

PhD Application Call

The call is for a fully funded four-year PhD position at the Department of Urban and Rural Development (SOL), Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) at Uppsala, Sweden. The person will be employed by the Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS) in Kathmandu and will spend 50% of the education-time at SOL in Sweden.

The Department of Urban and Rural Development at SLU offers a strong social science research environment in the subjects of rural development, environmental communication, landscape architecture and agrarian history. The PhD candidate will be enrolled in the subject area of Rural Development. Rural Development draws on several social science disciplines with strong interdisciplinary elements. It focuses on the specific conditions of rural areas linked to regional, national and global change - and development processes. Important research areas are development and rural policy, natural resource and land use; social, political and economic relations; sustainability and migration.

The Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS) is a Kathmandu-based policy research institute that undertakes research to create state-of-the-art knowledge on environmental, socio-economic, and political issues in Nepal and the South Asian region and engage in policy challenges for sustainable development. Its research and policy engagements are focused on different issues related to natural resources management, climate change and disaster risk management, water security and urban resilience, and decentralized local governance. For more details, please visit www.sias-southasia.org.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by Kristina Marquardt and Dil Khatri from SLU and Dinesh Paudel from Appalachian State University (US). The PhD position is part of a larger research project led by SOL at the SLU, Sweden. We encourage people who have a long-term interest to work on policy-oriented research to apply for the position and who want to be part of an international research team.

Project Description:

The PhD study will contribute to the Swedish Research Council – VR-funded research project on the political ecology of the changing forest-people relations in the Nepalese mountains. We are primarily interested in exploring the growing problem of farming-wildlife conflicts in rural Himalayan landscapes. We see the wildlife encroachments in farming as an unintended negative local consequence of broader processes of changes in forest-people relations and aim to explore policy and practical measures to address this problem faced by Himalayan communities. Conceptually, this research will contribute to the theoretical understanding of the newly emerging nature-society relations in the Himalayas.

The research has its geographical focus in the Nepalese Himalaya. Over the past decades, community forestry programs have resulted in a recovery of once-degraded mountain landscapes. Such forest recovery, however, has unintended consequences; farmers now face second-generation problems with catastrophic impacts of wildlife encroachment on their farmlands. We will explore the dynamics and drivers of the growing wildlife encroachments and its long-term implications for farm-based livelihoods by using a political ecological framework of understanding nature-society in the Himalaya.

Qualification:

We are looking for an enthusiastic, highly motivated and creative candidate with a Master's degree in interdisciplinary subject areas such as forestry, agriculture, environmental sciences, geography, sociology, anthropology, or political science. The candidate needs a strong background in social science, an interest in interdisciplinary research and experience in qualitative research methods.

Additional considerations:

- Excellent English skills, both written and spoken, are essential (shortlisted candidates can submit the English language proficiency test results by February 2023).
- Experience in fieldwork, preferably across rural settings in Nepal and interested in and ability to work being part of an international research team.

Forms for funding or employment:

This is a 4 year fully funded PhD position, where 2 years will be spent at SLU (Uppsala). The person will be employed by SIAS during the four years, the funding further covers one travel per year to Sweden and the expected costs for staying in Uppsala (as a top-up) for about six months a year. The funding also covers costs for fieldwork, conferences, books and other materials.

Starting date:

According to the agreement, but preferably first quarter of 2023.

Application:

Send your application with an updated CV, letter of motivation, and brief research idea (concept notes between 500-700 words outlining the research problems and analytical focus. The candidate is expected to include an English test result (IELTS or TOEFL). If the test result is not available at the date of application, please indicate when you can submit it. **Send your application to career@sias-southasia.org (Ref-PhD application)** by the 15th of January 2023. Those who have submitted an application earlier are not required to submit a new application. However, if the applicants want to reorient the research concept note, they can resubmit the application again.

Selection process:

The selection among the eligible applicants is based on: a written application including curriculum vitae, personal references; written assessment and interview. A written test and oral interview will be carried out to assess theoretical knowledge of resource governance and methodological experiences (familiarity with qualitative methods), experiences of data collection and analysis. The candidate will also be assessed for their knowledge of English (reading, writing, and speaking).

Please note that applicants invited to interview must submit attested copies of their degree certificate, and a transcript of records from previous first and second-cycle studies at a university or higher education institution.

PhD at SLU:

To qualify for third-cycle (Doctoral) courses and study programmes, you must have a second-cycle (Master's) qualification. Alternatively, you must have conducted a minimum of four years of full-time study, of which a minimum of one year at the second-cycle level.

Read about the PhD education at SLU at www.slu.se/en/education/programmes-courses/doctoral-studies/

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) is a world-class international university with research, education and environmental assessment within the sciences for sustainable life. Its principal sites are in Alnarp, Umeå and Uppsala, but activities are also conducted at research stations, experimental parks and educational establishments throughout Sweden. We bring together people who have different perspectives, but they all have one and the same goal: to create the best conditions for a sustainable, thriving and better world.

SLU has just over 3,000 employees, 5,000 students and a turnover of SEK 3 billion. The university has invested heavily in a modern, attractive environment on its campuses.



Southasia Institute of
Advanced Studies (SIAS)



Swedish University of
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