

# moth

FELLOWSHIP



MORE THAN  
HUMAN LIFE





# Applying for the MOTH Fellowship

As part of its MOTH Academy, the NYU MOTH Program offers its Fellowship as both a professional development opportunity for practitioners and researchers and as a space for the creative incubation of actionable initiatives for improved relations with the more-than-human world. The Fellowship Program serves both as a platform for emerging voices in this growing field and as a strategic intervention in advancing the rights and well-being of the more-than-human world.

MOTH selects up to twelve outstanding thinkers and doers to join a vibrant, interdisciplinary cohort. Over the course of twelve months, fellows work with MOTH as they develop innovative projects, cultivate generative connections across disciplines and geographies, and deepen the skills and practices that enhance their ability to contribute meaningfully to this burgeoning field. Rooted in collaboration, the program brings fellows together to exchange their work, brainstorm ideas, and chart new paths forward as a community.



moth  
FELLOWSHIP



## Program Overview

At the core of the program is a project conceived by each fellow and refined and expanded through collaboration with peers, mentors, and the wider MOTH community.

Applicants are invited to propose projects that engage with this year's central theme of **reciprocity with the rest of the more-than-human world**: How can we live and work in more relational and reciprocal ways with the more-than-human world? How might we give back to the rest of nature for all it has given us?

MOTH seeks to build a truly interdisciplinary and collaborative cohort. Proposed projects may vary widely depending on a fellow's background, the organizations or networks in which they are embedded, and the questions they are looking to address. For example, a lawyer might explore a novel legal action or theory recognizing an animal species' contribution to a medical advancement; a filmmaker might document relational approaches to nature within citizen assemblies across regions; a campaigner might design an advocacy campaign urging fashion companies to adopt circular practices aligned with ecological limits. By the end of the Fellowship, each participant will have developed an actionable, impactful output which will be showcased at the 2027 MOTH Festival of Ideas.





Since the Fellowship is rooted in the principle of collaboration and collective impact, it supports fellows who are already embedded in broader communities, networks, and organizations of humans and non-humans, enabling their projects to generate tangible benefits for broader collectives and ecosystems.

Beyond the individual project, the Fellowship experience is enriched through layered programmatic elements designed to nurture skills, deepen capacities, and foster community with humans and the rest of nature. Each fellow is paired with a dedicated mentor from the MOTH Program who provides guidance throughout the year. The Fellowship follows a hybrid model, blending virtual workshops and meetings with immersive in-person, in-nature gatherings that offer opportunities for reflection, feedback, and cross-pollination of ideas and places.

Community is at the heart of MOTH. Fellows will not only form lasting, meaningful bonds with one another, but will also become part of the wider MOTH network—a growing global community committed to reimagining our relationships with the more-than-human world. Fellows will learn from each other—collaborating to refine their projects—and from the larger more-than-human world.



moth  
FELLOWSHIP





In this inaugural year of the Fellowship, we welcome all who are interested to apply, though preference will be given to past participants in our Annual Course and the conference associated with the MOTH Festival.

## Components of the Fellowship

### 1. The Project

Fellows develop and begin to implement projects which promote, in some fashion, reciprocity or a relational approach with the rest of nature through creative or strategic action. The project should be designed to address a particular question or problem regarding reciprocity with the more-than-human world.

The precise contours of this project and proposed action will vary depending on the disciplinary background of the fellow. Fellows will be assisted in the design and refinement of their projects by the MOTH team as well as the other fellows.



moth  
FELLOWSHIP



## 2. Community of Practice

In addition to supporting personal and professional development, the fellowship aims to plug practitioners embedded in various networks and ecosystems into a rich community of practice which can nurture their growth as well as strengthen the field. The program accomplishes this first by building a complementary cohort of fellows and second by connecting fellows to the larger MOTH team, including mentors from the MOTH Collective. Ultimately, by the end of the fellowship and beyond, fellows will be integrated into the extended MOTH network.

## 3. Transformative, Ecocentric Learning

Through the program, fellows will dive deeper into ecocentric ideas and practices, absorbing insights from a range of disciplines, including law, the biological sciences, storytelling, and the arts. The in-person, in-nature gatherings and online workshops and meetings will include opportunities to learn from experts at the forefront of new and transformative approaches to acting with and on behalf of the more-than-human world.





Through these learning opportunities, MOTH is especially interested in introducing fellows to how place-based learning and tapping into emotions like awe and wonder can meaningfully facilitate and enhance actions, strategies, and tools to better relate to and act with the more-than-human world.

#### **4. Mentorship**

Each fellow will be paired at the outset with a mentor from the MOTH Collective. Fellows will work with their mentors in the design and implementation of their projects. Mentors will help fellows ideate and strategize while also more generally supporting their growth through the fellowship.

#### **5. Time Commitment**

The MOTH Fellowship involves a substantial time commitment and only those who can make such a commitment should apply. There will be approximately 30 hours of online sessions associated with the Fellowship, in addition to two in-person, in-nature gatherings as well as meetings with mentors. Participation in all these elements is mandatory. Fellows will also be required to attend the 2027 MOTH Festival of Ideas in order to present their projects.





# Application Process & Selection Criteria

## 1. Application Timeline

The application period opens November 21, 2025, and closes February 15, 2026. Applicants must submit a project proposal along with a cover letter, curriculum vitae (CV), one letter of reference, and other supporting materials (such as a portfolio of previous work, if applicable). The cover letter should explain how the applicant is embedded in networks, communities, and groups which would benefit from their participation in the fellowship and how the project they have proposed will advance collective action in the field. Please see the ‘application checklist’ document for more information on application materials. **Application materials should be sent as a single PDF to [moth@nyu.edu](mailto:moth@nyu.edu).**

Between March 1 and March 31, shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview twice; all applicants must be available during this window.

Acceptance decisions will be announced on April 8, 2026.





## 2. Selection Criteria

### *i. Project Proposal*

The project serves as the connective tissue for the fellowship. Applicants must submit a project proposal—not more than 2,000 words—which outlines the basis for their project.

As a reminder, projects should engage with the program's central theme of **reciprocity with nature**: How can we live and work in more relational ways with the more-than-human world? How might we give back to the rest of nature for all it has given us?

The proposal should include a summary of the project activity—for instance, a legal action, documentary film, scientific publication, or social venture. The proposal should also include:

- A clear description of the project.
- What led the applicant to propose this project and the need it addresses.
- The questions or issues the project is looking to solve, including any the applicant is hoping to resolve collectively and through participation in the Fellowship.
- The project methodology.
- The theory of change behind the project.
- The target audiences, communities, and / or beneficiaries of the project.





Applicants should identify a concrete output which can be completed within the timeframe of the fellowship, as the entire project may not be capable of completion within one year. For example, we do not expect that a documentary film would be completed within one year; however, an applicant pursuing such a project could complete a detailed story board and research process in service of completing the film.

The strength of the project proposal will serve as one substantial basis for selecting applicants for the program. The MOTH Program will assess the proposals based on the achievability of the actions outlined; their originality; and their potential impact, including within the applicants' communities, networks and ecosystems as well as the growing field dedicated to protecting the more-than-human world. We are also committed to building a complementary cohort, so project proposals will also be assessed for how they fit within the larger group and how other successful applicants may be able to support each other in the fellowship year and beyond.

We understand that the feasibility of projects may change over time given shifting external circumstances and so we approach the implementation of projects over the course of the fellowship year with flexibility.



## *ii. Other Individual Criteria*



We seek applicants who already have meaningful professional experience though may be looking to deepen their engagement with ecocentric ideas and practices. Successful applicants will have a demonstrable and coherent interest in topics related to improving relations—legal, political, social, ecological and /or cultural—with the more-than-human world. They will display an openness to new ideas and modes of being, a commitment to mutually supporting other fellows, and a desire to implement that which they learn through the fellowship in their professional and personal communities

## *iii. Collective Criteria*

In addition to evaluating individual excellence, MOTH is committed to assembling a complementary cohort—one that reflects diversity in experience, discipline, and perspective, allowing for a rich exchange of ideas across fields.

In other words, we will assess applicants on the basis of how their skill set, background, disciplinary interests, and other attributes reinforce the cohesion and strength of the larger group. We do this so that we can build a fellowship cohort which serves as a community of practice—where fellows can learn from each other in the design and development of their projects.





### 3. Commitment to the Program

Applicants must commit to fully participating in the fellowship program. In practice, this means that attendance in the two in-person gatherings is mandatory, as is attendance in the online workshops and meetings which will occur semi-regularly over the course of the year. Meetings with mentors and participation in the 2027 MOTH Festival of Ideas are also required components of the Fellowship. More broadly, applicants commit to engaging with the fellowship in a spirit of authenticity, openness, and collaboration. Finally, applicants commit to making tangible progress towards the achievement of their project throughout the fellowship year.

The following dates are approximate, but applicants should be aware of the timing for the in-person gatherings.

**1st in-person gathering:** approximately July 16-24, 2026 or July 19-28, 2026 // London, United Kingdom (this includes participation in the MOTH Course, which will run from July 19-24, 2026)

**2nd in-person gathering:** December 6-14, 2026 // tentatively, a location in the Global South





#### 4. Who Is Not a Good Fit for the Fellowship?

Please note that the Fellowship will not be suitable for applicants who:

- Cannot make the time commitment to the Fellowship, including travel and spending time in natural settings with limited infrastructure or connectivity.
- Are not open to tailoring their project based on feedback from other Fellows, the MOTH team, or MOTH mentors.
- Are not embedded in communities, networks or organizations that would benefit from their projects.
- Do not have the capacity to engage meaningfully with other Fellows on the details of their project.

### Program Timeline

Accepted fellows must confirm participation by April 15, 2026, after which they will be matched with mentors and begin developing detailed project timelines. Fellows are expected to meet the milestones established in these plans. There will be at least three virtual meetings, including one meeting with mentors, between April and July.





The first in-person, in-nature gathering will coincide with the 2026 MOTH Course, scheduled for July 19-24, 2026, in London, United Kingdom. Fellows will participate in Course sessions in addition to an extended gathering with their Fellowship cohort and the MOTH team, which will unfold over several days before or after the Course. Preparatory online workshops will be held in the weeks leading up to this event. MOTH can provide invitation letters to support visa applications, if needed.

Following the first in-person gathering, fellows will continue developing their projects through ongoing mentorship and regular virtual cohort sessions—spaces for feedback, skill-building, and interdisciplinary exchange. There will be at least six online meetings after the first gathering and before the second gathering.

The second and final in-person, in-nature gathering will take place in December 2026, tentatively in the Global South, and will span approximately ten days. This culminating convening will provide fellows an opportunity to present their work, share learnings, and further refine their approaches to engaging the more-than-human world. It will also deepen connections within the cohort and with the broader MOTH team.



moth  
FELLOWSHIP



After the second in-person gathering, there will be at least four online meetings. The fellows will wrap up their time in the program by sharing their projects and associated outcomes at the 2027 MOTH Festival of Ideas.

## **What Does the MOTH Fellowship Cover?**

MOTH covers the programmatic expenses associated with running the fellowship, meaning that there is no fee for participation. MOTH moreover covers the cost of transportation, accommodations, and food during the in-person gatherings. MOTH can cover the costs associated with obtaining visas, if necessary.

We do not, however, provide funding or stipends for the development of the project itself. For Fellows in true need of financial assistance to develop their projects, there is a limited pool of funding which may be available to partially support a few of them.

If you have any questions, please email Jackie Gallant ([jbg445@nyu.edu](mailto:jbg445@nyu.edu)) and Carlos Andres Baquero-Diaz ([cbd311@nyu.edu](mailto:cbd311@nyu.edu)); we're available to answer any questions over email or via Zoom and can discuss with interested applicants initial ideas for project proposals. There will also be two Q&A sessions, one on December 12th and another on January 10th.

