



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
Climate Change,
Agriculture and
Food Security



CLIFF – GRADS	
Climate, Food and Farming Network	GRA Development Scholarships

Call for Research Hosts: Capability Building through Research Stays for Low Emission Agriculture

The Climate, Food and Farming, Global Research Alliance Development Scholarships Programme (CLIFF-GRADS) is a joint initiative of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) and the CCAFS Low Emissions Development Flagship. The CLIFF-GRADS Programme builds capability in early-career PhD scientists from developing countries to conduct applied research in agriculture emission quantification and mitigation.

In the first three rounds of scholarship, 73 PhD candidates have received grants to further their research skills and establish international networks.

We are seeking expressions of interest from host institutes and supervisors willing to host a CLIFF-GRADS candidate.

Grants of \$12,000 USD will be awarded to PhD candidates from developing countries¹ for short research stays that will be completed before the end of 2021. Research stays should be between 4 and 6 months in length, with preference given to those of 6 months duration.

Expressions of interest must offer research stays relevant to:

- Measurement, modelling and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, or carbon storage in agricultural systems relevant to developing countries (this may be in the context of enhancing food security).

Funding for CLIFF-GRADS grants is provided by the New Zealand Government, the CGIAR Trust Fund donors and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The deadline for submission of expressions of interest to host CLIFF-GRADS candidates is the 9th February 2020.

¹ Applicants with passports from countries listed as “low-income economies”, “lower-middle-income economies”, “upper-middle-income economies” and “Latin America and the Caribbean” by the World Bank <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>



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Research Stay Proposal Template

Each host institution research supervisor should describe a proposed research stay using the template provided in Annex 1.

A section on desired skills is included to ensure applicants have necessary and relevant skills. This is to encourage applicants with the right skillset to ensure the candidate pool is well aligned with the advertised research stays.

Skills may include: lab and field work, modelling, writing science and policy publications, data visualization, presentations, project management and team collaboration.

Annex 2 provides an example of a successful CLIFF-GRADS research stay proposal. It was selected for advertisement in the previous CLIFF-GRADS call for applications, and was successfully funded with a CLIFF-GRADS placement.

Eligibility

The CLIFF-GRADS Programme provides grants for PhD candidates from developing countries, to undertake short-term research stays with a relevant research institute. Eligible PhD candidates must be currently enrolled in PhD programmes in a developing country. PhD Candidates who have previously received a CLIFF-GRADS grant are not eligible to apply.

Process and Timeline

January 2020:	GRA and CCAFS seek research stay proposals from host institutions for Round 4 call.
Mid-February 2020:	Round 4 call for PhD candidate applications opens.
Early April 2020:	Round 4 call for PhD candidate applications closes.
End April 2020:	CCAFS and GRA review panel evaluate and distribute short-listed PhD candidates to research supervisors for interviews.
Early May 2020:	Research supervisors provide their order of preference for the short-listed PhD candidates, and candidates are assigned research stays.
June 2020:	Successful CLIFF-GRADS candidates are publicly announced at the UNFCCC first sessional period in the first week of June.
June 2020:	Contract and grant administration process begins.
December 2021:	All research stays complete.

Roles of PhD Candidate, Host Institution and Research Supervisor

Each CLIFF-GRADS candidate will work directly with a research supervisor at the host institution. The activities to be conducted by the candidate, and a budget for the research stay, will be agreed between the candidate and research supervisor in a managed contract.

Host institutes and the research supervisor will provide mentorship and scientific training. PhD candidates will ideally be part of an existing research team and pursue work that contributes to

their PhD. The CLIFF-GRADS Programme is targeted at technical and hands on training, in field techniques and the use of equipment that the candidate may not otherwise have access to. Solely desk based studies are not preferred. Candidates should be helping to generate original data, while developing their research skills.

Each candidate should contribute to a project at the host institution in a way that builds their skills, contributes to their PhD thesis, and ideally leads to a collaborative publication.

The host institution and research supervisor should clearly communicate with their CLIFF-GRADS candidate about the support the candidate will receive during the research stay.

Communication

There must be a research supervisor at the host institution who sees the candidate regularly. Regular communication, in both directions, is a feature of successful past experiences and promotes progress toward the research objectives of both parties.

Grant Administration

Grants are disbursed directly to the CLIFF-GRADS candidate. Grant money should be used to finance the short-term research stay, including: travel, housing, meals, and research materials and services (if the candidate requires additional materials or services beyond those supplied by the host institution). Funding is not to be used for tuition, fees, or unrelated personal costs.

Logistics and Housing

The CLIFF-GRADS candidate and research supervisor will agree on dates for the research stay. The candidate is responsible for arranging visas, flights and lodging, with assistance from the host institution as necessary. The research supervisor and host institution must be willing to assist with documentation for visas, if needed. Depending on the location, the candidate will stay on or near the host institution (if appropriate accommodation can be sourced).

Duration

CLIFF-GRADS research stays are expected to be a maximum of 6 months. Candidates and research supervisors are welcome to extend the stay by mutual agreement if additional funding is available to support a longer stay.

Related CLIFF-GRADS Opportunities

The GRA and CCAFS may organise webinars, workshops and other activities for capacity building. These opportunities will provide professional experience, and serve as networking and communication platforms for CLIFF-GRADS candidates to share research and experiences with each other. CLIFF-GRADS candidates are not expected to use their funding for these opportunities.

Discrimination, Harassment and Misconduct

The CLIFF-GRADS Programme does not tolerate anybody being treated unfairly on the basis of age, race or colour, ethnicity or national origins, sex (including pregnancy or childbirth), sexual orientation, disability, religious or ethical belief, marital or family status, employment status, political opinion, or being affected by domestic violence.

The CLIFF-GRADS Programme does not tolerate any unwelcome or offensive sexual behaviour that is repeated, or is of such a significant nature to have a harmful effect, or which contains an implied or overt promise of preferential treatment or an implied or overt threat of detrimental treatment.

Programme Coordinator and Ongoing Contact

Upon the candidate's arrival, the research supervisor should introduce the candidate to a member of the human resources team at the host institution, in the case where contact with a third person is necessary for the student.

The student and the research supervisor should first discuss any problems that may arise and contact the CLIFF-GRADS coordinator (cliffgrads@globalresearchalliance.org) in the case of any problems that are not quickly or satisfactorily resolved.

All enquiries relating to this call for expressions of interest should be directed to:
cliffgrads@globalresearchalliance.org

More information

CLIFF-GRADS: https://globalresearchalliance.org/library/cliff_grads-fellowship/

GRA: <https://globalresearchalliance.org/>

CCAFS: <https://ccafs.cgiar.org/themes/low-emissions-agriculture>

Annex 1: Research Stay Proposal Template

(Research Stay title)

Keywords: *(livestock, soil, N₂O, CH₄, modelling, inventory, rice, agroforestry, other)*

Brief research stay outline: *(200-250 words – including links to GRA/CCAFS research groups, flagships, projects or other activities)*

Desired technical skills and/or experience:

Host institution and location:

Research supervisor: *(name, title, affiliation, and email)*

Start and end month of research stay: *(must be before end of 2021)*

Annex 2: Example of Successfully Funded Research Stay

Integrating mitigation strategies to decrease methane emissions of dairy cows in pastoral systems

Keywords: Livestock

Brief project outline:

Methane is an important greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. One major source of methane emissions is ruminant enteric fermentation. Globally, several methane mitigating strategies have been studied, with varying degrees of applicability and methane mitigation potentials. Most studies have been conducted in intensive production systems. Less research is available for pastoral dairy systems. An effective anti-methanogenic strategy for pastoral dairy systems must:

- i) Have a considerable methane mitigating potential,
- ii) Have minimal negative effects on the environment, animal or food safety,
- iii) Have persistent effects,
- iv) Be feasible to implement in grazing conditions, and
- v) Have no negative impacts on productivity and economic returns.

To date, no single strategy has been consistently effective ('silver bullet') or is readily applicable for methane mitigation in pastoral systems, and methane mitigating effects have been only mild to moderate, decreasing methane emissions by 15% at best. This project focuses on the potential of combining methane mitigation strategies that have been partially successful in pastoral systems, or that have been evaluated in intensive dairy systems and could be applied to pastoral dairy systems, to enhance their individual methane mitigating potential in a persistent manner. The student will conduct an experiment that aims to evaluate the effects of combining cottonseed supplementation and a methanogenesis inhibitor on methane production and persistency, milk production, composition and fatty acid profile of grazing dairy cows. This applied project will provide new knowledge on the effectiveness and persistency of combining different methane mitigation strategies for pastoral dairy production systems.

This proposal includes both laboratory and field work.

Preferred student skills or experience:

- Hands on experience with animals, particularly dairy cows
- Independent thinking and ability to resolve problems
- Organized and meticulous
- Effective teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Basic Spanish skills are desirable but not essential

Host institution and location: Instituto de Investigaciones Agropecuarias, INIA Remehue, Osorno, Chile.

Project leader / research supervisor: Camila Muñoz, INIA Remehue, camila.munoz@inia.cl.

Preferred duration of research visit: 6 months.

Preferred dates for research visit: Sep 2020 to Feb 2021.