



SAARC



Afghanistan



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Maldives



Nepal



Pakistan



Sri Lanka

# Call for Applications: SAARC PhD Scholarship Programme 2021 in Plant Breeding for Citizen of Bhutan and in Agricultural Economics for Citizen of Maldives By SAARC Agriculture Centre

## Background

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) under the framework of SAARC has been working relentlessly for strengthening agricultural research and development through regional networks with different institutions in South Asia. From 2017 onwards, the SAC has taken initiatives 'SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship Programme' to support aspiring agricultural professionals of the region for undertaking doctoral study in the premier Institute/ University of the SAARC region. The scholarship is highly competitive and merit based providing opportunities to the regular employees of the National Agricultural Research System (NARS)/ Department/ Ministry in SAARC Member States. Till date, the SAARC PhD scholarship has been awarded in 'Soil Science' to the candidate of Bangladesh for studying at Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh, in 'Agricultural Economics' to the aspirant of Afghanistan for pursuing study at University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, in 'Molecular Biology & Biotechnology' to the candidate of Nepal for undertaking study at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, India, in 'Animal Nutrition' to the applicant of India for pursuing study at Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar, India and in the discipline of 'Fish Nutrition & Feed Technology' to the candidate of India for undertaking study at Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai, India.

## Eligibility

For the academic year 2021, two scholarships will be offered: one in 'Plant Breeding' (for the citizen of Bhutan) and the other one in 'Agricultural Economics' (for the citizen of Maldives) as recommended by the Governing Board of the SAARC Agriculture Centre. The other criteria for the applicants are: (i) regular employee of the National Agricultural Research System/ Ministry/ Department,

(ii) below the age of 40 years as on the date of application deadline, (iii) more than three years of service experience, (iv) good command of spoken and written English, (v) available for full time PhD for a period of three years.

## Educational qualification for PhD in Plant Breeding

Master Degree (MSc/MS) in Plant Breeding/ Plant Genetics/ Plant Breeding and Genetics or any other branch of biological sciences with specialization in plant Genetics or Breeding.

## Educational qualification for PhD in Agricultural Economics

Master Degree (MSc/MS) in Agricultural Economics/ Economics/ Agricultural Marketing and Cooperation.

## How to apply

Applications are invited from potential candidates of Bhutan for pursuing doctoral study in the discipline of 'Plant Breeding' and from the aspirants of Maldives for pursuing doctoral study in the discipline of 'Agricultural Economics'. Candidates should submit application along with supporting documents (attested copies of postgraduate and basic degree certificates, mark sheet/ report card, medals/ scholarship/ peer recognition received, research paper/ short note/ review/ bulletin/ book/ book chapter published, and a synopsis of research proposal) to the Director, SAC through the current employer /relevant Ministry/SAARC Division/ Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / External Affairs of the home country on or before 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021. In case, the candidate perceives delay in forwarding the application through concerned ministry, he/she could submit the duly filled application signed by self and employer along with supporting documents directly to Dr. Md. Baktear Hossain, Director, SAC (director@sac.org.bd) as an advance copy. Notification regarding the scholarship and application format is available in the SAC website (www.sac.org.bd).

## PhD synopsis

Applicants are requested to submit a synopsis (brief proposal) of maximum 500 words for PhD research adhering to the format i.e., title, introduction, justification, objectives, and expected outcome. The proposal should be built up based on the South Asian challenges of agriculture and allied sectors. The synopsis will be evaluated for preparing the merit list along with other evaluation criteria. The expected outcomes of synopsis should lead to the advancement of knowledge and generation of newer technologies in the particular subject for the benefit of the South Asian region.

## Selection process

Applications received on or before the deadline (17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021) will be evaluated by the Committee headed by the Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre as per the following criteria: (i) academic records, (ii) awards/medals/peer recognitions, (iii) research projects handled as principal investigator or co-investigator, (iv) courses taught, (v) works experience in subject areas, (vi) relevance and quality of PhD synopsis submitted, (vii) publications, (viii) international exposure. The submitted applications will be finally evaluated based on the criteria mentioned above and selection will be made by the committee comprising of regional experts available at the Centre.

## Tenure and placement

The SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship Programme is tenable for a period of three years on fulltime basis. During their doctoral study, candidates are not allowed to perform any kind of part time or contract job at the place of their study. The selected candidates are expected to be placed at the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. The SAARC Agriculture Centre will facilitate their admission.

## Host Institute University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

In 1978, the University of Peradeniya became an independent entity. The Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture (PGIA), University of Peradeniya was established in 1975 with the main objective of developing in-country capacity for postgraduate education in agriculture and to provide appropriately trained scientific personnel for a rapidly expanding agricultural sector of the country. -Over the past three decades, it has achieved substantial progress and has emerged as a “Centre of Excellence” in higher education in agricultural sciences in the country.



## What covers under the SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship Programme?

1. Economy class airfare from home country to the host institute. Eligible during joining and after the completion of study.
2. Entire tuition fees as applicable to the University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
3. Living allowance at the rate US\$600 per month for three years.
4. One-time grant of US\$1000 to cover expenditure on books, study materials, computer and thesis preparation.
5. A grant of US\$1000 per year for three years to cover research cost with the recommendations of the PhD supervisor.

## Grant conditions

The awardee is expected to strictly follow the guidelines of respective University at the host country. The award may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory progress or attendance or if the registration is suspended or terminated by his/ her university for any reason. The awardee needs to execute a bond with the host Institute on behalf of SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka for the successful completion of PhD programme. In case of candidates leaving the doctoral study before completion, they need to surrender the entire fellowship amount with interest to the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka. A hard and soft copy of the doctoral thesis needs to be submitted to the SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka after completion. Besides, the awardee should acknowledge the SAARC Agriculture Centre in all publications including PhD thesis.

## Further contact

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