

### **Information on Postgraduate Research Scholarship - Ref: VCS-FLAS-01-19**

**Faculty: Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

**Department: School of Design**

**Lead Supervisor: Dr Benz Kotzen**

**Project Title: Organic Certification of Soil-Based Aquaponic Systems**

**Project Description:** The European Parliament notes that aquaponics is one of the *'ten technologies that will change our lives'* and the University Aquaponics Lab has been set up to undertake research in this growing field. The Lab requires a new recruit to take on a challenge which has considerable economic / societal / environmental impact, which is what new research requires. Whilst there are many aspects of aquaponics yet to be researched and fine-tuned, there are important questions to be considered regarding public acceptance of produce from aquaponic production systems so that it is embraced by society as being healthy, sustainable and 'organic'. Whilst in the USA organic status can be granted for aquaponically grown produce, in the UK and the EU this is not the case as organic status can only be bestowed on produce grown in soil. Aquaponic vegetables are normally grown without soil and thus the first part of the research project will be to investigate growing produce successfully in soil, without any detriment to the fish and potentially with benefits to fish health and wellbeing. This research will thus test various 'soils' to identify suitable substrates for soil-based aquaponics, and at the same time test the organic accreditation system, advancing towards, if not realising, organic accreditation. The second part of the research project will be to investigate the position of aquaponics within the market, and to define an identity that enables aquaponics to be recognised as a valuable brand that provides healthy, high quality, 'sustainable' products that are 'organic' and environmentally friendly.

**Duration: 3 years, Full-Time Study**

**Bursary available (subject to satisfactory performance):**

Year 1: £15,009

Year 2: In line with RCUK rate

Year 3: In line with RCUK rate

In addition, the successful candidate will receive a contribution to tuition fees equivalent to the university's Home/EU rate, currently £4,327, for the duration of their scholarship. International applicants will need to pay the remainder tuition fee, currently £9,173, for the duration of their scholarship. This fee is subject to an annual increase.

<b>Person Specification of Essential (E) or Desirable (D) requirements:</b>	
<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>E or D</b>
<b>Education and Training:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1<sup>st</sup> Class or 2<sup>nd</sup> 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</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 at least IELTS 6.5 (in all elements of the test) or an equivalent UK VISA and Immigration secure English Language Test is required, unless the degree above was taught in English <b>and</b> obtained in a majority English speaking country, e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, etc, as recognised by the UKBA.</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<b>Experience &amp; Skills:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous experience of undertaking research (e.g. undergraduate or taught masters dissertation)</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in horticulture</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in aquaponics / aquaculture</li> </ul>	<b>D</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarity with both quantitative and qualitative research methods</li> </ul>	<b>D</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarity with marketing and branding</li> </ul>	<b>D</b>
<b>Personal Attributes:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands the fundamental differences between a taught degree and a research degree in terms of approach and personal discipline/motivation</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to, under guidance, complete independent work successfully</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This scholarship may require Academic Technology Approval Scheme approval for the successful candidate if from outside of the EU/EEA</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A PhD project research proposal that is related to the research area</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scholarship must commence in September 2019</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>

**Closing date for applications: *midnight UTC on 31 July 2019***

**For further information contact: *Dr Benz Kotzen***

***E-mail: b.kotzen@gre.ac.uk***

#### **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.**

- **Scholarship Reference Number (Ref)**– included in the personal statement section together with your personal statement as to why you are applying
- **a research proposal related to the subject topic \***
- **a CV including 2 referees \***
- **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.