

# iUTAH Project Administrator Selected as AAAS Fellow

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2017

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has selected Andreas (Andy) Leidolf, iUTAH Assistant Director and Project Administrator, as one of 19 inaugural Community Engagement Fellows. The AAAS Community Engagement Fellows pilot program, aimed at improving collaboration and community building in science, provides orientation and support to professionalize and institutionalize the role of community engagement managers in the scientific community.

The initial cohort of fellows attended an orientation session in Washington D. C. for a week in January. At that session, they were introduced to AAAS leadership, content experts, and community managers using established engagement models to engage scientific communities. Among the tools that Andy brings back to Utah is a network of professionals and training in Trellis, a digital communication and collaboration platform developed by AAAS. He will return to AAAS for two additional trainings in 2017.

“USU was very pleased to have Andy Leidolf selected as an AAAS Community Engagement Fellow, and believes this prestigious honor underscores the value of Andy’s contributions to iUTAH, and the critical role that collaborative science can play in helping Utah plan for future growth and development,” said Jeff Broadbent, Associate Vice President for Research and Associate Dean, USU Office of Research and Graduate Studies.



USU and iUTAH Project Administrator Andreas Leidolf selected as an AAAS Fellow. He joins 19 inaugural Community Engagement Fellows from across the country focused on supporting the role of community engagement managers in the scientific community. Photo credit Donna Barry.



AAAS Community Engagement Fellow Andreas Leidolf, iUTAH Project Administrator, pictured with iUTAH Directors Mark Brunson and Michelle Baker. iUTAH is an interdisciplinary research and training program aimed furthering the goal of building Utah's next generation STEM workforce. Photo credit iUTAH.

In his role as assistant director and project administrator, Leidolf coordinates activities of the iUTAH EPSCoR project, working with leadership and engaging stakeholders to build statewide capacity to conduct research on vital environmental issues facing our state, specifically water sustainability. When asked about the AAAS program, Leidolf said that his interest in becoming an AAAS Fellow involved sustaining the community that iUTAH and supporting institutions across the state have built over the past four years.

“I am excited to join this accomplished group of professionals to further my understanding of how to build, grow, sustain, and support the community of science, technology, engineering, and math practitioners in Utah,” says Leidolf. “I feel that my selection represents a validation—by the premier science advocacy organization in the U.S.—of the work that iUTAH and NSF EPSCoR have been doing to support research capacity building in our state.”

When asked about the connection between iUTAH and EPSCoR, Head of NSF EPSCoR Denise Barnes said that projects exemplify the national imperative to engage in cutting edge research and provide opportunities for future generations of science and education leaders. “Andy Leidolf’s participation in iUTAH, an EPSCoR project, provided a wonderful platform from which he can now work to sustain and institutionalize interdisciplinary, cross-institutional research in Utah,” said Barnes.

With the growth of scientific collaborations both between institutions and across disciplines, AAAS is looking for ways to help scientists communicate and build communities. “We make a lot of progress and tackle much bigger issues when we collaborate with other institutions and with people from across the state,” says Leidolf.

“The iUTAH project on water sustainability and STEM workforce development is a sterling example of how statewide collaborations and multi-institutional research can be successfully deployed to address complex and pressing societal challenges,” said Broadbent.

Leidolf joined iUTAH in 2014, and will continue in his role as assistant director and project administrator through the completion of the National Science Foundation’s Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) funded grant in July 2017. iUTAH, which stands for innovative urban transitions and arid-region hydro-sustainability, is an interdisciplinary research and training program aimed furthering the goal of building Utah’s next generation STEM workforce and contributing to the education of and engagement with an informed, water-wise citizenry.

#### Related Links

[iUTAH website](#)

[AAAS Community Engagement Fellows pilot program](#)

[Trellis, a digital communication and collaboration platform developed by AAAS](#)

[National Science Foundation’s Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research \(EPSCoR\)](#)

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