

Transdisciplinary Graduate Fellows Program (TGFP)

Request for Applications for the Inaugural Cohort, 2018-19

A funding and professional development opportunity for graduate students at Michigan State University

Description of TGFP

The MSU Center for Interdisciplinarity (C4I) is a research center that will advance interdisciplinary research and education at MSU while preparing the next generation of citizen leaders to address the most challenging questions of our time. A key part of the educational mission of C4I is to provide graduate students at MSU with cross-disciplinary training opportunities, and the TGFP is a key part of this mission. TGFP will provide teams of graduate students the opportunity to work with a community partner on a consequential problem while receiving training in transdisciplinary team research practice. By leveraging a community of practice involving university and community partners, TGFP aims to train future transdisciplinary research leaders.

As participants in TGFP, fellows will receive the following:

- A \$5,000 fellowship paid out in two installments – one at the beginning of the spring and one at the end of the summer of the fellowship period, January to August 2019
- Professional development in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, community engagement, and team science
- Networking with peers, leaders in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary practice, and community partners
- Support in producing outcomes that will have value for academic researchers and for the community partner

Fellows in TGFP are expected to:

- Participate in the TGFP intensive short course in early January 2019
- Attend and participate in twice monthly, seminar-style meeting that provides an opportunity for trouble-shooting and for professional development
- Collaboratively develop final projects and papers with one's teammates and community partner

Community Partners

The community partners for the 2018-19 TGFP are the 1) Arts Council of Greater Lansing (<http://lansingarts.org/>) and 2) the MidMichigan Medical Centers in Clare and Gladwin, Michigan.

- The team of fellows working with the Arts Council will examine the impacts of artistic/creative programming on local economic development.
- The team of fellows working with the MidMichigan Medical Centers will address issues related to opiate prescribing and use in the Clare and Gladwin communities.

Each community partner will work with a team of three fellows on the topic indicated above. Teams and community partners will work collaboratively to create a meaningful research plan for the topic area during the January 2019 training week.

Selection Criteria

We are seeking MSU graduate students with a strong interest in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and a desire collaborate with community partners to make a positive difference for the mid-Michigan area. Successful applicants will have experience working across disciplines and will be able to demonstrate an aptitude for teamwork.

The selection committee will comprise the C4I leadership, the community partners, and a member of the C4I internal advisory board. Each team will consist of three graduate students, at least one of whom will be a graduate student in the College of Arts & Letters. Selection criteria will include:

1. Preparedness to succeed in a transdisciplinary environment (i.e., an environment that involves both academic and non-academic partners)
2. Preparedness to succeed in a collaborative, team-based environment
3. Relevance of a fellowship experience to the applicant's professional goals
4. Relevance of a fellowship experience to the applicant's research agenda
5. Success in the applicant's graduate program
6. Applicability of the applicant's skills to the relevant partner project(s)

How to Apply

Students should apply directly to the program by submitting all application materials in a single pdf. The pdf must be attached to an email sent to C4I@msu.edu with the subject line, "Application for 2018-19 TGFP". (If the faculty reference would prefer to submit their letter directly, please have them send their letter to C4I@msu.edu as a pdf attachment and include the applicant's name in the Subject line.)

The application materials in the order they should appear in the pdf are as follows:

- A cover sheet including:
 - Title: "TGFP Application for 2018-19"
 - Your full name
 - Your graduate program title (and other graduate programs, if applicable)
 - Your year in graduate school during 2018-19
 - The name of your faculty advisor
 - The team(s) for which you wish to be considered
 - The name and affiliation of the faculty member writing the recommendation letter, along with their relationship to you
- A 1-page statement of intent that addresses the selection criteria above and describes your preparedness to work on the topic associated with the team for which you wish to be considered
- A letter of support from a faculty member. The letter should indicate:
 - Their academic relationship with you
 - Their opinion of your ability to contribute to a team-based, transdisciplinary project
 - Their assessment of your ability to work closely with a community partner
 - Any details that bear on an assessment of your application in light of the selection criteria mentioned above
- Your current CV

Deadline for all applications is November 1, 2018. Successful applicants will be notified by December 1, 2018.

If you have any questions about TGFP or C4I, please contact Michael O'Rourke at orourke51@msu.edu or 517-432-0751.