

Announcement of opportunity: CZO SAVI Summer Interns Program

The Critical Zone Observatories (CZOs) represent a wide range of environmental and landscape settings. To enable broad understanding of the evolution, function and sustainability of the Critical Zone, the CZOs have begun to articulate scientific questions that are common and have value across the entire CZO network. Those questions are: What controls CZ properties? And processes? What will be the response of CZ structure, and its stores and fluxes, to climate change? And land use change? How can improved understanding of the CZ be used to enhance resilience and sustainability and restore function of the CZ?

A major goal of the recently-awarded CZO Science Across Virtual Institutes (SAVI) program is to develop the theme of common science and measurements, and include young scientists who will advance CZ science through their careers. The key to how SAVI will do this is an approach whereby junior scientists pursuing research at multiple CZOs do so through strong collaboration with senior PIs. Thus, the NSF has provided funding to the SAVI to enable cross-CZO or “common” research by graduate student or postgraduate summer interns (US citizens or green card holders at US universities only) during 2016.

The SAVI program anticipates funding 4-8 applicants with amounts ranging from ~\$2500-\$7500 each to support travel and research-related expenses; no overhead costs can be included in the proposed budgets; this funding is not for travel to conferences. Applicants can propose research activities at any of the US CZOs. Those proposals that advance cross-cutting questions and/or data synthesis at multiple CZOs will be prioritized. Proposal ranking will be based on the relationship between the science and the above-mentioned common questions, as well as to general working group themes articulated at the annual CZO meeting in Fall 2015: concentration-discharge relations, biogeochemistry, microbial ecology, critical zone resiliency and services, and conceptual and numerical modeling. Successful applicants will be obligated to provide a two-page report documenting the overall results of the work as well as a description of how the activity will help to advance their career.

Applicants should send a 3-page proposal describing the proposed research activities, budget and anticipated outcomes. The single-pdf-file application packet should also include a C.V., letter of recommendation from the applicant’s primary advisor, and letters of support from the appropriate contact person(s) at the host CZO(s). Applications should be sent to Tim White (tsw113@psu.edu) by March 21, 2016.