

Graduate Research Assistant position available (MS) to study social implications of genetically improved trees

Assistantship Description: A Graduate Research Assistant position is available with Dr. Chelsea Schelly within the department of Social Sciences at Michigan Technological University. The selected student will work with a diverse team, including Drs. Matthew Kelly and Carsten Külheim (College of Forest Resources and Environmental Science) on an interdisciplinary project focused on tree improvement techniques and their acceptability among various stakeholder groups. Specifically, the incoming student will assist in organizing and facilitating focus group discussions among various forestland owner types (industrial, non-industrial, Tribal). The purpose of the focus group discussions will be to assess the acceptability of genetically modified trees that address various societal and forest management concerns, including forest health, timber production, and restoration. The student will be expected to present at landowner workshops and scientific conferences.

Qualifications: The RA funded MS student must work well both independently and as part of a team and have skills and interest in social sciences related to environmental and natural resource issues. Desired qualifications also include an excellent academic record; strong writing, presentation, and computing skills; an interest in science communication and interdisciplinary research; and knowledge of qualitative research methods and analysis. Candidates with an undergraduate degree in social sciences, sustainability science, natural resources, forestry, or a related discipline are preferred.

Funding: The assistantship includes funding for tuition and living stipend for two academic years (including summers).

Application Process and Deadline: Review of applicants will begin November 5, 2020, and will continue until a desired candidate is chosen. Interested candidates should contact Dr. Chelsea Schelly and Dr. Matthew Kelly by email immediately (cschelly@mtu.edu and mackelly@mtu.edu) to express their interest and intent to apply. Applications must include a statement of research interests, an updated CV or resume, and contact information for three references. Suitable candidates will be contacted for an interview and will be encouraged to submit a formal application to the graduate school at Michigan Technological University (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/prospective/apply-now/>). Required application materials for and more information about the MS program in Environmental and Energy Policy can be found here: <https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/programs/degrees/environmental-energy-policy-masters/>