**Opportunity Title:** USGS Fellowship Assessing the Role of Algal Blooms on the Fate and Transport of PFAS
**Opportunity Reference Code:** DOI-USGS-2026-79

**Organization** U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)

**Reference Code** DOI-USGS-2026-79

**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. At least one recommendation must be submitted in order for the mentor to view your application.

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

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**Application Deadline** 1/29/2027 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

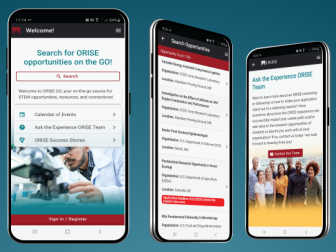
**Description** ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis and applications may close before the deadline.**

**USGS Office/Lab and Location:** A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) located in Boulder, Colorado.

The USGS mission is to monitor, analyze, and predict current and evolving dynamics of complex human and natural Earth-system interactions and to deliver actionable intelligence at scales and timeframes relevant to decision makers. As the Nation's largest water, earth, and biological science and civilian mapping agency, USGS collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides science about natural resource conditions, issues, and problems.

The USGS programs supporting this research—the Water Mission Area National Water Quality Program and the Ecosystems Mission Area Toxic Substances Hydrology Program— focus on supporting national-scale reconnaissance and prediction of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), harmful algal blooms (HABs), and associated toxins. Program goals emphasize targeted research and development to create advanced laboratory methods for detecting and documenting these emerging toxic threats. The programs also aim to advance understanding of the processes governing contaminant transport, persistence, natural attenuation, and geochemical transformation. Together, these efforts strengthen the scientific basis for forecasting the development, duration, and decline of emerging contaminants across environmental matrices to improve prediction and management.

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**Research Project:** Microorganisms play an important role in the fate and transport of environmental contaminants through processes such as degradation, sorption, motility, and life-cycle dynamics. This fellowship will investigate how microbiological processes influence the environmental behavior of HABs and PFAS by identifying and quantifying the mechanisms through which harmful algal species govern sorption, release, and transformation of PFAS in aquatic systems. You will have the opportunity to develop laboratory methods to characterize biological drivers that shape contaminant movement, retention, bioavailability, and exposure within phytoplanktonic and benthic algal communities. This training provides exposure to interdisciplinary scientific approaches required to provide Federal, Tribal, and State partners with the data and tools needed for evidence-based decision making and natural-resource management.

**Learning Objectives:** This fellowship provides a unique educational opportunity where you will:

- Collaborate with a supportive scientific community of interdisciplinary researchers across the USGS Ecosystem and Water Mission Areas.
- Design and implement laboratory experiments and apply advanced molecular biology and bioinformatics approaches to evaluate how environmental stressors influence contaminant fate with mentor guidance.
- Gain hands-on experience integrating molecular technologies with microbial ecology and environmental chemistry.
- Receive training on methods used to produce holistic ecological assessments such as field observation, laboratory experimentation, and computational analysis.
- Strengthen scientific communication skills through the dissemination of research findings related to contaminant transport, ecosystem health, and decision-support frameworks for resource managers.

**Mentor:** The mentor for this opportunity is Jennifer Underwood (jcunder@usgs.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: March 1, 2027.** 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 DOI and is contingent on the availability of funds.

**Level of Participation:** The appointment is full time.

**Participant Stipend:** Stipend rates may vary based on numerous factors, including opportunity, location, education, and experience. If you are interviewed, you can inquire about the exact stipend rate at that time and if selected, your appointment offer will include the monthly stipend rate.

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

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and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) 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 USGS. Participants do not become employees of USGS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

**Questions:** If you have questions about the application process please email USGS@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a doctoral degree in one of the relevant fields.

**Stipend** $98,811.88 – $107,128.71 Yearly

**Point of Contact** Rachel

**Eligibility Requirements**

- **Citizenship:** LPR or U.S. Citizen
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** (3 👁)
  - **Engineering** (1 👁)
  - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (1 👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (7 👁)