

Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation
(COVA CCI)

Cybersecurity Dissertation Fellowship
FY 2022

RFP #: COVACCI-21-03*

DEADLINE DATES:

RFP ISSUE DATE: April 5, 2021

Last day for questions and answers about this RFP: May 10, 2021

Applications due: May 17, 2021

Supported by:

Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation and the
Commonwealth Cyber Initiative

5115 Hampton Boulevard

Norfolk, Virginia 23529

(757) 368-4100

Email: jcostanz@odu.edu

* The RFP is contingent on anticipated funding from CCI.

I. Introduction

Virginia's Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) aims to create a Commonwealth-wide ecosystem of innovation excellence in cyber-physical systems (CPS) with an emphasis on trust and security. Certified as a node of CCI, the Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation (CoVA) seeks to:

- Conduct fundamental research that will lead to breakthroughs in CPS security (CPSS), contributing to the CCI mission of establishing Virginia as a global leader in secure CPS and in the digital economy,
- Foster and accelerate commercialization of CPSS innovation in order to grow and diversify the Virginia cyber economy, and
- Expand and diversify the cybersecurity talent pipeline through investments in research capabilities and commercialization efforts.

The CoVA CCI Cybersecurity Dissertation Fellowship program aims 1) to select, recognize, and financially support early-career individuals with the demonstrated potential to be high achieving cybersecurity professionals, and 2) to broaden participation in cybersecurity of underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

II. Eligibility Guidelines

Who May Apply:

Full-time PhD student in a COVA CCI institution, whose dissertation research focuses on cybersecurity-related topics.

Limit on Number of Applications per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Applications per Applicant: 1

An eligible applicant may submit only one application to the program.

III. Award Information

Award Amount:

\$25,000 for one year, with potential to renew for a second year.

Matching Requirement:

The awardee's institution must provide a 1:1 matching contribution. Graduate assistantship and tuition waiver can be used as a match.

IV. Award Conditions

Selected applicant(s) are expected to conduct high quality dissertation research and participate fully in COVA CCI activities including providing materials needed for reports, participation in COVA CCI meetings, and responding to data collection requests by COVA CCI. All publications and presentations resulting from the fellowship should acknowledge support from Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation (COVA), Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI).

V. Schedule

Request for Proposal Released: April 5, 2021

Q&A period: April 5 – May 10, 2021

Applications due: May 17, 2021

Award Notification: June 15, 2021

VI. Application Format

Application must use 1-inch margins, 11-point font or larger (Arial or Helvetica) and single line spacing.

1. Title Page (one page)

Use the provided Title Page which includes name of RFP. Please complete your name, department, institution and contact information.

2. Personal Statement (up to 2 pages)

Please outline your personal, professional, and educational experiences and career goals you intend to pursue. Describe how those experiences and goals qualify you for the Fellowship.

3. Dissertation Research Plan (up to 2 pages)

Present an original research topic that you would like to pursue and outline your research plan. Describe the research idea and your general approach. The use of CCI research facilities is encouraged.

4. Biography

A biography (up to 2 pages) must be provided.

5. Letter of Support

The applicant's PhD advisor must provide a letter of support. A 1:1 match is required and must be clearly described in the letter.

6. Letters of Reference

The application should include three letters of reference that comment on the applicant's skills, character, experience, and/or achievements.

VI. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via email to jcostanz@odu.edu not later than the close of business on date specified above in Section V. Late submissions will not be considered. Applications must be submitted as a single PDF file.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

The applications will be evaluated according to

- Intellectual Merit Criterion: the potential of the applicant to advance knowledge aligned with COVA CCI's mission based on a holistic analysis of the application, including the Personal Statement, Dissertation Research Plan, strength of the academic record, description of previous research experience or publication/presentations, and references.
- Broader Impacts Criterion: the potential of the applicant for future broader impacts as indicated by personal experiences, professional experiences, educational experiences and future plans.

IX. Questions and Point of Contact

Questions related to this project should be sent to John Costanzo via email (jcostanz@odu.edu). A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is provided.