Ph.D. Opportunities: Digital Tools in Urban Forestry

We are seeking three Ph.D. students to work on an exciting new National Science Foundation funded project investigating the role of digital tools on environmental justice in urban forests. Students will join a highly collaborative multi-institutional (U. of Utah, U. of Oregon, Texas Christian U., Texas State U., and Cleveland State U.) team of faculty, students, and stakeholders (city governments, urban forestry professionals, non-profit organizations). We welcome applicants with a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and social equity. Underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

Required teamwork skills for all 3 Ph.D. positions

- Ability and willingness to work in highly collaborative settings
- Enthusiasm, timeliness, reliability
- Appreciation for diversity in science
- Experience and/or interest in mentoring

PhD Position One: Urban trees and particulate matter pollution

This student will contribute to research on urban trees and particulate matter pollution in three U.S. cities. The student will have the opportunity to couple ecosystem science measurements with principles from landscape planning and design to inform urban forest planning and policy. The student will work in the Ecosystems Laboratory (Head: Alexandra Ponette-González, Location: Natural History Museum of Utah) at the University of Utah beginning in Fall 2023. The position has three years of guaranteed research fellowship funding and is eligible for additional funding upon completion of qualifying exams. Applicants from underrepresented groups may be eligible for additional Diversity Fellowships offered by the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning.

Desired qualifications and skills

- Background in environmental science or related field such as physical geography
- Experience with field- and lab-based methodologies
- Experience using analytical equipment
- Experience with statistical data analysis and data management
- Experience with a scripting language (e.g., R, Python, MATLAB)
- Strong interpersonal and written communication skills
- A creative mindset and approach to research
- Interest in the application of environmental science to urban planning questions

If you are interested in this position, submit a ½ page letter describing how you fit the position along with a current CV to Alexandra Ponette-González (alexandra@unt.edu). Note that the position is situated in the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning (https://plan.cap.utah.edu). The application deadline for the Ph.D. in Metropolitan Planning, Policy, and Design program is January 10, 2023.
PhD Position Two: Urban forest models and equity outcomes

This student will work on improving our understanding of the role of digital tools in addressing equity goals. The student will integrate empirical and modeling approaches to develop prioritization schemes for tree planting and/or conservation. The student will work in the Ecosystems Laboratory (Head: Alexandra Ponette-González, Location: Natural History Museum of Utah) at the University of Utah beginning in Fall 2023. The position has three years of guaranteed research fellowship funding and is eligible for additional funding upon completion of qualifying exams. Applicants from underrepresented groups may be eligible for additional Diversity Fellowships offered by the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning.

Desired qualifications and skills

- Experience with a scripting language (e.g., R, Python, MATLAB)
- Experience working with large and/or diverse datasets
- Experience with Geographic Information Systems and remotely sensed data
- Experience or interest in data visualization
- Strong interpersonal and written communication skills
- A creative mindset and approach to research

If you are interested in this position, submit a ½ page letter describing how you fit the position along with a current CV to Alexandra Ponette-González (alexandra@unt.edu). Note that the position is situated in the Department of City & Metropolitan Planning (https://plan.cap.utah.edu). The application deadline for the Ph.D. in Metropolitan Planning, Policy, and Design program is January 10, 2023.

PhD Position Three: Urban environmental governance and justice

This student will work on urban environmental governance and justice issues across multiple U.S. cities. Students with interests in urban policy, science and technology studies, political ecology, and related fields are encouraged to apply. Enthusiasm for conducting fieldwork and utilizing mixed, qualitative, quantitative, and geospatial methods is preferred. The student will work with Matt Fry in the Department of Geography at the University of Utah beginning in Fall 2023. The position has one year and two summers of guaranteed funding, with a second year of funding likely, and the potential for further teaching assistant positions in the Department of Geography.

Interested students should contact Matt Fry at: mfy@unt.edu. Note: the application deadline for the Department of Geography (www.geog.utah.edu) is December 11, 2022.

About the University of Utah

University of Utah is the state’s flagship university. It is R-1 and a member of the Association of American Universities and the PAC -12. The University is located in Salt Lake City, which offers high quality of life, a great public transit system, and easy access to hiking, biking, climbing, skiing and other outdoor activities.