



Campus Bonn



DAAD

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The Right Livelihood College (RLC) at the Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn, offers a DAAD-funded PhD research scholarship on:

Land degradation and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration in Kenya

Background

The Right Livelihood College (RLC) is a global transdisciplinary research and education initiative of universities and the "Alternative Nobel Prize", known as the Right Livelihood Foundation (RLF). Supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Center for Development (ZEF) at the University of Bonn hosts one of nine RLC Campuses at universities worldwide (www.rlc-bonn.de).

In collaboration with Tony Rinaudo, who was awarded the "Alternative Nobel Prize" in 2018, we offer a 3-year PhD scholarship for candidates from Kenya or other countries in East Africa, to carry out an empirical PhD research project related to the topic: "Land degradation and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration in Kenya".

Research background

Africa has experienced the most severe land degradation in the world. Given that especially the livelihoods of the rural poor depend on natural resources, many policies and strategies have been designed to address land degradation and to enhance productivity. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is a technique to (re-)green drylands on a large scale at minimal cost while improving livelihoods of people. FMNR has been developed and largely implemented in West Africa.

FMNR has been very successful in certain contexts, however, not all regeneration and conservation techniques are equally effective in different contexts. Considering this, it is necessary to undertake an 'options by context' analysis to analyze appropriate technologies suiting to various socio-ecological settings. Following up these options can be a source of evidence and learning about the best options for various soil types, land uses and knowledge systems. One needs to understand what motivates and de-motivates people to use FMNR or other regeneration and conservation techniques.

The PhD research project is aimed at addressing some of these concerns and scientific knowledge gaps by empirically assessing the potentials and challenges of FMNR in Kenya in an interdisciplinary way together with Kenyan partners.

Applicants have to develop an individual PhD research proposal narrowing the research scope and outlining a feasible methodology. The proposal has to be submitted together with the application.

The PhD scholarship call

Qualified applicants should be citizens of Kenya or other countries in East Africa, and currently reside there. They should hold an excellent master's or equivalent degree in environmental sciences, biology, forestry, geography, development studies, or related disciplines, and have outstanding proficiency in empirical research methods. Experience in action research and interdisciplinary is an asset. Fluency in English is mandatory.

The scholarship is funded by the DAAD for 3 years starting from August 1, 2020. It covers a Junior Researcher position at ZEF and respective costs for travel and research. In the first year, the candidate will participate in the ZEF Doctoral Studies Program in Bonn.

Your application should consist of:

- Signed DAAD application form with current date: https://www2.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/forschungsstipendium_en.pdf
- Personally signed Letter of Motivation (1 page)
- Personally signed CV in EUROPASS format – see template under: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae>
- Recommendation letter from your university; the letter must have a letterhead, signature and official stamp and must be of current date (not in a sealed envelope)
- Certificate(s) of employment from the employer(s) that proof a minimum of two years of relevant working experience
- Optional: recommendation letter from your current employer; the letter must have a letterhead, a signature and official stamp and must be of current date (not in a sealed envelope)
- Proof of language skills: English – IELTS or TOEFL (Note: The institutional TOEFL is not accepted)
- Copies of academic degrees (certified translation if necessary)
- Copies of academic transcripts, incl. grading-scale (certified translation if necessary)
- Short PhD research proposal narrowing the research scope (max. 5 pages)

All documents are to be submitted in English. Closing date for applications is March 31, 2020. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please send your applications via e-mail to:

Dr. Till Stellmacher: t.stellmacher@uni-bonn.de

RLC Programme Coordinator

Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn