

Climate Change Response Program Future Park Leaders of Emerging Change

National Park Service
US. Department of the Interior

Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
Climate Change Response Program



Student Opportunities in Global Change



The Future Park Leaders of Emerging Change (FPL) program builds a pathway for exemplary students in higher education to apply cutting edge knowledge and skills to park management while gaining valuable work experience, exploring career options, and developing leadership skills under the mentorship of the National Park Service (NPS).



2017 intern Ivan Bermejo developed and led facilitated dialogue programs on climate change for diverse urban audiences around Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. NPS Photo

Internship Program

The FPL program provides paid summer internships to highly accomplished undergraduate and graduate students to work on a diverse array of novel management challenges in national parks wrought by global drivers of change. FPL interns are hosted by units of the National Park System or NPS program offices, and internship projects address high-priority management needs in national parks.

Previous participants have worked on a wide range of management projects including:

- Modeling receding snow patches and the occurrence of archaeological remains in the Central Brooks Range at Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Alaska
- Developing an Ocean Acidification Action Toolkit for Olympic National Park, Washington
- Establishing a citizen science effort to monitor the ecological effects of cold air pools at Devils Postpile National Monument, California
- Identifying and characterizing the climate change vulnerability of vernal pools at Indiana Dunes National Park, Indiana

How to Apply

Eligible applicants are graduate or upper-level undergraduate students. Applicants must be enrolled in a university program for the duration of the project. This program is best suited to students in natural, social, and cultural sciences; education; communications; resource management; public policy; or other disciplines relevant to a public agency that manages diverse natural, cultural, and historic resources.

The FPL program accepts applications typically from early December to late January. For applications, information, and general requirements please visit the FPL website: futureparkleaders.org

More Information

Melanie Wood
FPL Project Manager
National Park Service

ph: (970) 267-2198
email: Melanie_Wood@nps.gov

Jessica Johnston
Education Programs Coordinator
Ecological Society of America

ph: (202) 833-8773
email: FPL@esa.org

2017 intern Shanasia Sylman examined the vulnerability of historic structures at Salem Maritime National Historic Site to sea level rise, storm surge, and tidal flooding. NPS Photo

Becoming Future Park Leaders

Career mentorship and professional development are core elements of the FPL experience. The summer culminates in a professional development symposium designed to expose interns to leaders in their chosen fields and provide them with useful tools and knowledge to launch federal careers.

While FPL participants are not guaranteed federal employment, successful interns are eligible to be hired non-competitively into federal jobs through Direct Hire Authority once they complete their degree program.

