

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

Extractivism, environmental justice and participation in Latin America

Project background

The Right Livelihood College (RLC) is a transdisciplinary global research and education initiative of universities and the Right Livelihood Foundation awarding the "Alternative Nobel Prize" (www.rightlivelihood.org). Supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), one of the nine RLC Campuses worldwide is based at the Center for Development (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany.

In collaboration with Juan Pablo Orrego, who was awarded with the "Alternative Nobel Prize" in 1998, and his organization Ecosistemas, we offer a 3.5-year PhD scholarship for candidates from Latin America, to carry out an empirical applied PhD research project related to the topic "Extractivism, environmental justice and participation in Latin America".

Research background

Large scale degradation and destruction of ecosystems in Latin America is as old as historical practices dating back to colonial times starting in the 16th century. Under different labels, extractivism is still operative in many contexts today, and has become politically, socially and economically internalized. Some of the economic growth rates and investments are systematically 'bought at the costs' of ecosystems – often with little or no real participation of so-called local communities which suffer most from extractive activities. Examples include large scale industrial mining, agro-industrial monocultivars for export, and the substitution of native forests with pine and eucalyptus monoculture plantations for timber and pulp export. This often relies on the externalization of costs and massive state subsidization.

The social and ecological impacts are evident: weakening of local economies and food sovereignty, displacement and marginalization of so-called local communities, increasing inequality and conflict as well as climate change and loss of biodiversity, just to name a few. Questions of sustainability and justice of this 'development mode' that dates back from colonial times are easy to pose, however, difficult to evidently answer.

Upon this backdrop, high level transdisciplinary education and research efforts on (truly) sustainable and integrated resource use and management based on socio-ecological principles safeguarding ecosystems while securing and enhancing local livelihoods are needed more than ever.

The call for this PhD research project is aimed at critically addressing some of these concerns and scientific knowledge gaps by empirically assessing questions of extractivism, environmental justice and participation in a selected case study in a country in Latin America.

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

The PhD scholarship call

Qualified applicants should be citizens of a country in Latin America, and currently reside there. They should hold an excellent master's or equivalent degree in social sciences, humanities, political sciences, environmental sciences, sustainability and / or development studies, or related disciplines from recognized institutions of higher education, and have outstanding proficiency in empirical and qualitative research methods. Experience in critical action and interdisciplinary research is an asset. Fluency in English is mandatory.

The scholarship is funded by the DAAD for 3.5 years starting from August 1, 2024. 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.

The application should consist of:

- ✓ Hand signed checklist
[epos_checklist.pdf \(daad.de\)](#)
- ✓ DAAD application form for research grants and study
https://www2.daad.de/medien/deutschland/stipendien/formulare/forschungsstipendium_en.pdf
- ✓ Letter of motivation
- ✓ CV in EUROPASS format (including current date) – see template under:
<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae>
- ✓ Copies of Academic Degrees (certified translation if necessary)
- ✓ Copies of Academic Transcripts, incl. grading-scale (certified translation if necessary)
- ✓ Letter of recommendation from your current employer (including current date); the letter must have an official letterhead, a signature and a stamp
- ✓ Certificate(s) of Employment from the employer(s) (including current date) that show proof of a minimum of two years of relevant working experience; the letter(s) must have an official letterhead, a signature and a stamp
- ✓ Recommendation letter from your university
- ✓ 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 12, 2024. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please send your applications via e-mail to:

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

Right Livelihood College (RLC) Campus Bonn Programme Coordinator, Center for
Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn