

Position Description

Title: Research Scholar in Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services	Hours: 100% FTE
Job Code: Researcher 6	Salary: \$70,000 - \$125,000
Department: Institute on the Environment	Created On: September 21, 2021
Reports to: Dr. Melissa Kenney, IonE Director of Research and Knowledge Initiatives	Last Revision Date: March 27, 2022

The [Institute on the Environment](#) (IonE) at the University of Minnesota seeks a **Research Scholar in Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services**. This position is part of a cluster hire to enhance the capacity of the University of Minnesota, through the IonE, to pursue interdisciplinary and collaborative research that advances sustainable systems through community-engaged and societally impactful scholarship.

As part of the cluster hire, we seek a Research Scholar in Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services to develop an externally funded program on the study of natural capital and ecosystem services, and its application to decision-making. The work will be embedded in The Natural Capital Project (NatCap), a partnership between the University of Minnesota, Stanford University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Stockholm Resilience Center, The Nature Conservancy, and the World Wildlife Fund (<https://naturalcapitalproject.stanford.edu>). Applicants must have expertise within the natural capital realm that is rooted in an interdisciplinary approach. Applicants must also demonstrate their commitment to working with partners outside of academia and how their work has had an impact in these partnerships. Applicants should also be able to articulate how their work enhances ongoing work within IonE and the Natural Capital Project.

We are looking for colleagues at any career stage who will establish long-term careers at the intersection of original scholarship and translational science, with an emphasis on team science and collaboration that includes other members of the IonE and Natural Capital Project communities. Successful candidates will be expected to establish an externally funded research program that partially supports their salary (>50% external funding) and supports other researchers. This position does not include any teaching responsibilities; however, candidates are welcome to seek teaching opportunities and may be nominated for graduate faculty status to serve on graduate student committees. We consider translation within and outside the university as part of professional activities.

This position will be based in the Knowledge Initiatives (KI) branch of the Institute, which hosts the portfolio of interdisciplinary sustainability research and scholarly activity for IonE. The position is located at IonE on the St. Paul, MN campus and the person will be expected to fully participate in IonE, including attending IonE events as well as developing working relationships with other IonE staff, university researchers and students, and external partners. This position allows for some

teleworking; however, because of the collaborative nature of this work, the incumbent **must** be able to work on campus regularly. We are able to discuss work flexibility options as part of an offer, and relocation funding will be made available for candidates who would need to move to the region.

About the position:

The Research Scholar will lead a research program focused on natural capital and ecosystem services, related to sustainable development, conservation, and/or land and water management decisions. This research should strive to articulate connections between decision-making, impacts on socio-ecological systems, and value to people.

The Research Scholar would be responsible for designing and developing project strategy, serving as the Principal Investigator on sponsored and non-sponsored awards, assuming fiduciary responsibilities for the budgets of funded projects, and supervising a team of research scientists. The Research Scholar would help integrate other UMN personnel into the NatCap partnership and work across programs to support Institute-wide research development, budgeting, external partnerships, and IonE-wide strategic projects such as [Impact Goals](#). The person in this role would also take responsibility for helping to catalyze the UMN/IonE community of faculty, staff, and students toward high-impact interdisciplinary research with the Natural Capital Project.

Additionally, the Research Scholar will be expected to collaborate with researchers across the NatCap community, help to develop joint research collaborations across NatCap partner organizations, and participate in the NatCap leadership committee. This person will help to expand the natural capital and ecosystem services community by fostering collaboration between UMN faculty, post-docs, and graduate students, and Natural Capital Project researchers at other NatCap partner institutions, as well as with researchers and decision-makers beyond the partner institutions.

This search is open-rank, and selected candidates will be considered for different job classifications; salary ranges for these positions are \$70,000 to \$125,000 depending on qualifications. More senior appointments involve higher salary and potential for longer contracts with advancement in salary and contract duration, depending on career stage. Candidates will be regularly reviewed for reappointment and promotion.

Application reviews will begin May 23, 2022 and the job will close on June 1 and all applications submitted by this date will be considered. Candidates who do not submit all required materials by the job close date, in the requested format, will not move forward. To apply, please submit as PDFs:

1. A detailed cover letter that describes your expertise and qualifications. Within the cover letter please include:
 - a. a description of scholarly expertise and major projects and/or outcomes
 - b. how you meet the required qualifications and your interest in this particular position (see below)
 - c. examples of how you currently or will in the future integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice as part of your professional work; if you are a person who is part of a group

who has been historically excluded, you may choose to instead include any questions you have for us about our anti-racist commitment and culture

- d. acknowledgment of your willingness to relocate to the Mpls/St. Paul area
2. CV or resume, and
3. Contact information for at least 3 recent references (i.e., name, title, organization; URL to biographical sketch or similar; address, phone number, and email address; and relationship to the candidate). *References will not be contacted until final candidates have been identified; candidates will be notified prior to contacting references.*

Competitive candidates will be contacted for a remote interview in late June 2022; finalists will be invited for an in-person interview and job seminar in July or August 2022. Additional interviews may be scheduled after these dates if the position remains open and the process may be modified depending on the status of the pandemic.

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and IonE endorse a “work with flexibility” approach that offers a welcoming and flexible work environment where everyone is inspired to do their best. Work location options include working fully remote, partially remote, or entirely in the office and are based on the work of the position. Some on-site work may be necessary for certain positions, even those designated as fully remote. Because we are a land-grant institution that serves the state, the University will continue to - in most cases - expect employees to live in Minnesota.

This position has been designated as either work profile 2 or 3; Profile 2 is expected to work on-site more than 50% of the time. Your office will be located at IonE in St. Paul, MN. Profile 3 is expected to work remotely more than 50% of the time. Your dedicated office space will be in your remote work location with drop-in space available at IonE in St. Paul, MN. IonE management retains the right to modify flexible work arrangement agreements on a temporary or permanent basis for any reason at any time.

Qualifications

Required Qualifications:

- Successful completion of a graduate degree (e.g., PhD, JD, MBA, MS/MA) in any field and an established scholarly portfolio appropriate to given career stage (demonstrated by scientific databases, reports, white papers, training materials, decision support systems, software and metadata documentation, policy memos, peer-reviewed publications, and patent filings)
- Demonstrated expertise in interdisciplinary natural capital and ecosystem services research and demonstrated ability to connect this research to decision-makers outside of academia
- Track-record of externally-funded research collaborations
- Demonstrated ability to work in a team environment with other experts both within the University and outside (e.g., communities, governments, businesses, etc.)
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Preferred Qualifications (there is not an expectation that all of these would be met):

- Ability to advance and catalyze others towards IonE's vision as described in the [Strategic Plan](#) including the ability to engage scholars across UMN towards NatCap goals, and co-produce creative, fundable, and impactful projects to advance sustainable outcome
- Expertise or experience using InVEST or working with the Natural Capital Project.
- Expertise in relevant research areas such as environmental, resource or ecological economics, ecosystem ecology, hydrology, natural resource management, socio-ecological systems analysis, and decision analysis.
- Experience with software development, decision support tools, co-production processes, participatory action research or community-engaged scholarship; and synthesis of ecosystem services to support decision-making.
- Awareness and/or integration of distributional and procedural equity as part of your research projects and/or examples of inclusively engaging diverse people and perspectives.
- Experience supervising and mentoring established research staff, including encouraging a collaborative and inclusive approach to our goal-oriented work; supervision experience relevant to assigned rank
- Strong commitment to mentoring and supervising undergraduate and graduate students
- An established record of impact-oriented public engagement and partner relationship cultivation that is integrated into research and professional activities
- Significant fundraising experience and/or current funding from diverse sources such as government grants (e.g., Federal, state), NGOs, foundation, and donors