RGGS-AMNH Comparative Biology Ph.D. Program: Student and Alumni Achievements (as of Fall 2026)

The Richard Gilder Graduate School at the American Museum of Natural History's Comparative Biology Program Ph.D. students publish papers in leading academic journals during their enrollment or subsequently based on research from their studies during their dissertation programs. RGGS Ph.D. students and graduates also are highly successful in securing distinguished grants and fellowships, awards, and positions following graduation.

For example, of the dozens of RGGS-AMNH Comparative Biology Ph.D. students eligible for prestigious 3-year U.S. National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, an exceptional 51% percent have been awarded to date; with additional honorable mentions, >80% of all eligible RGGS Ph.D. students have received GRFP recognition by NSF. Other prestigious fellowships have included Fulbright, CNPq (Brazilian National Science Foundation), German DAAD, and Gates Millennium, one student earned an NSF EAPSI Fellowship (for dissertation research in China), and three received honorable mentions from the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship program, including one alternate award.

Prior to NSF ending its biology Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant program in 2017, 63% of RGGS Comparative Biology Ph.D. students who applied received these substantial research awards, and the only eligible student to date for the continuing DDIG program in NSF Biological Anthropology received this award. Students also have been highly successful in garnering substantial research grants from professional societies, foundations, and other non-governmental sources. They are active in presenting their research at, and have secured travel awards to attend, national and international professional conferences, and many have won prestigious student awards at these conferences.

To date, RGGS-AMNH has graduated 58 Ph.Ds. in Comparative Biology, almost all of whom are employed in science, academic, educational, governmental/NGO, or museum fields and organizations. Museum curator, administrative leadership, and career-track research appointments have included those at the Swedish Museum of Natural History, Royal Ontario Museum (Canada), Muséum national d'histoire naturelle (Paris, France), Florida Museum of Natural History/University of Florida**,** and Museum für Naturkunde (Berlin, Germany), as well as numerous faculty positions at universities/colleges across the U.S., including 9 in the NYC metropolitan area alone, among others. Examples of other appointments for RGGS-AMNH Ph.D. graduates include as Senior Bioinformatics Scientist, Tempus Labs, Inc.; Senior Decision Scientist, Aetna/CVS-Health; Senior Specialist of Next Generation Sequencing & Bioinformatics, Association of Public Health Laboratories; Associate Staff Writer (Sleep), New York Times Wirecutter; Natural History Museum Specialist, Castle Museum of History (WI); or Senior Management & Program Analyst, National Invasive Species Council (U.S. Department of the Interior).

RGGS-AMNH Comparative Biology Ph.D. Program Alumni Placements (58 Ph.D. graduates; placements reported/available as of Fall 2026)

62.1% **Career track positions**

- 32.8% tenure-track faculty and curator positions
- 22.4% permanent full-time research and scientist professional positions
- 6.9% other professional appointments in non-profit, government, and private sector organizations

5.2% **Term faculty positions**

27.6% **Early career postdoctoral fellowship positions**

5.2% **Independent research or other**