

NASPS Student Mentor Collaboration Award, 2026



The North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society (NASPS) is requesting applications for the NASPS Student Mentor Collaboration Award. The purpose of this award is to establish a collaborative link between a graduate student working on sturgeon or paddlefish research and a professional who works with sturgeon or paddlefish as a researcher, manager, or in another capacity. The collaborator can be affiliated with a government agency, academic institution, or non-profit. This collaboration should directly advance science and will aid in the student's degree research. A single award will be given annually for up to \$2,500 USD.

Applicant Requirements: The student must be 1) enrolled as a full-time M.S. or Ph.D. student in Canada or the U.S. during the tenure of the award working with sturgeons or paddlefish and 2) the student must be a member of NASPS during the tenure of the award.

Application Process: The graduate student must submit in a single PDF packet the following:

- a. Cover letter describing: 1) professional goals; 2) relevance of research to sturgeon/paddlefish conservation and/or management; and 3) how the Award will assist student research. The cover letter should not exceed 2 pages.
- b. CV including current GPA, anticipated date of degree completion, participation in professional clubs and chapters, pertinent publications, and scientific presentations relevant to sturgeon/paddlefish.
- c. Budget detailing how funds will be spent.
- d. Unofficial academic transcript from their current institution.
- e. Two letters of recommendation from fisheries professionals who are familiar with the student's abilities and merit. One letter must be from the student's advisor (1 page).

The budget should detail how funds will be spent (see budget template as an example). The bulk of the funds may go to travel costs (transportation and housing). The award may not be used to purchase equipment. Consumables may be included if required to complete the research project but may not exceed \$500. The award will be distributed to the student's university and collaborating agency (agency or university indirect costs are not allowed). The award must be used within 1 year of issuance.

The letter from the major professor/advisor should describe the value of and need for developing the collaboration for the student's research and completion of degree and the student's merit. This letter should not exceed 1 page.

The letter from the collaborator should describe the role of collaborator in the transfer of technology or knowledge to the graduate student. Details on the collaborator's contribution in terms of space, time, equipment and consumables should also be included. This letter should not exceed 1 page. The collaborator may be contacted by a member of the governing board in regards to meeting objectives of the award during or after the tenure of the award.

Application Deadline: February 15, 2026

Announcement of Award: March 4, 2026

Announcement of Grantee: The grantee will be announced at the NASPS annual meeting. The grantee does not have to be present to accept the award.

Reporting Process: A report by the student detailing the collaboration between the graduate student and collaborator must be submitted to NASPS within three months of completion of the collaboration and no later than 15 months following receipt of the award. The NASPS should be acknowledged within all presentations, reports, and publications of the work resulting from the collaboration.

Application Submission: The application packet must be submitted to nasps@nasps-sturgeon.org by the application deadline. Questions may be directed to nasps@nasps-sturgeon.org.

Budget Template

Travel

Airfare

Car Rental

Mileage (\$0.54/mile)

Housing/lodging

Per Diem/meals, incidental expenses (\$/day)

Other

Travel Subtotal

Supplies

List supplies

Supply Subtotal

TOTAL