

Graduate Student Recruitment at Northern Arizona University

Dr. Georgia Roberts and Dr. Jesse Abrams at Northern Arizona University's [School of Forestry](#) are recruiting up to four master's students with interests in wildfire risk, governance, and economics to work as part of the Wildfire Insurance and Resilient Economies (WIRE) program in collaboration with the [Ecological Restoration Institute](#) (ERI). Students will have the opportunity to work as part of an interdisciplinary team that includes Dr. Andrew Sánchez Meador, Dr. Melanie Colavito, and Dr. Tris O'Mara from the Ecological Restoration Institute and Dr. David Auty from the School of Forestry. Funded assistantships are available to pursue research on the policy and economic dimensions of wildfire risk and community fire adaptation in Arizona. The student should have prior coursework and experience in issues such as natural resource governance, wildfire, environmental economics, or research methods in social and economic sciences. The program could begin in spring, summer, or fall 2027.

Funding will include a graduate research stipend, tuition waiver, health benefits, and a summer stipend.

Potential project opportunities include:

- What is mitigation worth? Linking treatments to insurance outcomes
- How do Arizona homeowners perceive and respond to wildfire risk?
- Insurance availability, affordability, and equity in the wildland-urban interface
- Insurance ripple effects on housing markets and local economies
- The role of Homeowners' Associations (HOA) in mitigating residential fire risk
- Scenario planning to inform wildfire and insurance policy
- Trends in Arizona home insurance premiums

Northern Arizona University is a 28,000-student institution with its main campus in Flagstaff, AZ, at the base of the majestic San Francisco Peaks. The School of Forestry has a long tradition of experiential learning for NAU forestry students in the NAU Centennial Forest and neighboring national forests. Flagstaff has a population of about 76,000 year-round residents and, at 7,000 feet, it is situated in the world's largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest. Flagstaff and Coconino County are rich in sites of cultural and historical significance and feature numerous national parks and monuments throughout the Colorado Plateau, including the Grand Canyon.

To be considered, send a CV, one-page cover letter, and contact information for two professional references to Georgia.Roberts@nau.edu and Jesse.Abrams@nau.edu. These will be reviewed starting on November 16, 2026. The deadline for full applications for those encouraged to apply will vary by program start date.