

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Investigations of Pollinator Fitness

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0361

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0361

How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click **APPLY**.*

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations
- A copy of an abstract or reprint of an article

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

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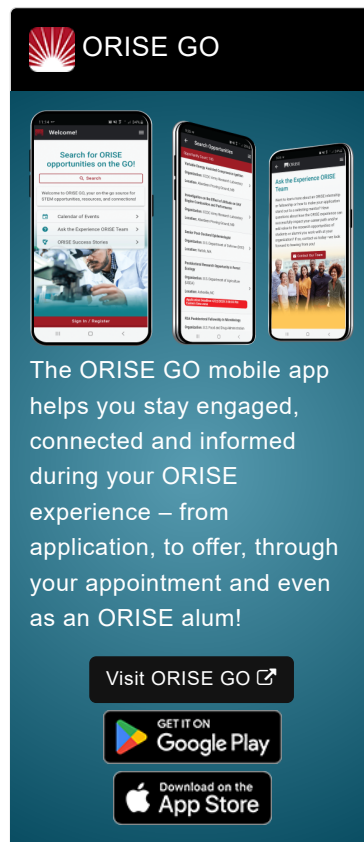
Application Deadline 10/2/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

ARS Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency with a mission to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table. ARS will deliver cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation's agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. The vision of the agency is to provide global leadership in agricultural discoveries through scientific excellence.

Research Project: This project focuses on how heat and hypoxia may influence pollinator physiology and ecology. You will help in hands-on research that examines native bee fitness and performance as a pollinator. Specifically, we will be examining the flight endurance of *Osmia* bees using Flyte Mills. These instruments quantify the distance bees can fly and will help characterize how well bees can perform following growth and development under various abiotic circumstances. This project will involve live bees (not honey bees), so you will need to be comfortable observing,



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handling, and caring for the larvae, pupae, and adult stages of bees. Learning outcomes will center on aspects of bee biology as they relate to heat, hypoxia, and reduced ambient air pressure. Further training will involve sophisticated approaches to remote sensing data acquisition, analytical approaches, and presentation of research findings at entomological conferences.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will have the opportunity to learn to:

- Discuss how heat, hypoxia, and reduced ambient air pressure affect native bee physiology, development, fitness, and pollination performance.
- Detail *Osmia* bee biology across larval, pupal, and adult life stages.
- Complete the observing, handling, and caring for live native bees in a research setting.
- Measure bee flight endurance and performance using Flyte Mills, including quantifying flight distance under different developmental and environmental conditions.
- Design and conduct experiments that evaluate the effects of abiotic stressors on pollinator performance.
- Collect, organize, and analyze behavioral and physiological research data.
- Use methods for remote-sensing data acquisition and how environmental data can support ecological research.
- Develop analytical and scientific-communication skills through interpretation of results and presentation of findings at entomological conferences.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Shawn Steffan (shawn.steffan@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: September 2026. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year, but may be renewed upon recommendation of ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and ARS. Participants do not become employees of USDA, ARS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is

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required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.ARS.Midwest@ornl.gov and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should have received a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past two years.

Stipend \$5,800.00 – \$6,000.00 Monthly

Point of Contact [Michele](#)

- Eligibility**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- Requirements**
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 24 month(s).
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Earth and Geosciences** ([3](#) )
 - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([2](#) )
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([7](#) )
 - **Mathematics and Statistics** ([4](#) )