



Campus Bonn



Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung
Center for Development Research
University of Bonn

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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

**Perennial polyculture farming in Uganda:
towards increased sustainability, resilience and livelihoods of smallholder
farmers**

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 Award (RLA). Supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Center for Development (ZEF) at the University of Bonn hosts one of eight RLC Campuses at universities worldwide (www.rlc-bonn.de).

In collaboration with The Land Institute, Kansas, USA, which was awarded the "Alternative Nobel Prize" in 2000, and the RLC Campus at the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS), Sweden, we offer a 3-year PhD scholarship for candidates from sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to carry out an empirical PhD research project related to the topic: "Perennial polyculture farming in Uganda: towards increased sustainability, resilience and livelihoods of smallholder farmers".

Research background

Current agriculture is often dominated by annual planting and harvesting of a single crop species. Natural ecosystems, however, are characterized by diversity and long term accumulative processes, something that can be mimicked in perennial polyculture farming. Research has shown potential benefits of such agricultural systems, including the prevention and remediation of land degradation, increased drought-resistance and a decreased need for agricultural inputs like fertilizers and pesticides. However, its actual role in smallholder farming in SSA and its potential to increase sustainability, resilience and livelihoods of smallholder farmers is yet still unclear.

In Uganda, in-depth empirical research is required on the compatibility of perennial polyculture farming systems with smallholders' existing practices and needs. What challenges would this pose to smallholders, for example with regard to their flexibility to changing needs or the build-up of pest and disease pressure? Also, what are the main characteristics of perennial polyculture cropping systems that farmers would be interested in, and to what extent would these differ from existing practices and needs?

The PhD research project is aimed at addressing some of these concerns and knowledge gaps by scientifically and empirically assessing the role and potential of perennial polyculture farming in Uganda in terms of sustainability, resilience and livelihoods of smallholder farmers. 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 a SSA country and currently reside there. They should hold an excellent master's or equivalent degree in agricultural, biology and/or environmental sciences, geography or related disciplines, and have outstanding proficiency in working with smallholder farmers in empirical biophysical and socioeconomic research methods. Experience in interdisciplinary and international projects is an asset. Fluency in English is mandatory. The age limit is 32 years.

The scholarship is funded by the DAAD for 3 years starting from August 1, 2018. 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:

- Motivation letter (1 page)
- A CV in EUROPASS format – see template under: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae>
- Two letters of recommendation from professors or supervisors
- Certified academic degree documents (as PDF)
- Short PhD research proposal narrowing the research scope (max. 5 pages)

All documents are to be submitted in English. Closing date for applications is April 8, 2018. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please send your applications via e-mail to:

Dr. Till Stellmacher: stellmacher@rlc-bonn.de

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