



## **Graduate Research Assistant Position Description**

Start Date: Summer or Fall 2024

We are recruiting a graduate student at the College of Charleston for a **Research Assistant position** (20 hours per week, \$21.50 per hour) beginning in either Summer or Fall 2024, with up to two years of funding available (summer months as a temporary student employee would be included). Applicants will receive preference based on their interest in conducting their Master's thesis related to this project.

The research assistant would report to Dr. Amy Scaroni, Assistant Professor at Clemson's Baruch Institute of Coastal Ecology and Forest Science and Adjunct Faculty with the College of Charleston, in collaboration with Dr. Tim Callahan, Professor and Chair of Geology & Environmental Geosciences at the College of Charleston, Guinn Wallover, Water Quality and Environmental Program Specialist, and Jestine Deepe, Laboratory Director, at Mount Pleasant Waterworks.

**Position details:** The Research Assistant will join an exciting and collaborative project to address bacteria pollution from septic systems on groundwater and surface water resources in coastal communities. Research will center on identifying septic system owner's motivations for septic maintenance and their willingness to accept solutions that provide for long-term septic system performance and water quality protection. The selected candidate will lead stakeholder engagement efforts, coordinate and facilitate surveys and focus groups, analyze results using appropriate social science methodology, and generate recommendations to be shared with local governments, water utility operators, and natural resource and outreach professionals. This study will include opportunities to engage with diverse stakeholders across the East Cooper area, including culturally significant historic settlement communities. The selected candidate will have opportunities to learn and practice stakeholder engagement and outreach methodologies, and to hone communications skills to enhance utility and delivery of information to stakeholders (written, oral, video, and web-based). A separate but linked project will be led by another graduate research assistant, focused on assessing water quality conditions in shallow groundwater at multiple sites in the coastal region of South Carolina, with a focus on the Mount Pleasant area.

**Minimum qualifications:** Candidates must have a bachelor's degree in environmental science, or related discipline by May 2024 (for summer start) or August 2024 (for fall start).

**Preferred skills:** Enthusiasm for outreach, science communication, environmental justice, and stakeholder engagement (or willingness to learn). Candidates from underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. Prior experience in environmental science, environmental justice, science communication, and social science methods will be helpful, but willingness to learn is a must.

Interested individuals should contact both Dr. Amy Scaroni ([ascaron@clemson.edu](mailto:ascaron@clemson.edu)) and Guinn Wallover ([cgwallover@mpwonline.com](mailto:cgwallover@mpwonline.com)) via email, including a CV and a brief statement of interest.