**Call for collaborative PhD projects**

**The Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences**

**and Wageningen University**

**Joint PhD Programme**

**2022**

**Background Information**

To strengthen the collaboration between Wageningen University (WU) and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), a 5-year collaborative PhD programme was initiated in 2016. The programme has indeed strengthened the collaboration as it has initiated some 90 PhD projects of which the first cohort has either defended their thesis in 2021 or will do so soon. Therefore the programme was extended to 2025 in 2020.

The 5-year programme consists of an annual cohort of 20 sandwich PhD’s who will be registered at Wageningen University as a Sandwich PhD candidate. This implies that the PhD candidates perform the major part of their research at CAAS and spend at least 18 months in Wageningen. Generally, these 18 months are divided over two main periods: 6-8 months at the start of the project and 8-12 months at the end of the 4 years, given a minimum of 12 months, where the division can vary depending on the project and supervisor agreements. The programme will start in September with a WU-Graduate School (GS) CAAS start-up training in Beijing, followed by a set of GSCAAS specific courses. From December onwards, PhD candidates can come to Wageningen for the first phase of their PhD programme.

**Call for collaborative projects**

We hereby invite academic staff of WU and CAAS to submit a joint PhD project to the WU-CAAS collaborative PhD Programme.

Please note the following:

* A cluster of PhD projects around a specific theme is possible. In this case it is recommended that more than one WU chair group is involved.
* Conditions to apply can be found in the Annex 1 below.
* When WU or CAAS scientists would want to collaborate but do not have a point of entry with the other institute, please contact the two programme coordinators:
  + CAAS: Mingjun Zhang ([zhangmingjun@caas.cn](mailto:zhangmingjun@caas.cn))
  + WU: Claudius van de Vijver ([claudius.vandevijver@wur.nl](mailto:claudius.vandevijver@wur.nl)).
* **Deadline for submission: 31 May 2022.** Your submission should be sent to both coordinators listed above.
* PhD candidates **cannot** submit an application for a PhD project or initiate the contact for collaboration. They are either listed in the application form as a potential candidate or apply via the website (<http://gs.caas.cn/>) on which the eligible projects are listed.

The application should include:

* The following information of the WU and CAAS scientists involved in the project:
  1. Names
  2. Affiliation (CAAS Institute / WU Chair Group)
  3. Email addresses
* Title of the proposed project
* A short proposal (max 500 words) of the intended research. This section should include objectives, background, scientific originality and/or innovative approach of the proposed research, methodology and possible societal application.
* A statement, signed by both parties, that describes the joint intent of collaboration in this PhD project between the WU chair group and the CAAS institute as well as the financial arrangements as stipulated in Annex 1.2.
* Information about the PhD candidate:

1. When a potential PhD candidate is known:
   * Name of candidate
   * His/her CV
   * Proof of the candidate’s proficiency in English (IELTS, TOEFL or Cambridge Test)
2. When no potential candidate is known:

The WU and CAAS scientists email both programme coordinators listed above with a highlight of the proposal (max 100 words). GSCAAS will include this highlight in a call for PhD candidates on its website. Applicants for the position will be asked to apply to both WU and CAAS supervisors. Accordingly, the supervisors select the preferred candidate and inform the GSCAAS and WU coordinators. Deadline for informing the coordinators is 15 June 2022.

**Note:** For both abovementioned cases, candidates must apply to the programme at the GSCAAS. Registration at WU only occurs once the project and candidate have been accepted by the Wageningen supervisor and financial arrangements have been met.

**Annex 1: Application criteria to participate in the Wageningen-GSCAAS PhD programme:**

1. The PhD candidate

*For PhD candidates to be eligible they must meet the following criteria:*

* English proficiency according to the demands of Wageningen University (see: <https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/PhD-Programme/English-language-requirements.htm>). Note: This requirement does not need to be fulfilled upon submission of the proposal but must be met upon the start of the programme on 15 August 2022 when the start-up training starts in Beijing.
* Candidates must obtain their MSc degree before 31 August 2022 which is acknowledged by the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education (NUFFIC) as an MSc comparable to the Dutch standards.

1. Financial arrangements

* *The CAAS Institute will cover:*
* A basic allowance for living costs for the duration of the project, including the required living allowance of the PhD candidate in the time that (s)he is in Wageningen. According to Dutch Immigration law this allowance should at least be € 1225,-. Note that in the application it should formally be stated by the CAAS supervisor how this allowance will be paid.
* A bench fee of € 1000,- per month that the PhD candidate is in Wageningen, to be paid to the chair group, of which € 900,- is covered by the CAAS institute and € 100,- by Wageningen University. Here too it should be formally stated by the CAAS supervisor how this allowance will be paid.
* All local research expenses.
* Travel costs of candidates (2 return tickets).
* *The Wageningen University Chair Group will cover:*
* All local facilities required for the candidate at Wageningen University.
* The candidate’s visa costs.
* At least one trip of the Wageningen supervisor to China (CAAS Institute).
* € 3500,- to cover training and education activities. Note that, like all other PhD’s of Wageningen University, the Graduate School of Wageningen University that the PhD candidate will be part of, will cover an additional € 2500,- for organisation of PhD training and education.