

**THE NORTHWEST SEAPORT ALLIANCE**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**MANAGING MEMBERS**  
**ACTION ITEM**

<b>Item No.</b>	<u>9D</u>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<u>August 2, 2022</u>

**DATE:** July 26, 2022

**TO:** Managing Members

**FROM:** John Wolfe, CEO

**Sponsor:** Jason Jordan, Director of Environmental and Planning Services

**Project Managers:**

Graham VanderSchelden, Environmental Project Manager

Alisha Peña, Senior Planner

Allison Lu, WA Sea Grant Fellow

**SUBJECT:** ILA with University of Washington for WA Sea Grant Fellowships

**A. ACTION REQUESTED**

Request Managing Members of the Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) authorization for the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate to enter an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) between The Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) and the University of Washington (UW) Sea Grant Hershman Fellowship Program, under which the NWSA would host two full-time Fellows for one year, from September 2022 to September 2023.

**B. SYNOPSIS**

Mid-September marks the end of the NWSA's highly successful first year of participation in the Washington SeaGrant Hershman Fellowship Program (WSG), administered by the university of Washington. Inaugural WSG Fellow Allison Lu had a very productive and mutually rewarding year as part of the Air Quality & Sustainable Practices (AQSP) Team, working to advance the 2020 NW Ports Clean Air Strategy. Building on this positive experience, the NWSA applied to continue as a WSG host organization for the 2022-23 program year. The NWSA has been matched with two fellows: one to work with the Air Quality and Sustainable Practices team and the other to work with the Planning and Logistics team.

The fellow that will join the Air Quality and Sustainable Practices team holds a Master of Marine Affairs from the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs at the University of Washington. She also completed a two-year Natural Resources Policy Fellowship with the San Juan County and Northwest Straits Commission. She will bring considerable technical and professional skills to the NWSA's efforts to implement the Northwest Ports Clean Air

Strategy (NWPCAS).

The fellow that will join the Planning and Logistics Team also holds a Master of Marine Affairs from the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs. She also has a wealth of research experience and data analysis skills that will be a significant asset to the NWSA's climate resiliency efforts, particularly the Vulnerability and Response Framework (VARF).

If the proposed ILA is approved by the Managing Members, the WSG Fellows will join the NWSA Air Quality & Sustainable Practices and Planning and Logistics teams, supporting implementation of the NWPCAS, and development of the VARF respectively. The fellows will work full-time for a year, beginning in September 2022. Under the ILA, the NWSA will pay the UW Washington Sea Grant Program a total of \$102,000 for the year to cover the NWSA's share of the costs of the Fellowships. The NWSA will also provide supervision, mentorship, workspace and equipment, as necessary.

## **C. OVERVIEW OF 2022-2023 WASHINGTON SEA GRANT FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY**

The WSG Hershman Fellowship offers a unique professional and educational opportunity for recently finished graduate students engaged in studies pertaining to ocean and coastal policy issues. Its goal is to offer students first-hand experiences working for organizations that are involved in crafting marine and natural resource policies and allows them to share their academic expertise with their host offices, which include government agencies, nonprofits, or tribes throughout Washington State. Host offices with programs that address coastal and marine issues through natural and social science research, local and traditional knowledge, policy, management, environmental justice, and/or equity-centered work are encouraged to participate, making NWSA a perfect fit for the program.

For the NWSA, the WSG Fellowship Program offers a great opportunity to cost-effectively strengthen our organizational capacity while at the same time providing a unique, high-caliber, real-world experience to a young professional looking to begin a career in the maritime field. The NWSA participated in the WSG program in the 2021-2022 academic year, hosting a fellow (Allison Lu) who was a part of the Air Quality and Sustainable Practices (AQSP) team. Allison has been an integral part of the AQSP team over the past year, leading development and implementation of the team's community engagement program, research on clean vessel incentives, a dashboard for tracking progress towards NWPCAS Implementation Plan milestones, and development of a sustainable building policy for the Port of Tacoma. A complete summary of Allison's work can be found in section D of this memo.

The NWSA applied to be a host organization for a 2022-2023 Hershman Fellow, and was selected in May 2022. In June NWSA staff participated in an intensive, two-day matching workshop led by UW during which the eight Hershman Fellow finalists and six host organizations (NWSA, Washington State Department of Ecology, Makah Tribe, Coast Salmon Partnership, The Nature Conservancy, and Puget Sound Partnership) made presentations and interviewed each other. Following the workshop, the NWSA was matched with Abigail Ames and Harshitha Sai Viswanathan, both recent graduates of the UW School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, where they earned Master's degrees in Marine Affairs. Both Abigail and Harshitha bring considerable technical and professional expertise and we

expect them to be important contributors to the NWSA's environmental and planning program.

If this ILA is approved, Abigail will join the NWSA Air Quality and Sustainability team, and Harshitha will join the Planning and Logistics team starting in September of 2022. A key focus of Abigail's work plan will be continuing to develop and implement the AQSP team's community engagement program including development and implementation of an ongoing community engagement framework, development and maintenance of a clean air and climate web portal, and development and distribution of our *Ports Clean Air Quarterly* newsletter. Abigail will also support our efforts to participate in and influence development and implementation of international, federal, and state policies and our work to engage with "Green Corridor" and low carbon ship fuel efforts.

Harshitha's work program will be focused on supporting the response framework part of the Vulnerability And Response Framework (VARF). The VARF planning effort is already underway and looks at ways to mitigate risk from potential hazards including those that are expected to get worse in future years with climate change. The fellow will help the VARF project team develop risk mitigation strategies in response to these hazards, with the goal of protecting seaport facilities and operations. The Planning and Logistics team is currently working on a hazards assessment, which will be completed in 2022. Harshitha will support completion of the hazards assessment and support the development of the response framework through research, data collection, and GIS mapping.

With the growing focus on clean air and climate solutions, climate resiliency, environmental justice, and community engagement, this is a timely opportunity to augment our capacity in these areas. The WSG program is a great opportunity to bring fresh energy and talent into the organization in an economical way, while also providing valuable experience and professional development opportunities for young professionals coming out of one of our state's graduate schools. In hosting these fellows that are looking to begin a career in the maritime sector, the NWSA can help support the workforce development goals of both homeports.

#### **D. SUMMARY OF 2021 – 2022 WSG FELLOWSHIP**

Allison has had the opportunity to manage several projects over the last year. She has led the development and publication of the *Clean Air Quarterly* newsletter, designed to provide community members and stakeholders with a quarterly overview of Port activities as they relate to clean air and climate issues. She is also managing development of a community resource web portal for the public to access educational information on port activities, air quality and climate issues, and mechanisms through which they can engage with the port. Allison is also managing development of an ongoing community engagement framework that will guide our ongoing engagement on air quality and climate issues and strengthen relationships with near port residents and community groups. In addition to these critical community engagement activities, Allison has also conducted a review of clean vessel incentive programs at other ports and scoped further research to develop program recommendations, drafted a dashboard to track completion of NWPCAS implementation plan milestones, beginning development of a database to catalogue Port of Tacoma and

NWSA buildings in order to manage compliance with the new Clean Buildings law, and beginning creation of a sustainable building policy for the Port of Tacoma.

Allison has also participated in many volunteering and professional development activities during her fellowship. She has volunteered to deploy and retrieve mussels as part of the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife Stormwater Action Monitoring Mussel Monitoring Survey. She also joined a team of Port of Tacoma staff to host a table at Vaughn Elementary's STREAM science fair, engaging students in pH testing and bug identification and teaching them about the Port's environmental initiatives. She has also volunteered for the Port of Tacoma's boat tours, as well as tabling at the Duwamish River People's Park Opening Celebration.

Allison was able to attend the Advanced Clean Tech conference in Long Beach, as well as the Green Transportation Summit and Expo. Through WA Sea Grant, she has also attended many virtual conferences in order to expand her knowledge of marine and coastal policy, including Capitol Hill Ocean Week conference, Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, and the Margaret A. Davidson Coastal Career Development Workshop (for which she also served on the planning team).

Over the course of just one year, Allison has developed her skills in project and program management, management of consulting resources and budgets, procurement, policy and legislative research and analysis, and data analysis and visualization. She has gained valuable knowledge of zero emission and renewable energy technology and resources, as well as technical knowledge on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, Port structure, policies, and stakeholder engagement processes. She has also collaborated heavily with staff across many departments at the Port of Tacoma, Northwest Seaport Alliance, and Port of Seattle.

Her extensive portfolio of projects, conferences, and activities is a clear indicator of both the value that the WSG Fellowship program brings to the NWSA and the professional development opportunity that is made available to the fellows.

## **E. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost to the NWSA of hosting two WSG fellows for the 2022-2023 academic year is \$102,000 – well below the fully-loaded costs of a single FTE. The NWSA contribution is about 70% of the total cost of the WSG Hershman Fellowship Program – which is \$70,000 per fellow and covers their salary, benefits, a tax stipend, a professional development allotment for the Fellow, and the UW's program administrative costs. The NWSA contribution of \$102,000 will be paid from the Air Quality and Sustainable Practices and

Planning and Logistics teams' program budgets for 2022 and 2023. These intern positions will not be included in the NWSA's headcount.

**F. ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST**

- ILA between University of Washington and Northwest Seaport Alliance