



M.S. & Ph.D. Assistantships in Human Dimensions of Citizen Science (Available for Fall 2018)

The College of Natural Resources (CNR) at North Carolina State University invites applications for 1 M.S.-level and 1 Ph.D. assistantship beginning in Fall 2018 (start dates are negotiable). The successful applicants will work under the supervision of [Dr. Caren Cooper](#) (Dept. of Forestry and Environmental Resources & NC Museum of Natural Sciences) and [Dr. Lincoln Larson](#) (Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management) to pursue degrees in [Fisheries, Wildlife & Conservation Biology](#), [Natural Resources](#), or related field. Assistantships are supported by an NSF-AISL project investigating participant dynamics, coordinated volunteer management, and associated outcomes across a broad landscape of citizen science projects. The 5-year study will focus on [SciStarter](#), the largest repository of citizen science projects in the world, using embedded assessments and other techniques to increase the capacity of citizen science projects to achieve scientific, learning, and conservation goals. Project outputs will advance citizen science as a coordinated and collaborative discipline and will help to foster optimal recruitment and retention of citizen scientists – including those currently under-represented in the STEM fields.

Possible research directions include, but are not limited to:

- Investigating impacts of citizen science project design and participation dynamics on scientific, learning, and conservation outcomes
- Examining pathways to initial recruitment and subsequent retention in citizen science
- Designing systems to enhance participant agency in navigating an ecosystem of diverse projects
- Assessing project owner perceptions about volunteer aggregation, competition, and collaboration
- Evaluating strategies for engaging under-represented populations in citizen science

Key Responsibilities & Opportunities (vary by degree objective):

- Work with faculty advisors to advance citizen science theory and practice by conducting literature reviews and crafting innovative research projects (assisting or leading study design, data collection, and analysis).
- Work with faculty advisors and partners to enhance capacity for project management in SciStarter, including the development of corporate staff volunteer programs.
- Assist or lead in developing peer-reviewed journal articles, academic presentations, non-technical reports and outreach materials (e.g., Manual for Project Owners), and other project deliverables.
- Train and supervise undergraduate research assistants and/or serve as a teaching assistant in relevant courses.
- Contribute to the activities of the cluster on [Leadership in Public Science](#), which offers unique intellectual focus and professional development in the realm of citizen science, open science, and science communication.

- Engage with colleagues in the [Biodiversity Research Lab](#) at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, where students will have ample opportunities to develop their science communication skills.

Required Qualifications:

- BS (for MS opening) or MS degree (for PhD opening) in human dimensions of natural resources, social sciences, information sciences, or related field
- Demonstrated research experience (data collection, analysis, and writing)
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Strong commitment to public science
- Interest in interdisciplinary (social and biological) research
- Meet admissions requirements of the NC State Graduate School

Desired Qualifications:

- Some background and/or coursework in ecology, conservation biology, or related field
- Experience with quantitative research and analysis skills, including survey development and implementation
- Experience with web analytics
- Experience working in citizen science contexts as a researcher and/or practitioner

Assistantship Package: These assistantships provide a competitive stipend, tuition, student fees, and health insurance. They assume 20 hours per week dedicated to the project and 20 hours dedicated to coursework. M.S. position is renewable for up to 2 years based on satisfactory progress. Ph.D. position is renewable for up to 3 years based on satisfactory progress.

Starting Date: The negotiable starting date for the assistantships is August 15, 2018.

How to Apply: Please begin the application process by sending an email copying both Dr. Caren Cooper (cbcoope3@ncsu.edu) and Dr. Lincoln Larson (LRLarson@ncsu.edu) with the following items in one PDF document:

- 1) Letter of Intent (personal statement describing relevant experience and research interests, should also specify preferred assistantship – MS or PhD)
- 2) Resume or CV
- 3) Contact Information for 3 Academic References

Positions will remain open until filled, with all applications submitted by January 15, 2018 receiving full consideration. If selected for the position, applicants will be asked to [submit an online application](#) to the NC State Graduate School.

About the College of Natural Resources (CNR):

[CNR](#) is a world leader in the sustainable use of natural resources. CNR's comprehensive approach to teaching, research and service encompasses the many and varied ways in which people's physical, economic and social needs are met through the wise use of natural resources. CNR is committed to interdisciplinary research, teaching and engagement, as nurturing and enjoying the environment and engineering sustainable products go hand-in-hand with helping communities and enterprises thrive. The faculty, staff, students and alumni of CNR are discovering and sharing real world solutions to real world problems every day.

About the NC Museum of Natural Sciences:

With 1.2 million visitors annually, the [NCMNS](#) brings the public in contact with science and scientists. The Museum began in 1879, with many expansions to support both visitors and a growing research collection. In 2012, the NCMNS opened a new wing, the 80,000 ft² educational and research facility called the Nature Research Center (NRC). Cooper's lab is one of several enclosed in glass for visitors to view ongoing research by faculty and their students. The centerpiece of the museum is the Daily Planet, which is the largest globe in the world from the outside, and a 3-story multi-media theater on the inside. Cooper, graduate students, and other scientists have opportunities to talk to the public in this theater.

About the Campus & Community:

Campus life at [NC State](#) is lively and varied. It offers [numerous opportunities for graduate students](#) hoping to build a rewarding and well-balanced life. The university is located in Raleigh, NC: consistently rated as one of the nation's [best places to live](#), work and play!

If you have any questions about this assistantship opportunity, please contact either:

- [Dr. Caren Cooper](#) at cbcoope3@ncsu.edu or 919-707-9273
- [Dr. Lincoln Larson](#) at LRLarson@ncsu.edu or 919-515-8947

NC State is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. NC State University welcomes all persons without regard to sexual orientation or genetic information.