

# POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE IN COMMUNICATING SCIENCE

**Review Begin Date: December 10, 2018**

*Jobs announcement closes: December 17, 2018*

Virginia Sea Grant (VASG) and the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science are excited to announce a joint Postdoctoral Research Associate in Communicating Science position, with an emphasis on climate change and resilience in coastal communities. The Postdoctoral Associate will conduct research as well as design, test, and deliver training in the Virginia and mid-Atlantic regions. Located in the VASG office at William & Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point, VA, the Postdoctoral Associate will collaborate closely with the Alda Center. The position is a two-year term, renewable for up to three years, at a salary of \$50,000.

Applicants should submit:

- A 1-2 page statement of potential research ideas related to communicating science, particularly involving coastal climate change information, and training involving graduate students and climate scientists, managers and staff addressing coastal and marine issues.
- Cover letter that speaks to the candidate's interest in the position and qualifications as well as identifies the timeline for PhD completion and/or availability for this position.
- Resume/CV
- Contact information for three (3) references

Online at <https://jobs.wm.edu/postings/33732> by December 17, 2018.

**VIRGINIA SEA GRANT** (VASG) is a seven-university partnership funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with matching funds from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Headquartered at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at William & Mary, and composed of the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, George Mason, James Madison, Old Dominion, and Virginia Commonwealth Universities. VASG is one of thirty-three Sea Grant

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programs located in every coastal and Great Lakes state, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The national university based network contains over three hundred institutions involving more than 3,000 scientists, engineers, educators, students, and outreach experts. VASG funds integrate research, communication, education, extension, and legal programs to bridge technical expertise, as well as the needs of those who manage, conserve, enjoy, and make a living from Virginia's marine environments. VASG holds a particular interest in enhancing coastal community resilience – including identifying and pursuing opportunities addressing challenges faced by flooding, sea level rise, social/economic, and ecological ramifications due to climate change.

**ALAN ALDA CENTER FOR COMMUNICATING SCIENCE (ALDA CENTER)** empowers scientists and technical experts to communicate complex topics in clear, vivid, and engaging ways. This leads to an improved understanding by the public, media, elected officials, and others outside of their own discipline. Located in Long Island, N.Y., on Stony Brook University's campus, the Alda Center was formally established in 2009 with support from Stony Brook University, Stony Brook School of Journalism, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. Training methodologies are inspired by the empathy, clarity, and vivid storytelling brought to life by Alan Alda and hundreds of experts on the PBS television show *Scientific American Frontiers*. The Alda Center's faculty specialize in science, technology, engineering, math, medicine, journalism, communication, public policy, and theater. This multidisciplinary approach to science communication training helps trainees tap into innate connections that come alive naturally when people recall a passion for their work.

## DESCRIPTION

This Postdoctoral position is designed to advance science communication research. The opening will help create new training modules – training the next generation of coastal and marine scientists, engineers, designers, lawyers, planners and other technical specialists towards communicating with policy and management decision makers, stakeholders, citizens. This Postdoctoral Associate will focus on the areas of resilience, climate change communication, and developing research projects designed to advance the Alda Center's science communication training methods in the Hampton Roads area. Specifically, the successful candidate will:

- Receive support to become a certified Alda Science Communication Trainer
- Conduct research in the field of science communication, including conducting literature reviews, and collecting and analyzing data.
- Collaborating with the Alda Center and VASG faculty and staff – design, deliver, and test new workshop curriculum that are tailored for resilience and climate change topics for VASG fellows, Virginia and the mid-Atlantic regions.
- Deliver 5-10 workshop days per year for the Alda Center and VASG, focused on Virginia and the mid-Atlantic.

- Participate and assist with manuscript writing for publications in scientific journals and presentations; may also assist in grant writing.
- Participate in planning discussions with leadership from VASG and the Alda Center on integrating communication training into the team science capacity building programs at VASG, and scaling up the application of Alda Method® climate and resilience training to a broader geographic scope.

The Alda Method® combines improvisational theater techniques that help scientists, engineers, and other technical experts to pay dynamic attention to the needs of their listeners and learn to spontaneously adjust to their audience. This approach integrates techniques to help experts distill their message, shape compelling stories, create common ground, and use conversational language that fosters genuine human connections. The successful candidate will support the Alda Center's and VASG's commitment to advancing research based science communication curriculum. The Postdoctoral Associate will focus on the area of resilience and climate change communication through developing research projects designed to advance the Alda Center's and VASG's communication training methods in this area. The training experience will enable the incumbent to conduct research on science communication in the context of real world application in Virginia and the mid-Atlantic. The position will work in VASG offices at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point, VA, and have a professional mentoring committee composed of Laura Lindenfeld (Director of the Alda Center), Troy Hartley (Director of VASG), the Alda Center and VASG collaborators in science communication and team science.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Ph.D. in Communication, Mass Communication, Journalism, or other relevant fields such as social psychology, psychology, sociology, political science, or education in hand by January 31, 2019
- Experience designing and conducting research
- Experience conducting workshops or teaching courses
- Demonstrated experience in coastal, marine, environmental communication – including content related to climate change
- Ability to communicate research results to both expert and non-expert audiences
- Excellent English writing and presentation skills

## PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Expertise in social network analysis, science of team science, community engagement, or message framing
- Demonstrated enthusiasm for coastal, marine and environmental issues – including resilience and climate change in coastal communities.
- High levels of proficiency in qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods social science or educational research

- Experience designing new curriculum
- Experience conducting workshops or teaching courses at the graduate level, or experienced professionals in coastal, marine or environmental fields, including public, private and nonprofit sectors
- Proficiency in data and project management
- Experience with grant writing and management
- Previous experience working as part of a team, including multidisciplinary research teams

## HOW TO APPLY

Applicants should submit a:

- A 1-2 page statement of potential research ideas related to communicating science, particularly involving coastal climate change information, and training involving graduate students and climate scientists, managers and staff addressing coastal and marine issues.
- Cover letter that speaks to the candidate's interest in the position and qualifications as well as identifies the timeline for PhD completion and/or availability for this position.
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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact Troy Hartley.

**Troy Hartley, Director**

**Virginia Sea Grant**

Email: [thartley@vims.edu](mailto:thartley@vims.edu)

William & Mary values diversity and invites applications from underrepresented groups who will enrich the research, teaching and service missions of the university. The University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and encourages applications from women, minorities, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities.