

Information on Postgraduate Research Scholarship - Ref: DTA-FES-01-2021

Faculty: Engineering and Science

Department: Livelihoods and Institutions, NRI

Lead Supervisor: [John Morton, Professor of Development Anthropology](#)

Project Title: **Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Livestock and Reduction of Meat Consumption**

Project Description:

We are seeking a PhD student researcher for a highly interdisciplinary project on climate change, meat, and the ways in which scientific knowledge circulates.

This project will investigate the communication of scientific research on greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions from the livestock sector and their implications for advocacy and action on climate change through dietary changes. The primary objective is to better understand the social and discursive processes that shape how scientific research into livestock-related GHG emissions is formulated, implemented, and disseminated in different media and how it is “translated”, understood and used by different groups, including climate change and animal welfare activists, farmers and their representatives, and the general public. A complementary policy-relevant objective is to identify how the essential messages of the science can be more effectively communicated to appropriate audiences, clarifying the roles of both research and advocacy and whether current public discussion may be obscuring other aspects of the debates. These aspects include the implications for livestock-producers in developing countries or in marginal areas of the UK, where livestock play an economically vital role. Such a widened debate can help identify novel solutions at consumer, market and policy level.

The project will be highly interdisciplinary, integrating ethnographic approaches to the “anthropology of the contemporary” with detailed scrutiny of existing scientific knowledge on livestock-related greenhouse-gas emissions. The project will investigate assumptions concerning both system boundaries and husbandry practices within life-cycle inventory assessments, amid knowledge of the diversity of real-world livestock systems, their environments and associated livelihoods, in both the Global North and Global South. Expertise on quantification of emissions and life-cycle assessment will be contributed through co-supervision by Dr Conor Walsh, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Science.

The primary methodological approach will be ethnographic, drawing on anthropological approaches to the study of science and public debate around it, and centred around qualitative and informal interviews with members of a range of groups, including scientists, climate activists, groups promoting vegetarianism or veganism, farmer organisations, and individual farmers and popular authors who have advocated forms of

sustainable livestock farming. It will also include direct observation at public events. The ethnographic approach will be supplemented by close textual analysis of key texts – scholarly, popular and intermediate, for their framings and assumptions. Both interviews with scientists and analysis of texts could draw on Latourian approaches to “science in the making” while also looking to generate a positive critique of the science. This project will be informed by social network analysis and mapping approaches to identify the main stakeholder and “nodes” of debate. Incorporating insights from quantitative lifecycle assessment and emission inventories, the analysis will recognise that livestock systems function in different regional, environmental, and socio-economic contexts, including extreme poverty and vulnerability, entailing contestable assumptions on, and metrics for, the role of livestock, which are neglected when discussions are presented at the global scale.

This scholarship forms part of the Doctoral Training Alliance on Future Societies of the University Alliance (<https://www.unialliance.ac.uk/dta/futuresocieties/>) and the successful candidate will benefit from cohort development training and joint activities with Future Societies research students from 7 other UA universities. The student will also become part of NRI’s own vibrant and international PhD student body researching topics in development studies, food systems, environment and agriculture.

Duration:	3 years, Full-Time Study
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Bursary available (subject to satisfactory performance):		
Year 1: £15,609	Year 2: In line with UKRI rate	Year 3: In line with UKRI rate
<p>In addition, the successful candidate will receive a contribution to tuition fees equivalent to the university’s UK Home rate, currently £4,500 for the duration of their scholarship. International applicants will need to pay the difference between the UK and international fee rate (currently £14,500) for the duration of their scholarship.</p> <p>Students may be liable for tuition fees after this period.</p>		

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

• Understanding of and experience in qualitative research methodologies	E
• Experience of working in a context of interdisciplinarity between the social and environmental sciences	D
• Awareness of some of the emerging issues on meat consumption, dietary choices and climate.	D
Personal Attributes:	
• Understands the fundamental differences between a taught degree and a research degree in terms of approach and personal discipline/motivation	E
• Able to, under guidance, to complete independent work successfully	E
• Readiness to undertake a PhD largely based on semi-structured and unstructured interviews with a wide range of stakeholders	
• Demonstrable interest in and enthusiasm for sustainability issues	E
Other Requirements:	
• The scholarship must commence by February 2022, if possible earlier	E

Closing date for applications: 15 November 2021

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 DTA-FES-01-2021)** – include 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.

For further information contact: E-mail: j.f.morton@gre.ac.uk