



THE COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

Request for Proposals, 2024-2025

Submission Deadline: November 3, 2023

The Center for Collaborative Conservation (CCC) at Colorado State University (CSU) is seeking applicants for our upcoming Collaborative Conservation Fellows Program, Cohort 14.

The CCC was established in CSU's Warner College of Natural Resources in 2008 to inform, promote, and support collaboration on meaningful conservation issues across Colorado, the Western United States, and the world.

"Collaboration is when people with a stake in a problem join forces, pool information, knock heads, construct alternative solutions, and forge an agreement." Barbara Gray, author of Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems

The Collaborative Conservation Fellows Program (Fellows Program) provides funding, training, and a community of practice for a cohort of students, practitioners, and faculty to plan and implement experiential, on-the-ground projects. During the program, Fellows learn and apply the practices that are the hallmark of successful collaborative conservation. In addition to formal learning opportunities and monetary support for work, past Fellows report that the program is also an enjoyable, meaningful, and impactful experience.

Collaborative conservation goes beyond defining conservation success in ecological terms. It takes a 'bottom-up' approach that accounts for locally defined priorities and local perspectives. It seeks to include voices that are often underrepresented or marginalized in decision-making processes and create new, innovative opportunities to collaboratively solve problems. We seek to increase the diversity and representation of our Fellows and increase collaborative research, education, and practice opportunities for underserved communities.

Three virtual information sessions will be held on [9/27 \(9:00-10:00 am\)](#), [9/29 \(12-1 pm\)](#), and [10/5 \(5-6 pm\)](#). Allison Brody, CCC's Associate Director of Learning, will be available throughout September and October to support the proposal preparation process by answering questions about project ideas,

proposal format and content, and address other questions and concerns. Schedule a meeting [here](#) or contact allison.brody@colostate.edu.

ABOUT THE FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Collaborative Conservation Fellows Program is for those interested in conservation at any stage of their careers - including graduate students, mid-career professionals, academics, or experienced practitioners. As highlighted in our [10-year Review](#), the Fellows Program challenges and facilitates students, faculty, and practitioners to propose projects that will work in collaborative ways with local communities to help build livelihoods and conserve their landscapes.

The Fellows Program is designed to build the capacity of Fellows as collaborative conservation leaders. We do this by providing monetary awards to support experiential learning through on-the-ground projects, creating a learning community with current and past Fellows, and by providing training and mentoring.

Training topics include exploring the foundations of collaborative conservation; skills to build consensus, facilitate decision-making, and create action plans; and tools for evaluating and measuring impact.

Fellows projects can involve a team of Fellows or an individual Fellow, and projects will take place from March 2024-August 2025. Since 2008 we have accepted proposals for a variety of projects, including:

- Proposing to have a diverse group of stakeholders work together to do on-the-ground conservation efforts, such as a restoration project, conservation research, social science research, citizen science, or education.
- A project designed to build capacity of a group of stakeholders to work together to accomplish conservation efforts, such as training, planning, creating tools (such as an app, social network map, photovoice, etc.), gathering and sharing information, outreach, or other support activities.
- Proposing to convene a diverse group of organizations, agencies, and other stakeholders to support collaborative conservation efforts.

Our [Publications](#) page and the [10-year Review](#) of the Fellows program lists some of the results and a more complete view of what Fellows have done, and this [Map](#) shows where they have worked.

We are also piloting a mentoring component for Cohort 14, which will support participating Fellows in their personal and professional growth. More information will be available during spring 2024.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

Individuals or teams representing organizations or existing collaboratives may apply. We accept project proposals from:

- Practitioners: non-CSU people who use, own, or manage natural resources as individuals (e.g., landowners, ranchers, foresters, farmers) or who work professionally as part of Native Nations, the private sector, non-profits, government and state agencies, and other entities.
- CSU graduate students from all colleges and departments. Graduate students should be officially admitted and registered at CSU.
- Faculty, research scientists, post docs, and extension agents from all colleges and departments.

The CCC is strongly committed to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) efforts of Warner College of Natural Resources. The Fellows Program seeks to increase the diversity and representation of our Fellows to provide deeper cultural learning among the cohort, and increase collaborative research, education, and practice opportunities for underserved communities. In addition, we recognize that COVID-19 has disproportionately affected people and communities of color, individuals with disabilities/chronic illness, and those with limited financial resources. As such, we encourage applications from individuals who identify as belonging to an underrepresented group, and/or projects that focus on underserved or marginalized communities.

HOW TO BECOME A FELLOW

Those interested in becoming a Fellow should submit a proposal by November 3, 2023. Leading up to this date, applicants will have multiple opportunities to learn what is likely to be successful, have their questions about the project or overall goals of the program answered, and gain additional ideas and preliminary feedback. Interested applicants should learn more through scheduled virtual Information Sessions and direct outreach to CCC's Associate Director of Learning, Allison Brody (allison.brody@colostate.edu) (schedule a meeting [here](#)).

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Project proposal submitted	By November 3, 2023
Review Committee selects finalists	January 15, 2024
Travel and other logistical needs to attend Fellows Training Retreat in April	January 15-April, 2024
Fellowship begins with orientation meeting	March 2024

Submit a Project Proposal

[Foundations for Practicing Collaboration Conservation: a Theoretical Framework & the CC Fellows Learning Modules](#)

[Partnership Levels of Engagement](#)

[Project Proposal Guidelines](#)

[Project Proposal Review Criteria](#)

[Budget Template](#)

[FAQ's](#)

Successful project proposals will describe:

- How you, your teammates, and your project will benefit from participating in this program. How poised are you in your personal and professional growth to be able to take advantage of this learning cohort?
- The ways in which your project exemplifies collaborative conservation work.
- How stakeholders/community members are either currently or anticipated to participate in the project (for example, [Partnership Levels of Engagement](#)).
- The types of conservation or community issues that your project will address, and how.
- The capacity of the project team to not only implement the project, but also provide an impactful experience for the Fellow(s) involved.

- How each member of the project team will contribute to the project and fulfill the expectations of the Fellows Program.
- A draft budget (see [budget template](#)).

The review committee will use these criteria to assess and rate project proposals (see also [Project Proposal Review Criteria](#)). We will have a preference for projects that have some connection with CSU – if you don't yet have one, we encourage you to reach out to establish one. This could be accomplished by emailing faculty or extension agents or connecting with CSU Centers.

Project proposals should be submitted to allison.brody@colostate.edu, and will be accepted through November 3, 2023. Successful finalists will be informed by January 15, 2024, and the Fellowship will begin with an orientation in March 2024.

WHAT TO EXPECT AS A FELLOW

The CC Fellows Program, Cohort 14, will take place from March 2024 through August 2025.

Cohort 14 Fellows (Project Teams or Individuals) must attend an in-person Training Retreat (April 2024). Following this retreat, each Fellow (Project Team or Individual) will build on their proposal by developing a project plan (including goals, objectives, timeline, stakeholder analysis, theory of change, budget, and how the project results will be disseminated to communities and stakeholders). This will be an iterative process with CCC staff, ensuring the project maximizes opportunities for collaboration, community engagement, and Fellows' learning. Final project plans will be submitted by May 31, 2024.

CCC Fellows are expected to participate in the in-person training retreat as well as virtual cohort trainings held throughout the course of the Fellowship. Training Learning Modules are constructed from [Foundations for Practicing Collaborative Conservation: a Theoretical Framework & the CC Fellows Learning Modules](#). We recognize that the practice of collaborative conservation is situationally responsive, and there is no one way to do it. Rather, these Modules are meant to help each individual develop their philosophy and approach based on key sets of principles, processes, and techniques. We seek to embed research in practice and equip CC Fellows with the knowledge and skills to successfully practice collaborative conservation.

Fellows (Project Teams and Individuals) will be expected to submit triannual reports that include structured reflections about their project, the collaborative process, and the overall experience with the Fellows Program.

As the project implementation phase concludes, Fellows submit a Final Report and produce one or more Final Products. Examples of Final Products include conference presentations, publishable manuscripts, models, conference posters, thesis or dissertation chapters, training guides, apps, handbooks, media products, policy briefs, strategic plans, recommendations for policy makers, workshop agendas and notes, and digital and non-digital maps. Other project ideas might be determined by the needs of the community.

NOTE: Final Products should acknowledge support from the Center for Collaborative Conservation. The CCC will use information from Final Products as well as information included in reports (NOT your actual project data) in future journal articles, social media posts, regional newsletters, internal reports, and for fund-raising. By accepting a CCC Fellowship, you will be giving us permission to use your Fellows' products and reports for these purposes. Your acceptance of the award also constitutes agreement to post your final products and your Fellows' Project Report on the CCC website (if your report contains sensitive information that should not be shared with the public, we will honor this).

FELLOWS FUNDING

In general, Fellowship awards range from \$8,000-\$12,000 per Fellow, with a cap of \$20,000 for a Team application each year. This funding can be used for a variety of purposes, including stipends, salaries, equipment, services, and travel.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

PROJECT TEAMS

By definition, collaborative conservation projects require the work of a team. However, for some Fellows, applying as an individual is the best fit, and their project team are not explicitly included in the program. For others, it will work best for the entire project team to participate in the Fellows Program. Therefore, we accept Pitches from both individuals and project teams.

For a team project, we suggest that each team include a **Project Sponsor**, who helps to guide the process, and one or more **Fellows** who do much of the project work. Project Teams might also include **Additional Team Members** who can provide expertise, a connection to the community, or other support. Examples of some of the different ways a project team might be constructed include:

- a CSU graduate student (Fellow) and their major professor or faculty advisor (Project Sponsor)
- a CSU faculty member (Project Sponsor), a graduate student (Fellow), and a practitioner (Fellow)
- A practitioner (Project Sponsor), a graduate student (Fellow), and a CSU faculty member (additional team member)

The differences in these team roles are described in more detail in Table 1.

Table 1. Suggested Team Roles

Project Sponsor	Fellow	Additional Team Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Serves as a guide, project manager, and mentor.▪ Has a stake in the project, the Fellow, and the outcomes.▪ Often (but not necessarily) will have previous experience with collaborative conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Coordinates and implements one or more aspects of the project.▪ Gains skills and experience in leadership, collaboration, and management of a conservation project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provides expertise or connection to community.▪ Supports implementation of one or more aspects of the project.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

Whether participating as an individual or a member of a project team, there are many benefits to being part of the Fellows Program. As described in Table 2, these include funding, the opportunity to add to your knowledge and skills, add to your network, and be part of a community of practice.

Table 2. Benefits of Participating

Project Sponsor	Fellow	Additional Team Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain funding, support, and other resources to carry out a meaningful project in collaborative conservation. ▪ Sharpen professional skills in collaborative conservation. ▪ Sharpen skills as a project manager and a mentor. ▪ Contribute to the field of collaborative conservation. ▪ Join a community of practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain funding and support to work on a meaningful project that will contribute to the field of collaborative conservation. ▪ Build professional skills in collaborative conservation. ▪ Grow leadership skills. ▪ Build a network for future jobs and promotions. ▪ Develop cultural competencies and awareness. ▪ Be part of a supportive cohort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain funding, support, and other resources to carry out a meaningful project in collaborative conservation. ▪ Sharpen professional skills in collaborative conservation. ▪ Sharpen skills as a mentor. ▪ Contribute to the field of collaborative conservation. ▪ Join a community of practice.

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

The Fellows Program is a formal program and includes specific expectations for each role. These are described in Table 3.

Table 3 Expectations for Each Role

Activity	Project Sponsor	Fellow	Additional Team Member
Training Retreat (2.5 days, April 2024)	R	R	V
Cohort Trainings (six 3-hour trainings)	V	R	V
Triannual Reports	R	R	R
Final Report	R	R	R
Final Product	R	R	R
Final Program Evaluation (August 2025)	R	R	R

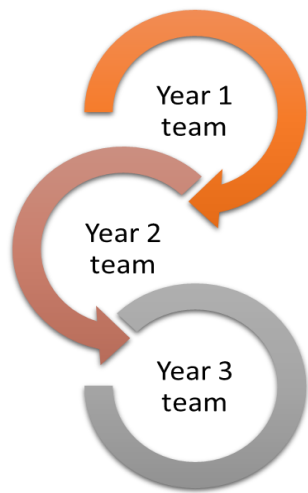
Key: “R” = required; “V” = voluntary; “D” = depends on circumstances

****NOTE: A major benefit of the CCC Fellows Program is for the Fellows to be part of a cohort. This cohort model requires that Fellows must attend all meetings and training.** Failure to do so without approval will result in expulsion from the program and loss of funds.

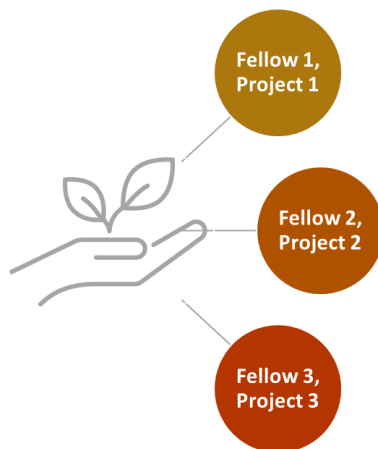
PROJECT TYPES

The Fellows Program seeks to create long-term impacts by building collaborative capacity in sustainable ways. We are especially interested in proposals that include sustained collaborative engagement that would take place over the course of multiple years (Model 1), or that involve multiple Fellows working on different aspects of an issue (Model 2). We are also interested in stand-alone collaborative conservation projects which can be completed in 18 months by an individual or small team (Model 3). All proposed projects should seek innovative and locally driven solutions to conservation problems.

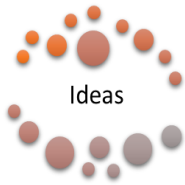
Multi-year project teams (Model 1) will submit interim reports each year, send team members to the Training Retreat each year, and submit updated project plans each year. This will be an iterative process with CCC staff, who will work with the Project Sponsor to review the project and decide if course corrections or other changes are warranted.



Model 1, the multi-year project. One or more Fellows participate in the first year. Then a different team works on the same project in Year 2, and again in Year 3. For example, a practitioner with established relationships with a community in Tanzania recruits a team (CSU faculty and graduate student) for year 1. In year 2, the same project sponsor and CSU faculty brings on a different graduate student to carry on the project, then again in Year 3. In this way, the project (in collaboration with community) receives three or more years of funding and support, adding value (especially to the project sponsor and faculty) and increasing the opportunity for conservation impact.



Model 2, several Fellows work on different aspects of a single issue or topic area. For example: Project 1 is designed to identify the drivers of social conflict over wolf reintroduction; Project 2 works with landowners and producers to understand the potential impacts of wolf-livestock depredation to inform policy; and Project 3 identifies the factors that enable successful collaborative conflict-prevention programs around wolf reintroduction. Each Project would have its own budget, Fellow or Fellow team, and Project Plan.



Graduate student,
practitioner, faculty member,
or team develop project idea



Model 3, stand-alone project completed by an individual Fellow or team. For example, a practitioner recruits a team (graduate student and CSU faculty) to address wildlife conflict issues affecting communities in southern India by holding focus groups and strategic planning sessions.

Questions? Please contact Allison Brody, CCC Associate Director of Learning,
allison.brody@colostate.edu