About Us

Team-TERRA = Team-based, Transdisciplinary, Estimating Risks, and Real-world Analysis

A transdisciplinary doctoral training program for predicting risks to food, energy, water, and ecosystems in America’s original megalopolis.

Team-TERRA is a training program that studies the northeastern U.S. megalopolis stretching from Boston to Washington, D.C. as a living laboratory to understand, predict, manage, and communicate risks to food, energy, water, and ecosystems in the face of global change. As part of the training program, trainees work in diverse teams to predict and solve the complex problems of the future in regions that are urbanizing and challenged to both provide the essentials for human wellbeing while maintaining the many benefits of biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

The training program consists of a 2-year sequence of coursework, teamwork, an applied internship, and associated workshops. Successful students will learn highly sought-after skills in risk analysis, management, and communication. These skills include landscape analysis and decision support tools embedded in Geographic Information Systems and how to collaborate with diverse stakeholders. In addition, a cornerstone of the training is the opportunity to learn how to work in and lead teams with members who have diverse lived experiences, knowledge, and skills. Participating students can have an array of research interests and professional experience, all of which makes valuable contributions to the team. Team projects can contribute toward each student’s departmental and university dissertation requirements.

We seek collaborative, driven, and creative students with diverse lived and professional experiences who are trained broadly in the environmental sciences for this National Science Foundation-funded training program. We are especially interested in applicants from groups historically excluded from STEM, including but not limited to people with varying neurological and physical abilities, women, gender non-conforming, Black, Indigenous, and other Students of Color. And, we are interested in students whose life experiences or academic history will contribute to the environmental justice focus of the program.

Collaborative Partners

- **Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies** is a world-renowned research institute that specializes in studying risks to ecosystems including in urbanizing landscapes
- **UConn Institute of the Environment** advances research, education and engagement on the environment
- **UConn Center for Biological Risk** seeks to improve the capacity to assess, manage, and communicate biological risks of global change through research, teaching, and community outreach.

Steward Pickett brings his many years of experience in working on the interaction of ecology and social systems in cities.

Mark Urban brings expertise on ecosystem prediction in response to global change.

Margaret Rubega teaches how to communicate science and risk.

Milagros Castillo-Montoya is leading the internal assessment of the program to ensure review and continuous improvement.
Benefits to Trainees

Funding is now available, including

- $34,000 stipend for one year
- Tuition and fees waived
- Subsidized health benefits
- Travel funds

Trainees harness the diverse experience and knowledge of their transdisciplinary team to collaborate on local environmental justice issues. They also work with stakeholders, develop quantitative analytical skills in predicting risk and uncertainty, explore options for managing such risks, and learn how to communicate risk and uncertainty to clients, stakeholders, and the public.

Our Trainees

![Trainees image]

Commitment to Diversity

Team-TERRA is committed to enhancing The National Science Foundation’s mission to increase participation in STEM from historically excluded groups.

We value the varied knowledge and skills that arise in teams made up of members who have diverse lived experiences, identities, professional experiences, and disciplinary backgrounds.

UConn and Team-TERRA provide mentoring and support for their trainees with particular attention to eliminating barriers for historically excluded groups. Individuals from historically excluded groups are encouraged to apply.

To apply

Students should seek admission into a relevant department at UConn and apply simultaneously to the Team-TERRA program. If already a student at UConn, students can apply immediately.

We welcome applications from students from any discipline related to environmental risks, including those in the natural and social sciences, engineering, geography, environmental studies, and computer science and statistics.

If you are unsure if your disciplinary focus would fit, please contact us.

For more information and to apply, visit: terra.biorisk.uconn.edu/traineeship-information

or contact:

Mark Urban, mark.urban@uconn.edu
Charlotte Nelson, charlotte.nelson@uconn.edu

Who We Are

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<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Interest areas</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Urban</td>
<td>Ecology &amp; Evolutionary Biology</td>
<td>Eco-evolution in cities; climate change; aquatic ecology and resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milagros Castillo-Montoya (Evaluator, co-PI)</td>
<td>Higher Education and Student Affairs</td>
<td>Diversity in STEM education, course design and pedagogy in higher education, classroom assessment, faculty development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Elphick</td>
<td>Ecology &amp; Evolutionary Biology</td>
<td>Biodiversity protection and management; conservation planning; coastal resilience; agroecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Park-Boush</td>
<td>Geosciences</td>
<td>Risks to aquatic ecosystems and water resources from hurricanes and climate change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steward Pickett</td>
<td>Cary Institute of Ecosystems</td>
<td>Urban socio-ecological systems, landscape analysis, urbanization, ecosystem studies, land use conflicts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Rubega</td>
<td>Ecology &amp; Evolutionary Biology</td>
<td>Functional ecology of birds in degrading habitats; science communication</td>
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<td>Kathleen Segerson</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Agriculture and natural resource economics; incentive effects of alternative policy instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiling Wang</td>
<td>Civil &amp; Environmental Engineering, Center for Environmental Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>Risks of climate-land interactions to agriculture, ecosystems, and water resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Willig</td>
<td>Ecology &amp; Evolutionary Biology</td>
<td>Resistance, resilience, and vulnerability of ecosystem services and biodiversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuanrong (Cindy) Zhang (TERRA Co-PI)</td>
<td>Geography, Center for Environmental Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>CyberGIS and spatial data science for risk analysis of food-energy-water ecosystems nexus</td>
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