

Our Programs

The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) offers an integrated program for collaborative and individual research focused on critical problems in socio-environmental science. All projects are initiated by a proposal to SESYNC. Unless otherwise noted, requests for proposals are issued twice each year with proposal submission deadlines of May 15 and October 15. Funding is determined on the basis of a review conducted by the SESYNC Scientific Review Committee in July and December.

All funded projects can be [found here](#). [1]

Prospective applicants for Pursuit and Workshop support are strongly encouraged to contact SESYNC by emailing research@sesync.org [2] to discuss potential ideas for synthetic research. Please allow sufficient time for these discussions, as we find that iteration with project leads prior to the final proposal can be very important in framing questions and developing an appropriate synthesis team and approach to problem-solving.

Collaborative Team-Based Research (Pursuits)

Synthesis research at SESYNC is conducted chiefly by interdisciplinary teams. Their projects are called Pursuits. Teams comprised of ~12-18 members participate in face-to-face meetings at our Center in Annapolis, Maryland. Pursuits generally last 1-2 years and involve 2-4 meetings of approximately 3-5 days each. The composition and number of participants in a Pursuit will vary depending upon the nature of the research problem and the expertise needed to address it. Virtually all teams are highly interdisciplinary, and we encourage the inclusion of individuals from outside of academia (e.g., governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations). SESYNC places priority on teams whose members have not had extensive prior collaborations with one another.

Individuals interested in Pursuits should examine the list of SESYNC research Themes (under development; available soon). Each description outlines a general research topic, identified by SESYNC through a community-driven process. Themes offer opportunities to study a variety of related research questions and many opportunities to develop actionable scientific outcomes, in addition to linkages with other similarly-funded projects. Those interested in submitting a Pursuit proposal to SESYNC should apply under one of these existing Themes.

That said, we recognize that there are many potential projects with great applicability to socio-environmental problems that fall outside of the portfolio of SESYNC Themes. Accordingly, SESYNC also offers opportunities for exciting and creative Pursuits that are not tied to an existing SESYNC Theme. These Pursuits may be proposed on any topic relevant to socio-environmental science. However, we place priority on those addressing a pressing need or with high potential to develop important results. Teams that can achieve their goals in approximately 18 months are especially of interest.

Proposals for all Pursuits should be submitted to meet one of the biannual deadlines.

Workshops

Workshops are single meetings of up to 30 participants that focus on a broad topic or a set of related topics. Workshops may summarize and/or synthesize the state of the topic and/or identify future directions that have the potential to lead to a larger synthesis effort. We are particularly interested in Workshops that bring together new combinations of individuals and disciplines.

Proposals for all Workshops should be submitted to meet one of the biannual deadlines.

Short Courses

Short Courses provide instruction and training on topics relevant to socio-environmental systems, the synthesis process, data management and analysis, or cyberinfrastructure tools. Short Courses are typically 3–10 days in duration, and they may either be offered directly by SESYNC experts or proposed and led by external experts.

Proposals for all Short Courses should be submitted to meet one of the biannual deadlines.

Postdoctoral Research

SESYNC supports its Postdoctoral Fellows through the coordination of research, outreach, and instructional opportunities, as well as a specialized professional development program to polish academic, communication, and teaching skills. Postdoctoral Fellows are in residence at our Annapolis Center for two years.

Current postdoctoral opportunities can be [found here](#). [3]

Graduate Student Research

SESYNC provides opportunities for pre-doctoral fellows to network across multiple scholarly disciplines and gain skills in conceptualizing socio-environmental systems and proposal writing—all leading to the opportunity to conduct original team-based socio-environmental synthesis research in SESYNC's unique learning environment. This program is administered separately.

Additional information can be [found here](#). [4]

SESYNC Fellowships for Established Scholars

SESYNC Fellowships provide intensive research and engagement opportunities at our Annapolis Center for individual scholars.

Current fellowship opportunities can be [found here](#). [3]

Sabbatical Fellows

Established scholars are encouraged to apply for sabbaticals of 2–12 months at SESYNC or at Resources for the Future in Washington, D.C. Sabbatical Fellows pursue synthesis activities that consistent with the mission of SESYNC, and also participate in collaborative Center activities as part of their efforts while in residence.

Policy & Practice Fellows

Scholars from government, NGOs, corporations, and the media can apply for support to work in residence at SESYNC for periods of 2–3 months. Policy & Practice Fellowships could include organizing small-group discussions or workshops, working with SESYNC scholars to understand the needs of the policy/user community, assisting the SESYNC community in identifying opportunities to improve communication of the Center’s science, and leveraging practical applications of actionable science.

Maryland Fellows

Scholars from University System of Maryland (USM) universities or other institutions within commuting distance can propose any type of socio-environmental synthesis project to be conducted during periods of leave or sabbatical from their home institutions. Maryland Fellows must be in residence at SESYNC for 2–12 months.

Short-Term Visitors

Scholars may apply for short-term (2–8 weeks) visits to SESYNC. Short-Term Visitors pursue synthesis activities that are consistent with the mission of SESYNC, and may also participate in collaborative Center activities as part of their efforts while in residence.

Undergraduate Summer Internships

The SESYNC Internship Program provides undergraduate interns with opportunities to obtain an authentic research experience and to enhance their understanding of the complex nature of socially-relevant environmental problems and the research approaches used to address them. Interns work full-time in a research mentor’s lab over the summer, as well as participate in weekly Internship Program events such as field trips and seminars.

Additional information can be [found here](#). [5]

Source URL: <https://www.sesync.umd.edu/projects-results/our-programs>

Links

[1] <https://www.sesync.umd.edu/projects-results/funded-projects>

[2] <mailto:research@sesync.org>

[3] <https://www.sesync.umd.edu/opportunities>

[4] <https://www.sesync.umd.edu/for-you/educator/programs/graduate-programs>

[5] <https://www.sesync.umd.edu/for-you/educator/programs/undergraduate-internship>