UNH Sustainability Institute

Sustainability Fellowship
Renewable Thermal for Equitable Energy Transformation
Cambridge Community Development Department
Cambridge, MA

About the Sustainability Fellows Program:
UNH Sustainability Fellowships pair exceptional students from across the U.S. with municipal, educational, corporate, and non-profit partners in New England to work on transformative sustainability initiatives each summer. Sustainability Fellows undertake challenging projects that are designed to create an immediate impact, offer a quality learning experience, and foster meaningful collaboration. Fellows work on-site with their mentors at partner organizations for 10 weeks, supported by a network of Fellows, partners, alumni, and the UNH Team. Graduate students, exceptional undergraduate students, and recent graduates from any accredited college or university are eligible to apply.

A detailed description of one Fellowship follows. To learn more about the other Fellowships offered this year, and for application instructions, see: www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/sustainability-fellows.

About the Fellowship:
Cambridge has long been committed to taking action on climate change and is working to reduce carbon emissions 80% by 2050. The City has developed successful community-based initiatives that have helped residents connect to energy efficiency, renewables, and sustainable transportation. Building on this work, in 2015, Cambridge adopted the Net Zero Action Plan, which lays out specific energy efficiency and renewable energy actions to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Over half of the energy use in Cambridge buildings is fossil fuel use – gas and oil – for heating and hot water. As a result, getting to net zero will require scaling up not just renewable electricity, but also renewable heating and cooling, such as air-source heat pumps (i.e., electrification) and solar hot water. This work also needs to ensure that a wide range of residents and stakeholders can share in the benefits and be a part of program design, helping make equity a part of energy transformation.

The Fellow will play an important role in Cambridge’s renewable thermal strategy. First, the Fellow will help develop and implement community outreach for a new renewable thermal marketplace, launching in the spring to help residents find and connect with installers. Building on this work, the Fellow will also take a lead in understanding how equity can be a part of renewable heating and cooling initiatives. By researching the
barriers that Cambridge’s diverse residents face in home energy upgrades, and looking to other cities for best practices, we can develop a strategy that works for many Cambridge residents in an environmentally just way.

Outcomes:
First, the Fellow’s work will result in new outreach materials and a community engagement strategy. This will involve conducting analysis to identify high-priority homes, developing content (letters, postcards, flyers, social media), and preparing materials for community workshops. Second, the Fellow’s work will result in a short report that highlights barriers to home energy upgrades in Cambridge, based on reviewing data and stakeholder conversations. This report will also include research on other cities’ strategies for equity in home energy upgrades.

Impact:
The Fellow’s work on the new renewable thermal marketplace will directly help Cambridge residents learn about a new technology, save energy, and save on utility costs. More broadly, this launch represents Cambridge’s initial work to support renewable thermal projects, and the results of the Fellow’s work, on both the marketplace launch and the energy equity research, will help inform us about residents’ needs and objectives. Finally, Cambridge strives to be a leader in sustainability policy and share lessons with other communities; the work completed during the summer can help other communities in New England and beyond understand how to plan for equitable energy transformation.

For the Fellow, we expect that the summer will provide an understanding of how new urban sustainability initiatives are implemented, including outreach strategy and community engagement. Additionally, environmental equity is a rapidly evolving policy topic, and we hope the Fellow can use this opportunity to become a knowledgeable professional in this important aspect of sustainability.

Desired Qualifications:
• Strong understanding of environmental and energy strategies, particularly in the areas of environmental justice and equity
• Passion for community engagement, ideally with experience in interviewing, community outreach, or developing outreach materials
• Strong communication skills
• Basic familiarity with Excel or similar data tool
• Passion for climate and environmental issues

Work Location: Cambridge Community Development Department, 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Mentors: Nikhil Nadkarni, Energy Planner

Compensation: $6500 summer stipend (taxable and paid on a two-week payroll cycle over the course of the fellowship term)
**Expectations:**
Fellows are expected to be primarily dedicated to their assigned projects throughout the summer, and also participate in a variety of networking activities, professional development opportunities, and presentations coordinated by UNHSI. Specifically, Fellows are expected to:

- Attend a mandatory orientation at UNH prior to the start of the fellowship term, **May 28-30, 2019**. (Travel scholarships may be available for students traveling from outside New England.)
- Work full-time on-site at the partner organization for 10 weeks, for a total of 400 hours, **June 3 - August 16, 2019** (an eleven-week period, allowing for one week off, as mutually agreed upon with supervisor).
- Complete a fellowship project according to the work plan (with adjustments as necessary).
- Participate in weekly webinars or advisory group meetings.
- Present work at mid-term and final poster sessions at UNH on **July 12 and August 9**. (Travel support available.)
- Engage in additional professional development, networking, and advisory activities as offered.
- Provide and receive feedback at the end of the fellowship.

**Apply by February 7** at [www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/sustainability-fellows](http://www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/sustainability-fellows).

**Questions** may be addressed to [megan.carney@unh.edu](mailto:megan.carney@unh.edu).