cohort will take place on Wednesdays and Fridays, approximately May 19 - June 16, 2021.

YES - I can participate in this cohort

IF NEED BE - It is not my first choice, but I can participate in this cohort

NO - I cannot participate in this cohort

Cohort E, September, 2021–March, 2022

The online workshop sessions for this cohort will take place on Wednesdays and Fridays, approximately September 22 - October 20, 2021.

YES - I can participate in this cohort

IF NEED BE - It is not my first choice, but I can participate in this cohort

NO - I cannot participate in this cohort

Cohort F, January, 2022–July, 2022

The online workshop sessions for this cohort will take place on Wednesdays and Fridays, approximately January 12 - February 8

YES - I can participate in this cohort

IF NEED BE - It is not my first choice, but I can participate in this cohort

NO - I cannot participate in this cohort

Is there anything you would like to let us know about your availability or preferences for cohorts? (200-word limit)

Program requirement agreement

Participation

- If you are selected to participate in the program, you are expected to take part in the full range of activities for the program along with the others in your cohort. You will:
- Participate in the nine-session online professional development workshop;
- Participate in the online community of practice throughout the six-month fellowship, which will include asynchronous posting on an online collaboration platform;
- Participate in three 90-minute follow-up sessions held after the workshop;
- Develop a sustainability project at your museum that aligns with your organization's mission and priorities, as well as previous experience with sustainability;
- Receive \$1,500 in participant support, payable to your institution, for use at your discretion for staff time, materials, or other expenses;
- Submit an online report describing your project and your experience with the fellowship; and
- Optionally complete one or two brief online evaluation surveys and/or optionally participate in program research.

Do you agree to these terms?

Yes

No

Availability

If you are accepted into the program, you will be notified in early April, 2021, and required to confirm your participation by the end of April, 2021. We will try to accommodate cohort preferences to the extent possible. If you cannot participate in the cohort you are placed into, NISE Network may or may not be able to accommodate a date change. If we cannot accommodate a date change, you may be asked to cede your place to another participant. Do you agree to these terms?

Yes

No

Permissions

Do you have the necessary permission from your institution and/or your supervisor to participate in this program, including the project work at your museum? (Please note that the program is very flexible in terms of the project each organization takes on, and we understand that sometimes project plans have to change.)

Yes

No

Submit

Application complete

CREDIT AND DISCLAIMER



This program is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Grant Number MG-245910-OMS-20.



This program is a continuation of the Sustainability Fellowship program established through support from the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation as part of Arizona State University's Rob and Melani Walton Sustainability in Science and Technology Museums initiative.