



**SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
SECRETARIAT**

Message No. 799 02 99
No. SAARC/ARD/77/SAC/B/2024

The Secretariat of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade of the Royal Government of Bhutan and has the honour to inform that the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) has called applications for SAARC Ph.D. Scholarship Programme-2024 on 'Plant Breeding' from the citizens of Bhutan. In this connection, a copy of letter No. SAC/778/PhD programme/application/2024/114 dated 13 August 2024 from Director, SAC, along with Brochure and Application Form reflecting the terms and conditions for SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship-2024, is enclosed.

The esteemed Ministry is requested to take necessary measures to disseminate this information among the prospective candidates, including uploading the announcement in the websites of the following offices:

- i. Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- ii. Relevant Ministry(ies) and offices;
- iii. National Agricultural Research System (NARS);
- iv. Relevant professional organizations/bodies/institutions; and
- v. Relevant publicly accessible sites.

It may be noted that the **applications should be submitted to SAC on or before 15 September 2024**. Eligibility criteria, prescribed Application Form and other details can be downloaded from the website of the SAARC Agriculture Centre (www.sac.org.bd).

The Secretariat of SAARC avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade of the Royal Government of Bhutan, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Encls: a. a.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & External Trade,
(SAARC Division),
Royal Government of Bhutan.



Kathmandu, 14 August 2024

Copy to:

- (i) Governing Board Members, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC);
- (ii) Heads of SAARC Regional Centres/Specialized bodies, **for posting the same in their respective webpages;** and
- (iii) Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka.



South Asian
Association
for Regional
Cooperation

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)

Agricultural Knowledge & Information Hub in South Asia

Ref. No. SAC/778/PhD programme/application/2024/112A

Dated: 13.08.2024

H.E. Secretary General
SAARC Secretariat
Kathmandu, Nepal

Kind attention: Director (ARD), SAARC Secretariat

Subject: Request to arrange to issue the note verbal for "Calling applications for SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship programme – 2024 from the candidates of Bhutan.

Your Excellency,

As a part of continuous efforts towards capacity building, the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) has initiated SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship Programme in order to support aspiring young agricultural professionals to undertake their doctoral study in reputed agricultural University of SAARC region. Three candidates (citizen of Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and India) have been awarded their doctoral degree in the reputed University of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India under the SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship programme. Currently three candidates (citizen of Nepal, India and Sri Lanka) are pursuing their doctoral degree in the reputed University of India and Sri Lanka. During the current year, the Governing Board (GB) of the SAC recommended to offer the SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship to the candidates of Bhutan. As of several discussing with Bhutan, SAC is going to invite application preferably on Plant Breeding. SAC is proposing University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka for Bhutan applicant. The SAC will communicate for the official confirmation from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka for hosting the PhD fellows.

Applications are invited from the regular employees of National Agricultural Research System (NARS)/ Department/ Ministry/ University of Bhutan (for pursuing PhD in Plant Breeding). Information details (background, eligibility – educational qualification, age, experiences, process of applications, PhD synopsis, selection process, tenure and placement, host institute, coverage under scholarship, grant conditions, etc.) of SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship Programme - 2024 is provided in the announcement brochure. The aspiring candidates should apply as per the prescribed format. The announcement brochure and application format are attached herewith for circulation and is also available in the SAC website (www.sac.org.bd). The duly filed applications along with all supporting documents should be mailed to Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director, SAC (director@sac.org.bd) through their current employer/ relevant ministry/ SAARC Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan on or before 15th September, 2024.

May I therefore humbly request Your Excellency to kindly arrange to issue the *Note Verbale* to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan with a copy to SAC-GB member of Bhutan to facilitate the process.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,



(Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid)
Director



Call for application:
SAARC PhD Scholarship programme 2024
in Plant Breeding from Bhutan
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 studied at Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh, in 'Agricultural Economics' to the aspirant of Afghanistan studied 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, in 'Fisheries Economics' to the applicant of Sri Lanka for pursuing study at PGIA under the university of Peradeniya Sri Lanka.

Eligibility

For the academic year 2024, two scholarships will be offered in 'Plant Breeding' (**for the citizen of Bhutan**) 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 Genetics and Breeding or any other branch of biological sciences with plant genetics/ breeding as a major.

How to Apply

Applications are invited from potential candidates of Bhutan for pursuing doctoral study in the discipline of 'Plant Breeding'. 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 **15th September 2024**. 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. Harunur Rashid, 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 5000 words for PhD research adhering to the format *i.e.*, title, introduction, justification, objectives, and expected outcome. The proposal should be prepared 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 innovation in the particular subject for the benefit of the South Asian region.

Selection Process

Applications received on or before the deadline (**15th September, 2024**) 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) work experience in subject areas, (vi) relevance and quality of PhD synopsis, (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 as 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 for the participant of Bhutan

University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (For Bhutan) in establishing its identity at its inception in 1942, the then University of Ceylon decided that a coat-of-arms would not be in keeping with the traditions of an oriental country. Instead, it chose a seal with a lion motif that has remained the university's logo over the years, although small changes were made during its transformation into the University of Peradeniya.

The original Logo of the university consisted of a lion - the lion being the symbol of Sri Lanka, surrounded by a circle containing the Sanskrit motto 'Sarvasva Locanam Sastram' (knowledge is

the eye unto all) and the words University of Ceylon in English. Outside the circle was a design of 'Pala Pethi', a symbol of purity and wisdom in indigenous art, represented here by stylized lotus petals of the Kandyan Period.

In 1978, when the University of Peradeniya became an independent entity, the Council adopted the Logo of the University of Ceylon without the Sanskrit motto, but with the words University of Peradeniya in Sinhala, Tamil and English.



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\$ 600.00 per month for three years.
4. One-time grant of US\$ 1000.00 to cover expenditure on books, study materials, computer and thesis preparation.
5. A grant of US\$ 1000.00 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 of PhD.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C. A. E.', is located at the bottom right of the page.

Besides, the awardee should acknowledge the SAARC Agriculture Centre in all publications including PhD thesis.

Further Contact

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SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)

(Agricultural Knowledge & Information Hub in South Asia)

Dhaka, Bangladesh

Application for SAARC Agriculture

PhD Scholarship Programme – 2024 for Bhutan

Important Notes

- ✓ Regular employees of National Agricultural Research System (NARS)/ Ministry/ Department/ University
- ✓ To apply PhD in the discipline of 'Plant Breeding', the candidate should be citizen of Bhutan
- ✓ To apply PhD in the discipline of Plant Breeding for Bhutan
- ✓ Applicants must be below 40 years of age as on 20 September, 2024 and more than three years of experiences in the National Agricultural Research System/ Ministry/ Department/ University
- ✓ Duly filled application should be forwarded through the concerned head of institution/ ministry.
- ✓ Copies of degree certificates, mark sheet/ report card, title page and abstract of postgraduate thesis, passport (information page), birth certificate (English version), proof of employment (office ID), copies of publications, synopsis of the proposed PhD research should be annexed with the application.
- ✓ Incomplete applications in any respect will be rejected.
- ✓ Please paste passport photo on first page of application.

1. **Full Name:**
2. **Present designation:**
3. **Official address with telephone, fax and mail ID:**
4. **Permanent residential address with telephone number:**
5. **Date of Birth:**
6. **Age as on 15th September, 2024 (Years/ Months/ Days):**
7. **Nationality:**
8. **Gender:**
9. **Marital status:**
10. **Passport No:**
11. **Academic Qualifications (starting from highest) - mention salient achievements, if any in the form of medals/Certificate/ fellowships/ scholarships received**

Degree	Year		University/ Institute	Major subjects	Grade/ Class/ Division
	From	To			

12. Title of the postgraduate (MSc/ MS) research:

13. Employment records (from most recent position):

Designation	Name and address of organization / institution	Period of service (Month/Year)		Brief job description and responsibilities
		From	To	

14. Research projects handled as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator:

Name of the project with approximate cost	Approval date with duration	Role (PI or associate)	Approval authority

15. Academic activities performed:

Level (undergraduate or Master)	Name of the course with number	Credit hours

16. List of scientific publications including research paper, short notes, reviews, books, book chapters, policy paper, technical bulletin and popular articles etc. State the details of publications including authors name, year of publication, title, journal name with volume, issue and page no. or DOI. In case of book or book chapter, mention the details including author/ authors name, publisher name, year of publication, ISBN No.

17. International exposure:

18. PhD synopsis:

(Limit the write up within 5000 words comprising of title, introduction, justification, objectives, expected outcome)

Declaration by the Candidate

I do hereby declare that particulars provided by me through my application are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statements or any required information withheld from this form may provide grounds for the withdrawal of any offer of scholarship at any point of time. In the event of my selection in the SAARC Agriculture PhD Scholarship program, I do agree to abide by such rules & regulations of the institute as applicable to me.

Date:

Signature of the applicant

Recommendation of the Candidate's Employer or Head of Institution

I do hereby certify that Dr./ Mr / Ms..... (full name of applicant) of..... (official address) shall be released on deputation for 3 years to pursue the PhD program offered by the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh from the day of commencement of the program.

Name of the employer:

Designation:

Office Address:

Date:

Signature with Stamp

Recommendation of the Concerned Ministry

I do hereby certify that Dr./ Mr /Ms.(full name of the candidate) of (official address) under Ministry of(name of the concerned Ministry) shall be released on deputation for 3 years to pursue the PhD program offered by the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, Bangladesh from the day of the commencement of the PhD program

Name of the Ministry:

Officer forwarding the application:

Designation:

Office Address:

Date:

Signature with Stamp