



G.E.M. Environmental NFP

Research Assistance Scholarship Program

Program Rules and Regulations

- The rules and regulations that follow were written to serve as the governing document for G.E.M. Environmental NFP's "GEM for STEM: Research Assistance Awards" as a part of our AmeriCorps Education Award program where participants can earn a \$2380 Segal Education Award upon the successful completion of 675 hours of direct service on an approved project that provides a tangible benefit to public lands including scientific surveys, invasive weed studies/ treatment, habitat restoration, erosion control/ mitigation, increasing recreation access, or other related type of project work. Projects may contain both an in office research and out of office field work component, but participants must spend a majority of their recorded hours on field work.
- Scholarship information, deadlines, and application forms for download will be posted on the company web site with a running list of scholarship recipients. <https://www.gemenvironmental.org/scholarship.html>
- This specific scholarship opportunity is intended for Undergraduate Students in their junior or senior year, and Graduate Students, who are working on research projects in support of their thesis.

There are 16 awards available for FY2021 ending September 31st. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis with reviews taking place the first week of March, June, and September. Award announcements will be made the second week of March, June, and September.
- Applicants must currently be enrolled in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics) related program offered by an accredited trade school, community college, or university in **Arizona** (or be enrolled in an online program while residing in Arizona); be able to furnish transcripts for the school of which they are currently enrolled; be considered "In Good Standing" with that school; have a GPA above 2.5; must be over the age of 18 or have signed permission by a legal guardian; have the legal right to work in the United State, and be able to pass a state and federal criminal history check.
- By submitting a signed application, the student agrees to present their findings at a high school, community college, or other forum as a lecturer/ presenter for one of the GEM for STEM educational experience programs. This opportunity is designed to offer the award recipient with public speaking experience in order to fortify the individual in preparation for their thesis defense or other symposium presentation(s) by providing a less aggressive forum to practice their presentation than the traditional thesis defense. By doing this we also hope to introduce high school and community college students to various scientific fields and inspire them to pursue an academic career in STEM by exposing them to aspiring scientists and their influential research. Additional travel expenses may be covered for Lecturers presenting at campuses located more than 25 miles from their residence, campus, or housing. Associated costs for background checks or fingerprint cards will be covered for approved applications. An individual may opt out of presenting their research by providing the Organization with a service of equal value. Send inquiries concerning program deviation to the Director of Scholarship at scholarships@gemenvironmental.org **before** submitting an application. GEM Environmental cannot guarantee concessions will be made for requests concerning program deviations.
- To be considered complete, applications must contain all required supplementary documentation to be eligible for review by the Scholarship Committee, this includes the Letter of Recommendation. **The Letter of Recommendation must be submitted directly to the Director of Scholarship by the academic or research advisor providing the recommendation.** As a part of

- the review process, the Director of Scholarship will contact the faculty member/ professor/ advisor to ensure the documents authenticity and validate the student's enrollment credentials. Letters of Recommendation can be sent to the Director of Scholarship at scholarships@gemenvironmental.org.
- If the applicant has provided all the required documentation listed on the scholarship application and complies with the requirements listed in the previous paragraphs, the project proposal and budget will then be forwarded to the committee for review.
 - As a part of the application, the student must provide a project proposal including a 4-7 page synopsis and 1-2 page budget request with justifications **explaining how the individual would use their budgeted funds** to purchase supplies, process samples, pay for lab or equipment time, travel expenses, etc. Budget requests should include accurate/ up to date pricing for all line items; inaccurate or inflated project costs will result in a proposal rejection. Budget line items must appear in and be addressed in the project proposal and be validated in the budget justification. [ie: The Banded Iron Formation (BIF) samples prepared by Sonoran Labs for the Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) will then be used to determine the percentage of iron present in the formation thought to have originated from chemical participants settling to the bottom of a shallow sea located in the back arc basin of a Proterozoic subduction zone (Welsh 2013).]
 - Submissions will only be accepted if written as a concise, formal research proposal following the normal progression of the scientific method in which the applicant makes a formal request for funding to the GEM Environmental Scholarship Committee. Acceptable Submissions, at a minimum, shall include an abstract, introduction, hypothesis, statement of objectives, variables, methodology, data (if applicable), results/ or expected results, references, and appendices (including the budget and budget justifications).
 - The number of awards are determined by the organization's annual AmeriCorps subgrantee application with The Corps Network's Education Award Program; Approved applicants must enroll as AmeriCorps State Members with GEM Environmental, participant in field work on their approved project, and adhere to AmeriCorps rules of behavior and prohibited activities.
 - A volunteer committee will be assembled to read and provide input on submission essays. The committee will review and vote to approve essays based purely on their adherence to proposal rules and guidelines, grammar, budget assessment, feasibility, and potential impact.
 - ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and/ or social connection will not be evaluated and will have no effect in the acceptance of any one individual. Scholarships are awarded purely on the applicant's merit and their desire to contribute to their field.
 - The selection committee will be made up of three organization officers or directors and four additional volunteers. The organization will require that two of the volunteers hold at least a bachelor's degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics related field and be willing to spend the adequate time necessary to thoroughly evaluate all applications they receive. Before the applications are passed on to the committee, an organization officer or director not serving on the committee will evaluate the application for minimum qualifications. Once an application is determined to qualify, the non-committee director, officer, or volunteer will pass approved applications to the committee for review. The Scholarship Committee will evaluate and grade essays using pre-designed rubric assessing the applicant's adherence to proposal rules and guidelines, grammar, budget assessment, feasibility, and potential impact. Once the review of approved applications is complete, proposals will be voted on by all committee members and need at least a five-sevenths vote (5 of 7 members) to receive funding. Upon completion of voting, the non-committee director or officer will announce which applicants have been approved to receive funding. The Director of Scholarship will then contact the award recipients and post the names of recipients on the Organizations website for public viewing.
 - A call for volunteers to serve as committee members will take place 1 month before the scholarship

- application deadline. If volunteer roles are not filled by the application deadline, absentee volunteer tasks and roles will be absorbed by officers/ directors and applications will require at least a simple majority to be approved for funding depending on the number of committee members present.
- Relatives of organizational representatives and substantial contributors will be allowed to submit applications to the scholarship program. To ensure an unbiased selection from the pool of applicants, the organization has implemented a strategy to remove selection bias of voting committee members by implementing the following policy:
 - Family members, teachers, and those with close relations of applicants are not allowed to serve as scholarship committee members. Individuals that violate this policy may be subject to removal from the organization and/or legal ramification.
 - Once an application has been determined to meet minimum qualification requirements and the application has been approved by a committee vote, the applicant will have passed all necessary requirements to be transferred funds; at which point, the individual will be held “in good faith” to use the money at their own discretion.
 - **Before project work may began, the recipient is required to submit a response to our online demographic survey.** Information from the demographic survey will be used for internal reporting and to evaluate our scholarship programs; however, we will not publicly release any personal information collected from the survey or the applications other than the recipient’s name and school as provided in the initial application, without first obtaining permission. The names of award recipients and their respective schools will be listed on the Scholarships Page of our Organizations’ website. Our website will also depict unassociated demographic information that does not identify the individual recipients, only the demographics that our organization serves.
 - Participants are requested to submit a response to be our Organizations’ blog, “Scholarship Success Spotlight,” where we feature inspirational personal stories and the academic achievements of program participants on our website and across social media.
 - Make sure to enter a current mailing address, telephone number, and email on your application. If you are selected to receive an award, the award and check will be sent to the address listed on the application and correspondence will be initiated via the supplied email. **If we cannot reach you to verify your contact information, your award will be rescinded.**
 - The Organization reserves the right to amend these rules at any time and it is the applicant’s responsibility to adhere to any updates or changes in policy. The most current form of the scholarship rules and regulations will be available on the Organizations webpage for viewing and download.
 - Upon submitting an application, the applicant explicitly agrees to release the use of their name and likeness to the Organization for use with any future promotional material and they agree to waive the right to take legal action against G.E.M. Environmental NFP, its Directors, Officers, affiliates, employees, volunteers, contractors, or subsidiaries for the use of their name or likeness in any such Organization related business.
 - All program participants, voluntary or paid, are required to adhere to the Organizations Code of Conduct. Any violations of the policies governing the Organizations’ ethics may result in award withdraw/ a rescinded award, and/or legal ramifications. The Code of Conduct Policy is available for download at the bottom our Organizations “About Us” page.

If you have any questions or concerns, please send your inquiry to:

Director of Scholarship

Scholarships@gemenvironmental.org