



UVM Food Systems Graduate Fellows 2027-2028 PhD Research Fellowship Call

The Food Systems Research Institute is excited to request applications for our 2027-2028 PhD Research Assistantships. Our call is open to incoming UVM PhD Students and provides three years of funding. Recipients will receive an annual stipend of **\$37,000** in addition to coverage of tuition and the comprehensive fee. Other benefits for FSRI fellows include travel funding for workshops and/or conferences associated with their research and access to funding to cover open access publication costs. Students must remain enrolled at UVM to continue receiving fellowship funding. Funding will expire at the end of the three-year period or upon departure from the University.

Students who have been accepted into a PhD program at UVM are eligible. The FSRI anticipates funding up to seven (7) PhD candidates in the 2027-2028 academic year. Faculty may apply to sponsor up to three (3) PhD candidates.

Tuition and Fees

The FSRI PhD Research Fellowship covers tuition for course credits and comprehensive fees for PhD candidates. The requisite GRA **tuition scholarship** of 9 credits per semester and 5 credits in the summer is charged to the FSRI.

Application Process

Applications should be in a standard font, 11 point or larger. Margins should be at least 0.5".

Students interested should include the following materials in their applications:

- 1) A 2-page (max) statement of interest to include: A description of their PhD research with specific emphasis on relevance to food systems. The connection of their work to local and/or regional food systems in Vermont and/or the Northeast.
- 2) A CV and/or resume not to exceed 5 pages.
- 3) A one-page (max) statement about how their food system project relates or contributes to issues of equity, inclusivity, and diversity.

Applicants should place their materials into a single PDF document and [upload it to InfoReady](#). Applicants should also include the name and email of their faculty advisors when submitting their application.



Faculty advisors will be notified via an email requesting the following materials, which will be blind to the student:

- 1) A one-page (max) letter of support from their advisor to address: The potential for the candidate's research to contribute to the goals of the FSRI and Vermont/Northeast food systems.
- 2) A research and training plan for the success of the applicant.

Applications are due through InfoReady by **January 15, 2027**. All applications will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers from across UVM. Final decisions will be made by the FSRI team.

FSRI Research Fellowship Scoring Rubric for New Candidates

Applicants will be evaluated based on the rubric below. Reviewers will also provide comments and/or a narrative assessment of each candidate with specific emphasis on the criteria below.

Category	4 (Exceptional)	3 (Good)	2 (Needs Improvement)	1 (Not Appropriate or Absent)
Alignment	Uses a food systems approach, embraces more than one discipline. Has strong relevance to Vermont/ the Northeast and is conducted in the region.	Does not have food systems focus; disciplinary in nature. Relevant to Vermont/ Northeast but not conducted in the region.	No focus on Vermont/ Northeast. No focus on food systems.	No relevance to Vermont/Northeast. No focus on food systems or any food area.
Research	Clear explanation of research questions. Feasible plan for developing a research proposal.	Clear explanation of research questions. Plan for research proposal adequate.	Vague research questions. No clear plan to develop a research proposal.	No research questions. No plan for a proposal.
Education	Detail their plans to engage with range of skills and disciplines relevant to food systems.	Detail plans but unclear how a food systems approach will be engaged.	Vague plans for how will embrace a food systems approach.	No plans
DEI	Thoughtful response on how their food systems research will address issues of diversity, equity, and	Thoughtful response but does not include actionable items to how their project will address issues of DEI.	Response is severely lacking in detail and actionable items.	Response does not address how they will improve or address issues of DEI.





	inclusion with actionable items.			
Faculty Support	Clear plan for the student to complete their doctoral degree in a timely fashion with funding. Strong alignment between the faculty and student interests.	Plan for completion is lacking in some clarity. Good alignment between the faculty and student interests.	Plan is not clear or not mentioned. Limited alignment between the faculty and student interests.	Faculty support letter is incomplete or not present.

