

Information on Postgraduate Research Scholarship - Ref: VC 2022-FES-NRI-1

Faculty: Engineering and Science
Resources Institute

Department: Livelihoods and Institutions Dept., Natural

Project Description:

Description:

Efforts to date to tackle climate, biodiversity and inequality challenges are proving inadequate, with business-as-usual development pathways representing an existential threat to humanity and nature as we exceed planetary thresholds. In academia, policy areas (biodiversity, climate, food systems) and among social movements, attention is increasingly focused on the need for transformative change, but there is contestation, because values and viewpoints differ. This has implications for normative goals and understandings of change processes and of human-environment relations. This PhD will seek to provide contributions to theory, methodology and new empirical insights on transformative change interpretations and pathways in territories and landscapes (ideally in Colombia or Kenya).

The methodology will employ qualitative, participatory, and ethnographic research methods to engage with lived and embodied experiences and imaginaries of landscapes and territories (past, present, and future), including evolving systems of exchange, governance, and decision-making. The PhD analysis will draw upon and explore different social theories to consider how social norms and affects are embedded in and reproduce systems of power and meaning in dynamics of place and scale. Central to the analysis will be the causes and consequences of gender and intersectional inequalities relating to processes of colonisation and neo-liberal market economies and the possibilities for, and cultivation of care, solidarity and regenerative ethics, with a focus on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in tropical forest areas. Key research questions include: How do affects, emotions, worldviews and values shape imaginaries / understandings, experiences, and feelings relating to territories and territorial change processes and possibilities among IPLCs? To what extent are potential and ongoing change processes considered transformational and by whom? What are the pathways, levers and processes for achieving more equitable change processes?

The PhD aligns to new NRI research on Transformative Change for Biodiversity and Equity, which will involve transdisciplinary, action-research processes at global, national and landscapes scales, including engagements in a series of landscapes in Colombia, Cameroon and Kenya and partnerships with other European research organisations. The Natural Resources Institute is a multi-disciplinary institute addressing the sustainability challenges around agriculture, food systems and the environment with a focus on developing countries. Similarly, NRI's new MSc on Transformative Change for Sustainable Development and research group on Political Ecology and Culture are supporting a vibrant new research area on transformative change, political ecology, social movements, socionatures, territories, power and affect. It is envisaged that the student would have academic training in anthropology, political ecology, environmental sociology, cultural studies, gender, human geography, or psychology. This PhD scholarship will offer the student a grounding in social and biodiversity research and analytical skills, with an opportunity to work with multiple institutions at the cutting edge of research and action in this field, and a chance to engage with different disciplines.

Lead Supervisor: [Professor Valerie Nelson](#)

Project Title: Imaginaries and pathways for sustainable, regenerative territories and landscapes	
Duration:	3 years, Full-Time Study or 6 years, Part-Time Study

Bursary available (subject to satisfactory performance):

Year 1: £17,668 (FT) or pro-rata (PT) Year 2: In line with UKRI rate Year 3: In line with UKRI rate

In addition, the successful candidate will receive a contribution to tuition fees equivalent to the university's UK Home rate, currently £4,596 (FT) or pro-rata (PT), for the duration of their scholarship. International applicants will need to pay the difference between the UK and international fee rate (currently £15,100) for the duration of their scholarship.

Students may be liable for tuition fees after this period.

Person Specification of Essential (E) or Desirable (D) requirements:	
Criteria:	E or D
Education and Training:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Class or 2nd class, First Division (Upper Second Class) Honours Degree or a taught Master's degree with a minimum average of 60% in all areas of assessment (UK or UK equivalent) in a relevant area to the proposed research project 	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those whose first language is not English and/or if from a country where English is not the majority spoken language (as recognised by the UKBA), a language proficiency score of in an IELTS certificate demonstrating that you have achieved at least 6.5 overall and a minimum of 6.0 in any of the elements or an acceptable, demonstrable equivalent to this UK VISA and Immigration secure English Language Test is required, unless the degree above was taught in English and obtained in a majority English speaking country, e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, etc, as recognised by the UKBA. 	E
Experience & Skills:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous experience of undertaking research (e.g. undergraduate or taught masters' dissertation) 	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of qualitative, ethnographic, and participatory research methods and data analysis 	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous experience in issues such as land and natural resources tenure and rights, landscapes, biodiversity, climate, territorial development preferably with respect to tropical forest regions 	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of recent social theory of relevance to transformative change and biodiversity 	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to addressing gender in research 	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of or experience in development anthropology, environmental sociology, human geography or political ecology 	D
Personal Attributes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the fundamental differences between a taught degree and a research degree in terms of approach and personal discipline/motivation 	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to, under guidance, complete independent work successfully 	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrable interest in and enthusiasm for sustainability issues 	E
Other Requirements:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scholarship must commence by February 2023 	E

Making an application:

Please read this information before making an application. Information on the application process is available at: <https://www.gre.ac.uk/research/study/apply/application-process>. Applications need to be made online via this link. **No other form of application will be considered.**

All applications **must include** the following information. **Applications not containing these documents will not be considered.**

- In the first part of the application select the following: **Development Studies (MPhil/PhD)**
- **Scholarship Reference Number (Ref: VC 2022-FES-NRI-1)**– included in the personal statement section together with your personal statement as to why you are applying
- **a CV including 2 referees ***
- **a short proposal on how you would address the research topic**
- **academic qualification certificates/transcripts and IELTS/English Language certificate if you are an international applicant or if English is not your first language or you are from a country where English is not the majority spoken language as defined by the UK Border Agency ***

**upload to the qualification section of the application form. Attachments must be a PDF format.*

Before submitting your application, you are encouraged to liaise with the Lead Supervisor on the details above.

Closing date for applications: *midnight UTC on 30 November 2022*

For further information contact: *E-mail: v.j.nelson@gre.ac.uk*