VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

PhD Researcher
“Resource Nexus Issues Revealed by COVID-19 for Professional Communities in the Agri-Food Supply Chain”

Organisational Unit: United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES)

Reference Number: 2020/UNU/FLORES/PSA/PHD/79

Closing Date: 16 November 2020

About UN University
For the past four decades, UNU has been a go-to think tank for impartial research on the pressing global problems of human survival, conflict prevention, development, and welfare. With more than 400 researchers in 13 countries, UNU’s work spans the full breadth of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, generating policy-relevant knowledge to effect positive global change. UNU maintains more than 200 collaborations with UN agencies and leading universities and research institutions across the globe.

United Nations University for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES)
The mission of UNU-FLORES is to contribute, through research, capacity development and dissemination of knowledge, to the resolution of pressing challenges in the area of sustainable use and integrated management of environmental resources (water, soil and waste), particularly in developing and transitional countries. It aims to serve within the UN as the think-tank on resources management and be internationally recognised as a major hub and intellectual focal point promoting integrated management strategies addressing, in particular, the needs of developing and emerging countries. The Institute is located in Dresden, Federal Republic of Germany. For more information, please visit http://flores.unu.edu.

Objectives of the PhD Research
The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated fundamental challenges in the Agri-Food supply chain in different societies and communities, especially in countries of the Global South. More than a health emergency, the widespread impacts of COVID-19 in different social, economic, and political systems have placed increased pressure on environmental resources and food security. The increased demand for resources, loss of biodiversity, and climate change are grand challenges that are intensified under the COVID-19 pandemic. The need for integrated and holistic approaches to sustainable water, soil, waste, energy, and other geo-resources becomes a necessity in this context.
The successful PhD candidate will be given the opportunity to conduct research work on the topic of “Resource Nexus Issues Revealed by COVID-19 for Professional Communities in the Agri-Food Supply Chain” under the guidance of the PhD supervisors at both UNU-FLORES and TU Dresden. The aim of this research is to address the fundamental challenges in the Agri-Food supply chain that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The research will provide solutions to increasing the resilience of food systems and ensure food security in vulnerable communities, especially in the Global South. Upon completion of the PhD, it is expected that the successful candidate will apply the knowledge learnt to their home country and disseminate the research results in a way that is beneficial for developing country’s capacity and personal career.

Responsibilities

- Perform research related to the topic “Resource Nexus Issues Revealed by COVID-19 for Professional Communities in the Agri-Food Supply Chain”;
- Perform field visits, data collection, and analysis as required;
- Write and publish papers in peer-reviewed journals;
- Organise activities such as workshops that are related to the research project;
- Opportunity to contribute to teaching activities, especially e-learning and capacity development;
- Perform other duties as assigned by the supervisor and the director.

Required Qualifications and Experience

- A Master’s degree in natural, social, economic, political sciences, or a related field;
- Proven skills in statistical analysis and experience of fieldwork;
- Proven expertise in inter and transdisciplinary research including interactions with relevant authorities and stakeholders;
- Demonstrated proficiency in English. Recognised proof of language proficiency are:
  - IELTS: required level is 7.0
  - TOEFL: required level for the paper-based test is 600 points, and the internet-based test is 100 points
  - Evidence to prove that English was the language of instruction for at least one of previously completed degree programmes, in the form of a letter issued by the relevant university officials
- Working experience in developing countries is mandatory; knowledge of their agricultural sections is highly desirable;
- Experience related to the Agri-Food supply chain would be highly beneficial;
- Strong planning, organisation and time management skills, with the ability to communicate clearly, and efficiently;
- Must be flexible with the ability to establish priorities and work within prescribed timelines;
- Excellent team player with strong interpersonal skills as demonstrated by the ability to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity.

UNU is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, nationality, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities to apply and become part of the organisation.

UNU has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNU, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination.

Duration and Remuneration

UNU-FLORES pays a monthly stipend of EUR 1566 for the duration of the PhD research. It is anticipated that the research shall be completed in three years but a one-year extension may be possible. Funding is provided by the Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft, Kultur und Tourismus through public
funds according to the budget approved by the Saxon State Parliament, CzechGlobe – Global Change Research Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences (GCRI), and UNU-FLORES. This stipend is expected to cover relocation, living and education expenses. The candidate will be part of the Joint PhD Programme in Integrated Management of Water, Soil and Waste. The PhD research will be carried out in close collaboration with UNU-FLORES, TU Dresden, and CzechGlobe. Please note that while the PhD programme is tuition-free, semester fees of approximately EUR 250-300 will need to be paid directly to TU Dresden for enrollment. For additional information on the programme and the admission procedure, please visit our website.

Contract specification

This position is being offered as a full-time position and on a one (1) year Personnel Service Agreement (PSA) with UNU-FLORES, with the possibility of renewal subject to satisfactory work performance, and the completion of specific milestones. The combined duration of the contract shall not exceed four (4) years. The successful candidate will be employed under a personnel service agreement based in Dresden, Germany and will not hold international civil servant status nor be a “staff member” as defined in the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations.

This position carries an annual leave entitlement of 2.5 working days per month (a total of 30 days of paid annual leave), and a private health insurance coverage.

Starting Date: As soon as possible

Application Procedure

Interested applicants should submit their application online through Impactpool and upload the following documents there:

1. Completed and signed Joint PhD Programme application form;
2. Letter of motivation;
3. Curriculum Vitae;
4. A short research proposal (max two pages) describing how you would approach the research topic;
5. Copies of ALL university transcripts;
6. Copy of TOEFL/IELTS or evidence proving that English was the language of instruction for at least one of the previous completed degree programmes, in the form of a letter issued by the relevant university authority;
7. Abstract of MSc thesis (or equivalent);
8. Two reference letters;
9. Please insert the following reference number in the subject 2020/UNU/FLORES/PSA/PHD/79

Please note only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Shortlisted candidates will be required to prepare a 10-minute presentation as part of the interview process.