



## Preliminary HEI Summer Fellowship Syllabus 2026

*last updated September 2025*

This document contains important information about the 2026 HEI Summer Fellowship, including

- Expectations for the summer
- Mentor–fellow relationships
- What HEI provides
- Accessibility
- Key contacts
- Summer schedule

### Expectations for the Summer

The HEI summer fellowship is a full-time fellowship, which means that fellows should be spending about 40 hours per week on fellowship activities, including their summer research, HEI-based activities (about 1–2 hours per week), and other professional development activities with their mentors. This fellowship is intended to take place over a 10-week period during the months of June through August. Due to academic schedules and vacations, the exact span of the 10 weeks may be determined by the mentor and fellow. All the opportunities are expected to be in person unless the mentor's organization is remote.

Fellows are expected to complete multiple rounds of project development, including the following:

- A project proposal, due within 2 weeks of the start of the fellowship
- Mid-summer presentation (5 min project overview per fellow with a small audience)
- Final research symposium (10 min presentation + 5 min Q & A with a general audience)

Throughout the summer, fellows will participate in professional development seminars organized by HEI staff. These seminars have been carefully designed to facilitate career development and research skills for fellows and have been appreciated by past fellows. There will also be office hours held by HEI staff throughout the summer to track progress and alert HEI in case additional support would be beneficial.

### Mentor–Fellow Relationships

Throughout your summer fellowship, you will be working with an expert mentor in the field of environmental health. You might also work with graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, or other undergraduate students in a laboratory, field, or office setting.

HEI expects mentors to provide a welcoming and encouraging research environment where you can thrive and contribute to ongoing research. The role of the mentor includes the following:

- Introduce the fellow to peers and colleagues in the lab and department.
- Provide information on the scale and scope of work expected for the summer.

- Identify and support opportunities to pursue research in areas of interest to the fellow.
- Provide constructive feedback throughout the summer.
- Develop (with the fellow) clear and reasonable deliverables that can be achieved.

Fellows are also expected to meet with their mentor at least weekly. *Please let an HEI staff member know if you have not met with your mentor by the end of the first week of the fellowship.*

Please note that mentors are there to guide and encourage research, but much of the summer will be self-guided and require independent work to accomplish previously determined goals. If you feel overwhelmed with the scope of work that is expected of you or if your experience does not match the expectations outlined in this syllabus, please do not hesitate to reach out to HEI staff.

### **What HEI Provides**

HEI funds the Summer Fellowship Program and fellow stipends; stipends are reviewed annually. The stipend for summer 2026 is \$8,000, paid over three installments. Throughout your fellowship experience, HEI is here to match the fellows and mentors, organize office hours for support and networking with your peers in the program, provide opportunities to ask questions separately from your matched mentor, and support professional development through seminars and connections with the International Society of Exposure Science ([ISES](#)) and International Society for Environmental Epidemiology ([ISEE](#)) professional societies. Additionally, HEI works to ensure the fellow-mentor relationship is successful, providing support to address any potential concerns and providing a platform for fellows to present their research.

You and your mentor will work closely together over the summer and be responsible for the following:

- Day-to-day schedule
- Research scope and experiences
- Data and supporting information

Fellows are guests of the mentors and not employees of HEI. HEI will not be providing fellows with housing, research projects, or workspace.

### **Accessibility**

If you have accommodations at your school or would like to learn more about the accessibility offered at the mentor institutions, please refer to the accessibility offices linked within the mentor summaries. If you would like additional information, you are encouraged to connect with the HEI key contacts below.

### **Key Contacts**

Although mentors should be the main communication point for you, HEI is here to offer support if issues arise, or you find yourself struggling in any way (academic or personal).

Throughout the summer, fellows should use Hlina Kiros, a research assistant at HEI and the fellowship program liaison, as their main contact. She can be reached at [hkiros@healtheffects.org](mailto:hkiros@healtheffects.org) during usual East Coast business hours.

If you would like to discuss anything confidentially, HEI ombudsman Dr. Lenny Howard [lhoward@healtheffects.org](mailto:lhoward@healtheffects.org) is a great resource and will be working with you throughout the summer.

## Summer Schedule

The summer schedule of fellow activities will include a mixture of deliverables, professional development, and networking. The timeline of major events is listed below. HEI staff will also hold optional office hours to meet with your cohort and discuss ongoing projects throughout the summer. This time will also provide an opportunity for fellows to ask questions or clarify anything with the HEI fellowship team. Drafts of presentation items will be submitted for review to the program liaison 3 days before the scheduled presentation session (e.g. mid-summer and final presentations).

| Activity   | Date*                                    |
|--|--|
| Kick-off meeting for Fellowship Cohort               | The week of May 11, 2026                 |
| Payment 1  | May 15, 2026                             |
| Summer Fellowship Begins                             | Monday, June 1, 2026                     |
| Communication, Soft Skills, and First Week Check-In  | Friday, June 5, 2026                     |
| Payment 2  | Friday, June 12, 2026                    |
| Introduction to the Societies, with guest speakers   | Friday, June 12, 2026                    |
| Graduate School Career Panel, with guest speakers    | Thursday, June 18, 2026                  |
| Project Proposal Due                                 | Two Weeks After Start Date               |
| Research Skills Training (e.g., R, ArcGIS)           | Friday, June 26, 2026                    |
| Practice for Mid-Summer Presentations                | Tuesday, July 7, 2026                    |
| Mid-Summer Presentations                             | Friday, July 10, 2026, at 2:00 pm EDT    |
| Payment 3 (final)                                    | Friday, July 10, 2026                    |
| Environmental Jobs Career Panel, with guest speakers | Friday, July 24, 2026                    |
| Research Skills Training (e.g., R, ArcGIS)           | Friday, July 31, 2026                    |
| Practice for Final Presentations                     | Monday, August 3, 2026                   |
| Final Presentations                                  | Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 2:00 pm EDT |

*\* All dates are tentative and will be finalized after the fellowship cohort is assembled.*