

AGU's Bridge Program Creates Opportunities for Underrepresented Students

In its first year, 20% of the 250 active Earth and space science graduate programs in the United States applied for partnership with the program.



The Mesa Arch in Canyonlands National Park, Utah. Credit: DonyaNedomam/Depositphotos.com

By [Chris McEntee](#) © 5 December 2019

Inaugurated in 2019, AGU's [Bridge Program](https://www.agu.org/bridge-program) (<https://www.agu.org/bridge-program>), part of the [Inclusive Graduate Education Network](http://www.igenetwork.org/) (<http://www.igenetwork.org/>) ([IGEN](http://igenetwork.org/) (<http://igenetwork.org/>)), was initiated to [develop, adopt, and share inclusive practices](https://fromtheprow.agu.org/agu-joins-partnership-to-build-greater-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-physical-sciences/) (<https://fromtheprow.agu.org/agu-joins-partnership-to-build-greater-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-physical-sciences/>) for recruiting, admitting, and retaining women and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduate programs. The response to the program has been positive. In the first round of applications to the Bridge Program, AGU received 52 applications from institutions wishing to become Bridge Partners—these applicants represent 20% of the 250 active Earth and space science graduate programs in the United States. From those applications, 14 institutions were chosen as Bridge Program partners (listed below) and will be featured on the AGU and AGU Bridge Program websites.

Partners will be given access to the AGU Bridge Program's bachelor and master's student applicant database, which can be used to identify and recruit qualified students.

Partnering universities and colleges underwent a rigorous review process to assess their ability to support and mentor these students. Successful partners will be given access to the AGU Bridge Program's bachelor and master's student applicant database, which can be used to identify and recruit qualified students from underrepresented groups who are interested in pursuing graduate studies in the geosciences. AGU members are encouraged to share information about the AGU Bridge Program with any current or prospective students who may have an interest in pursuing graduate degrees in the Earth and space sciences.

African American, Hispanic, and Native American students who want to join the Bridge Program can take advantage of a free common application that can be shared with multiple partner institutions. They must meet the eligibility criteria by exhibiting academic promise, must not have applied to graduate school, or must have applied but were not accepted. Once accepted into the program, students can take advantage of professional development opportunities, including workshops and conferences, connections to faculty who can serve as mentors, and connections to other students in the program who share their experiences. Students can apply to be included in the database starting in mid-December.

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The AGU Bridge Program is an asset to institutions seeking to increase diversity in their departments and the larger geosciences community. By working together, we can create a more welcoming environment in the Earth and space sciences for everyone. Congratulations to the 2019 AGU Bridge Partner institutions.

The following are the 2019 Bridge Program partner institutions:

1. Colorado State University, Department of Atmospheric Science
2. Georgia State University, Department of Geosciences
3. Hampton University, Department of Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences
4. Lehigh University, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
5. Michigan Technological University, Department of Geological and Mining Engineering and Sciences
6. University at Albany, State University of New York, Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences and the Atmospheric Science Research Center
7. University of Arkansas–Fayetteville, Department of Geosciences and Environmental Dynamics Program
8. University of California, Irvine, Department of Earth System Science
9. University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of Earth Science
10. University of Chicago, Department of the Geophysical Sciences
11. University of Colorado Boulder, Department of Geological Sciences
12. University of Massachusetts, Department of Geosciences
13. University of Minnesota, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
14. University of Wisconsin–Madison, Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences

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