

**Opportunity Title:** Social Science Research Support at EPA

**Opportunity Reference Code:** EPA-SSP-0009-10

**Organization** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**Reference Code** EPA-SSP-0009-10

**How to Apply**


- Submit application and supporting documents by clicking on Apply Now button.
- For more information, contact [EPAjobs@orau.org](mailto:EPAjobs@orau.org). Do not contact EPA directly.


**Description** The EPA Environmental Research and Business Support Program has an immediate opening for an EPA Social Science Research Support position with the Office of Research and Development at the EPA's facility in Duluth, Minnesota.

The Office of Research and Development at the EPA supports high-quality research to improve the scientific basis for decisions on national environmental issues and help EPA achieve its environmental goals. Research is conducted in a broad range of environmental areas by scientists in EPA laboratories and at universities across the country.

The National Health Effects and Environmental Research Laboratory (NHEERL) is responsible for scientific research on the effects of contaminants and environmental stressors on human health and ecosystem integrity. The impact of the Laboratory's efforts can be felt far beyond the EPA as our research enables state and local governments to implement effective environmental programs. NHEERL also collaborates with governments and organizations on issues of environmental importance. NHEERL's Mid-Continent Ecology Division (MED) in Duluth MN conducts research through the Sustainable and Healthy Communities (SHC) Program to help communities make decisions that lead to a more sustainable society and environment.



The selected candidate shall assist in the provision of data collection, transcription, and qualitative analysis services to support social science research. The social science research conducted at MED utilizes case study methods that apply both theory-testing and theory-building approaches. Data collection methods document the behavior and decisions of different stakeholder groups through participant observation, document analysis, and social media mining. The research goal is to understand the decision-making process and how context shapes behavior and preferences related to the environment. He/she will also have the opportunity to learn about and contribute to environmental decision-making for a real-world problem revolving around ecological outcomes and socioeconomic benefits of restoration and redevelopment of an urban river through a study of how actors navigate the process. The selected candidate shall work with other members of MED's Sustainable and Healthy Communities team to conduct


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participatory community research.

**Responsibilities include but are not limited to:**

- Attending meetings, preparing meeting and/or interview transcripts,
- Coding and analyzing interview data, and
- Assisting in background research, writing, and dissemination of results.

**Data collection and analysis responsibilities shall include:**

- Assisting a multi-disciplinary research team with field research, literature reviews, data management, and qualitative analysis,
- Learning and applying concepts to code and categorize data, analyze transcripts, notes, and other documents (i.e., planning documents, grant applications, work plans, etc.), and
- Performing analysis which may include any part of the research process: initial analysis, recognition of emerging themes, maintenance of data source's voice or intent, and background literature reviews.

**Communications-related responsibilities shall include:**

- Interacting with other members of the development team, as well as EPA scientists, and
- Co-authoring poster presentations for scientific conferences.

**Location:** This job will be located at EPA's facility in Duluth, Minnesota.

**Salary:** Selected applicants will become temporary employees of ORAU and will receive an hourly wage of \$24.82 for hours worked.

**Hours:** Full time.

**Travel:** Travel related to this position will be local, and mostly limited to the City of Duluth, MN.

**Expected Start Date:** The position is full time and expected to begin in September 2017. The selected applicant will be a temporary employee of ORAU working as a contractor to EPA. The contract period is through May 14, 2018. EPA may elect to renew the contract for an additional two (2) 12-month optional periods.

**Working Conditions:** The selected candidate shall be supervised by a mentor who will provide day-to-day direction, as well as coach, advise and counsel the student, and review the student contractor's work.

This position will involve both work in an administrative and other indoor settings. The work environment involves everyday risks or

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discomforts that require normal safety precautions typical of places of places such as offices, meeting or training rooms, or commercial vehicles.

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**Qualifications**    **Eligible applicants must:**

- Be at least 18 years of age and
- Have earned at least a Bachelor's Degree in anthropology, geography, environmental education, urban studies, urban planning, sociology, public health, human dimensions of natural resources, peace studies, or a related field of study and have completed at least 1 year of coursework and research towards a Master of Science (or equivalent) degree within the last 24 months and
- Be a citizen of the United States of America or a Legal Permanent Resident.






*EPA ORD employees, their spouses, and children are not eligible to participate in this program.*

**Required Knowledge, Skills, Work Experience, and Education**

The applicant shall have:

- Demonstrated experience with qualitative social science research, inferential studies of human behavior, or evaluation methods used in education or public health through coursework, employment, or projects;
- Experience conducting research on one of the following topics: community development, outdoor recreation, participatory resource management, environmental perception, and/or social dimensions of place attachment;
- Experience with systems-thinking approaches to problem-solving;
- Demonstrated organizational skills and ability to work independently, as well as have experience working in teams; and
- Strong written, oral and electronic communication skills.

**Eligibility Requirements**

- **Citizenship:** LPR or U.S. Citizen
- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree received within the last 24 month(s).
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Communications and Graphics Design** (1 )
  - **Earth and Geosciences** (21 )
  - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (14 )
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (45 )
  - **Other Non-Science & Engineering** (5 )

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◦ **Social and Behavioral Sciences** (28 👁)

**Affirmation** I certify that I am at least 18 years of age; a recent graduate with at least a Bachelor's Degree in anthropology, geography, environmental education, urban studies, urban planning, sociology, public health, human dimensions of natural resources, peace studies, or a related field of study, and have completed at least 1 year of coursework and research towards a Master of Science (or equivalent) degree within the last 24 months; a citizen or a Legal Permanent Resident of the United States of America; and not a current employee of EPA ORD or the spouse or child of an EPA ORD employee.

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