



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • (360) 902-1800

April 2nd, 2026

ATTN: WSU and UW faculty and students in agricultural climate and conservation sciences
Re: Announcing Science-to-Policy Research Fellowship for Climate-Smart Agriculture

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) invites applications for the inaugural **Science-to-Policy Research Fellowship**, a highly selective and fully funded one-year opportunity for emerging scientists to apply cutting-edge agricultural greenhouse gas (GHG) research to real-world public policy and program design. This fellowship places a highly qualified PhD Candidate, Postdoctoral Scholar, or early career Research Associate at the center of Washington's efforts to accelerate climate-smart agriculture. The Fellow will help translate scientific evidence on soil carbon dynamics and agricultural GHG mitigation into state programs that directly support producers, agricultural viability, and ecosystem health.

The Fellow will work closely with WSDA program leadership to help implement Washington's **Climate-Smart Equipment Grant Program**, a \$4.6 million initiative designed to help farmers invest in equipment that reduces GHGs while improving soil health and farm resilience. This position offers a rare opportunity to operate at the science-policy interface, helping ensure that public investments in climate-smart agriculture are grounded in rigorous scientific evidence.

Fellowship Responsibilities

The Fellow will support WSDA in integrating the best available science into program implementation and future conservation practice development. Primary responsibilities include:

1. Program Development and Implementation
 - Develop programmatic guidelines, technical documentation, and rigorous review criteria for the Climate-Smart Farm Equipment Grant Program
 - Interpret GHG mitigation literature related to agricultural equipment and management practices
 - Respond to grower questions on identifying and synthesizing GHG literature for applications
2. Scientific Review of Applications
 - Review applications submitted under the program's Emerging Practices Track, where applicants must provide literature-based estimates of GHG reductions
 - Verify eligibility and calculate estimates submitted under the program's CPS Track using COMET-Planner and other approved GHG estimation tools
 - Evaluate the scientific credibility of submitted estimates and supporting citations
 - Provide written technical recommendations to WSDA staff regarding the plausibility and durability of claimed emissions reductions

3. Research and Synthesis

- Aggregate greenhouse gas reduction estimates across funded projects
- Analyze patterns and implications for agricultural climate mitigation
- Help identify emerging practices that may merit future development into NRCS Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) or incorporation into modeling platforms such as COMET-Farm

4. Knowledge Dissemination

- Produce summary reports and technical briefs translating program findings for scientific and policy audiences
- Contribute to publications, presentations, or white papers documenting lessons learned

The Fellow will work closely with WSDA staff while maintaining appropriate collaboration with their home academic institution. This is a remote position, with the occasional requirement to travel to Olympia as needed.

The desired term for this fellowship is June 2026 to May 2027.

Ideal Candidate Profile

Successful applicants will combine strong technical expertise with exceptional analytical, communication, and organizational skills. Ideal candidates will demonstrate:

- Strong working knowledge of soil carbon dynamics
- Familiarity with greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural systems
- Understanding of conservation practices and climate-smart agriculture
- Familiarity with USDA's NRCS CPS and COMET tools
- Ability to critically interpret and synthesize scientific literature
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Exceptional attention to detail
- Interest in applying scientific expertise to real-world policy and program implementation
- The highest degree of professionalism as required by a representative of two state agencies

Eligibility

Applicants must already be one of the following at Washington State University (WSU) or University of Washington (UW):

- PhD Candidates who have successfully completed qualifying exams
- Postdoctoral Scholars
- Research Associates or equivalent early-career research positions

Applicants should have training in fields such as:

- Soil science
- Rural sociology
- Agroecology
- Biogeochemistry
- Agricultural systems modeling
- Environmental science
- Climate science related to agriculture

Preference will be given to applicants who can integrate the fellowship into their ongoing research or dissertation work. WSDA strongly encourages Fellows to approach the program through a rigorous research lens, with the goal of producing peer-reviewed publications or other scholarly outputs documenting lessons learned.

Application Materials

WSU and UW applicants must submit a:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. One page letter of interest that:
 - Details the applicant's qualifications for the fellowship
 - Explains their interest in science-to-policy work in climate-smart agriculture
 - Describes potential integration with ongoing research and dissertation work, including intended research outputs and products
 - Confirms their post-qualifying-exam status (for PhD students only)
3. Letter of support from graduate advisor or supervisor that:
 - Confirms the applicant's eligibility
 - Details their qualifications
 - Indicates the advisor's willingness to support the applicant's participation in this 12-month fellowship through technical and research consultation and mentorship, and through collaboration with WSDA leadership as needed
4. Budget from graduate advisor or supervisor detailing complete costs of supporting the Fellow for 12-months, to be executed via Interagency Agreement (IAA) and not to exceed \$125,000

How to Apply

Complete applications should be submitted to WaSHI@agr.wa.gov by 5pm on May 15, 2026 with the subject line *WSDA Science-to-Policy Research Fellowship Application*.

For Questions and Comments

Email WaSHI@agr.wa.gov or attend an informal virtual office hour on April 10th from 11-12 PT:

Microsoft Teams meeting

Date: Fri 4/10/2026 at 11:00 AM PT

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/26748017001713?p=35U8NFaL19hn5tG1lv>

Meeting ID: 267 480 170 017 13

Passcode: wz6aY7oZ

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