



## **Invertebrate Scavenger Research Fellowship**

North Carolina Zoological Society (NCZS) is a non-profit with a focus on saving wild animals and wild places that has been conducting research on vultures in Tanzania since 2013. The Grumeti Fund (GF) is a non-profit organization tasked with carrying out the wildlife conservation and community development work in and around 350,000 acres of the Ikorongo-Grumeti Game Reserve complex (IGGR). In 2019, Grumeti Fund launched a program to support wildlife research, Research and Innovation for the Serengeti Ecosystem (RISE), whose mission is to develop and support research targeting tangible solutions to benefit the people and wildlife of the Serengeti ecosystem and beyond.

NCZS and GF (via RISE) are looking for applicants (graduate students) interested in studying invertebrate scavenger community ecology. Little is currently known about invertebrate species (primarily flies) that utilize carcasses (dead animals) in African ecosystems. The goal of this study would be to characterize the fly communities using carcasses in different areas and seasons to include wet and dry season fieldwork in northern Tanzania and potentially in Ruaha National Park in the south as well. Student will receive support in learning field techniques and invertebrate identification. Understanding invertebrate carrion communities can have applications in conservation biology, disease ecology, and forensics. A follow-up study to investigate how invertebrate communities are affected by mammalian and avian scavengers, such as vultures, could lead into a PhD.

### **Benefits and expectations**

The Fellowship includes a two-year award of up to \$8000 per year, intended to support a Masters student. If Masters program is only one year long or if student is already one year into program, \$11,000 will be awarded for a single year. One award will be made. The award may be renewed for up to three additional years to potentially cover a PhD, subject to adequate research progress, funding requirements, and availability of funds. The recipient must use the funds to undertake research on invertebrate scavenging communities with oversight from NCZS and GF.

### **How to apply**

Application packages must include the following components:

1. Personal statement
  - a. Briefly describe your career goals.



- b. Describe your research interests and skills. Emphasize those that are of relevance to this project as described above.
2. Writing sample
  - a. Respond to the following prompt and support with relevant literature: *Describe how invertebrate scavenging communities affect disease ecology and conservation. Identify a specific research question about invertebrate scavenging communities and detail one methodological approach that could be implemented to answer this question.*
3. Supporting documents
  - a. Timeline – if currently enrolled, provide coursework start dates, availability for field work and data analysis, time to graduation / completion. Applicants not already enrolled should supply timeline of when they would be able to begin fieldwork and/or graduate studies. There is potential to begin fieldwork in May 2024 before enrolled.
  - b. Budget (non-research costs) - Provide costs for university tuition and fees and related expenditures from your university. Indicate whether other funding sources have been obtained or if your university fees are paid (e.g. scholarship).
4. CV
5.
  - a) Graduate program transcripts (if relevant)
  - b) Undergraduate certificate and transcripts
  - c) If accepted into a graduate program, include your letter of program acceptance
6. One reference letter (if already accepted into a graduate program, the reference should be from your current or future graduate program advisor or PI).

The personal statement should not exceed two single-spaced pages, and the writing sample three single-spaced pages. Use 12pt font and standard margins. Any photos or maps count towards the total length. References, timeline, and budget information do not count towards the total length.

Applications and reference letters are due by April 7, 2024 and should be submitted as a single compressed PDF to [RISE@grumetifund.org](mailto:RISE@grumetifund.org) referencing “Scavenger Fellowship” in the subject line. Reference letter writers should email their signed recommendations from their organizational account and reference the full name of the relevant graduate student in the subject line.

The recipient will be announced by April 17, 2024.

### **Eligibility requirements**

Applicants must:



1. Be a Tanzanian national.
2. Be enrolled, accepted, or interested in applying for a research-based MSc program. The affiliated university or organization may be based within Tanzania or internationally.
3. Have very strong academic qualifications, with academic and career goals relevant to wildlife conservation.

### **Use of Fellowship Funds**

The grant is intended to cover research-related expenses, university tuition and fees, and/or a modest stipend.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Fellows are required to submit two written reports during their fellowship year. An interim report must be received by 7 months after the start date, and a final report by 13 months after the start date. Guidelines and requirements for these reports will be provided in advance of each due date.

For questions or inquiries, contact [RISE@grumetifund.org](mailto:RISE@grumetifund.org)