

SSI guidelines for pool recruiting

Guidelines for faculty members who are approached by fellowship applicants who wish to work with them:

A. If you receive an inquiry from a prospective applicant you should assess their potential candidacy in three respects:

1. *Do they have an adequate academic background to be a viable candidate?* Students with GPA's below 3.5 and GREs (verbal + quantitative) below 1200 will probably need exceptional CV's, particularly research experience and publications, to be accepted. The strongest filter will be for students who only have an undergraduate degree. It is possible that we would give a fellowship to someone who wished to go straight from undergraduate degree to Ph.D. but it would take a truly exceptional candidate (probably both strong numbers and years of substantial post-graduate research experience). Candidates for MS degrees are very unlikely to be awarded a fellowship at UMaine and should be discouraged except under special circumstances.

2. *Are they genuinely interested in sustainability science?* Previous course work, research projects, and faculty mentors are useful ways to assess interest level. It might also take a phone call to evaluate student understanding and investment in sustainability science. Some students with great potential might desire a switch in focus from previous work. In this case, do they have adequate methodological and/or theoretical sophistication to switch at this point?

3. *Are you interested in serving as this person's advisor or co-advisor?* Here the issues are compatibility of interests and whether or not you can incorporate another student into your SSI research.

B. If only 1 and 2 are true you should suggest other SSI faculty the person might wish to contact and if only 1 is true then you might suggest other UMaine, non SSI faculty. In all cases PLEASE respond, even if it is just a form email saying "I am sorry but I don't have any openings for someone with your background" and CC your response to SSI recruit@maine.edu to keep track of the level of interest in SSI.

C. If all three criteria are met then you should encourage the student to apply (through the regular Grad School process) and open a dialogue about working together. In some cases they may already have an application on file.

D. If you volunteer to work with a student you will essentially become an advocate for their application. This will involve:

1) writing a letter explaining how you would integrate this person into your SSI work. The easiest way to incorporate this letter into the application process is for the student to list you as an additional reference (beyond the usual three).

2) helping the student through the application process. For example, you should explain their degree options (most likely one associated with your unit or EES). If application for a particular degree requires vetting by a selection committee you should make sure that happens in a timely manner.

E. Again, to keep track of the level of interest in SSI and to coordinate among faculty in case a student receives multiple positive responses, please CC SSI recruit@maine.edu on your initial response.