

## **U-LINK (University of Miami - Laboratory for INtegrative Knowledge) Predoctoral Fellowship in Interdisciplinary Research**

### **Important Dates**

- Online applications due by 5:00pm on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### **Earliest Start Date**

- August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

### **Background and Objectives:**

The world's most challenging problems are usually complex. Fully addressing the issues associated with climate change, for example, requires understanding weather patterns, the relationship of health and disease to environment/diet, coastal architecture, energy policy, city planning, human behavior, truth in media, social justice, international relations, big data, and many other fields. The University of Miami's (UM's) Laboratory for INtegrative Knowledge (ULINK; [ulink.miami.edu/](http://ulink.miami.edu/)) initiative was developed to foster and support our researchers' efforts to explore and successfully address these complex problems spanning multiple disciplines. (See MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change for inspiration and examples: (<https://www.macfound.org/programs/100change/>)). We wish to extend the opportunity to work and learn across disciplines to a select group of our doctoral students.

U-LINK seeks applications from doctoral students who desire to pursue problem-based interdisciplinary research. The U-LINK Predoctoral Fellowship requires the student to identify at least two UM faculty advisors, representing at least two distinct disciplines, with whom to complete his or her dissertation work. We especially encourage project proposals that tackle problems aligning with UM's Roadmap To Our New Century initiative (<http://roadmap.miami.edu/>); e.g., addressing environmental challenges, engineering smart/connected cities, promoting health and wellness, cultivating a culture of belonging, and applying the potential of big data to global issues. The U-LINK Predoctoral Fellowship is an excellent opportunity for innovative doctoral students interested in completing their dissertation in a dynamic, interdisciplinary environment. The fellowship is comprised of a stipend of \$40,000 for a 12-month period (beginning August 1 each year) plus 100% health insurance subsidy while a student is supported by the U-LINK fellowship. The awardee may remain a fellow until the successful completion of his/her dissertation defense (as long as the fellow is in good standing with the program, is still earning academic credit hours toward their degree at the University, and has been deemed to be making timely progress toward degree completion by the U-LINK Action Team) up to a maximum of 3 years.

**Eligibility:** The U-LINK Predoctoral Fellowship is intended for exceptional graduate students already enrolled in a University of Miami doctoral program and highly committed to engaging in problem-based interdisciplinary research. Applicants should not have completed all of their coursework unless they have already taken coursework in a second discipline that is relevant to the proposed project. Applicants must be currently in good standing with their graduate program.

**Application Process:** Candidates should engage with their proposed advisors to develop an interdisciplinary project proposal and complete an online application (see application materials

below). Students who have ideas for an interdisciplinary project proposal, but who would like assistance in identifying a second advisor, can contact Dr. Susan Morgan, Associate Provost for Research Development and Strategy ([semorgan@miami.edu](mailto:semorgan@miami.edu)), for assistance in identifying potential collaborators.

Candidates interested in applying for the U-LINK Predoctoral Fellowship should submit completed applications via the InfoReady Review website at the following link: <https://miami.infoready4.com/CompetitionsDetail/1803234> by February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

To apply to the Fellowship in the InfoReady Review website, use the following steps:

1. Go to <https://miami.infoready4.com>
2. Log in by using your UM Single Sign-On credentials
3. Search for the “U-LINK Predoctoral Fellowship in Interdisciplinary Research”
4. Select the competition
5. Click on “Submit Application” and follow the instructions on the page
6. Once you’ve completed step #4, please make sure to select “Submit Application” at the bottom of the page in order to submit your application.

**Application Materials:** The online application includes the following:

1. Working title for the proposed research
2. A concise, jargon-free 100 word abstract
3. Research proposal: You will be asked to separately address each of the following questions in the online application. (Your proposal will be reviewed by faculty from different disciplines. The proposal should be written for a general academic audience (avoid jargon; and define all technical terms, when necessary)).
  - a. Which distinct disciplinary fields will you combine, and how will you combine them? You will need to provide the names and departmental affiliations of your co-advisors. (Maximum of 200 words).
  - b. What is the complex, societally relevant problem you would like to tackle? Please include the central question that will drive your research, referencing literature relevant to the work you are proposing. (Maximum of 500 words).
  - c. Describe your proposed research. (Maximum of 500 words).
  - d. Why is an interdisciplinary approach necessary to tackle your research problem? (Maximum of 200 words)
  - e. Training plan: How will you acquire expertise in your second discipline? Please provide a list of relevant courses you have taken (or would propose taking) and any other activities (such as working in a co-advisor’s lab or research group) that would provide a solid foundation in the disciplines relevant to the proposed project. (Maximum of 300 words)
  - f. Describe the significance and contribution of your research to your field and other fields. How will society benefit from the results of your work? (Maximum of 300 words)
4. CVs from applicant, and two co-advisors
5. Letters of support from two co-advisors. (If you need assistance identifying a co-advisor, contact Dr. Susan Morgan, at [semorgan@miami.edu](mailto:semorgan@miami.edu)); letters of support should be sent to Grace Delgado, at [g.delgado1@med.miami.edu](mailto:g.delgado1@med.miami.edu).
6. Unofficial graduate transcript

**Evaluation Criteria:**

1. Proposed research addresses an important societal challenge
2. Interdisciplinarity of the proposed approach to the problem and the necessity for multiple disciplines to address the identified problem
3. Interdisciplinarity of the co-advisors (are the disciplines sufficiently diverse?)
4. Potential scholarly/scientific impact (i.e., research is innovative and will have an impact on not only the research community, but society as a whole)
5. Proposal is written clearly, and for a general academic audience
6. Readiness of the applicant and selected advisors for conducting a dissertation across disciplines (exploring new methods, theories, practices of another field)
7. Academic performance and/or scholarly record of the applicant. Year-to-year renewal of the U-LINK fellowship is contingent on satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

**For more information, please contact:** Dr. Susan Morgan, Associate Provost for Research Development and Strategy, [semorgan@miami.edu](mailto:semorgan@miami.edu)