

Trellis Fund 2018 - Student Application Instructions

The Horticulture Innovation Lab Trellis Fund connects U.S. graduate students to agricultural NGOs, universities and research agencies in the developing world. Each Trellis student will be assigned to a single developing-world organization, and will work with that organization to provide capacity building and relevant, science-based information to address problems facing their beneficiaries. In addition to graduate student expertise, the funded organizations receive a \$4,000 grant from the Trellis Fund.

Purpose

Small organizations in developing countries identify a horticultural problem facing local farmers and propose a project to the Horticulture Innovation Lab's Trellis Fund. The Trellis Fund matches selected organizations with graduate students who have skills relevant to the proposed project. The students then work with the funded organization to help the project connect with information and to reach their goals. In this way, organizations are able to extend new ideas, information, and technologies to their communities, while graduate students gain hands-on experience in international development and applied research. Organizations and graduate students are encouraged to form long-term connections. Trellis Fund projects may address farmer issues related to irrigation, fertilization, other aspects of production, pest management, postharvest practices, nutrition, or marketing in relation to fruits, vegetables and high-value horticultural crops.

Project Descriptions

Please [view this year's Trellis Fund Project Descriptions and Student Roles](#) for more details on each of the available projects. For this application cycle, there are projects in the following countries:

- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Nepal
- Rwanda
- Tanzania
- Uganda

Award

Selected graduate students will be provided air travel and reimbursement for lodging, visa/passport expenses, vaccines, and reasonable food expenses. In-country travel will be taken care of by the lead organization. Students will also be provided a \$300 fellowship upon successful completion of the project.

<http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu>



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Eligibility

Graduate students, including international students, from the Horticulture Innovation Lab's partner institutions are invited to participate: University of Florida, North Carolina State University, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and the University of California, Davis. In addition, you will need to be considered a student by your university throughout your involvement in the project.

Obligations

- Coordinate a work plan with the organization in advance of travel. Conduct necessary background research
- Travel to country of lead organization and complete fieldwork activities (~2 weeks)
- Support/consult with your organization via email and other electronic methods remotely before and after travel (for a minimum total of 100 hours)
- Complete a required, weekly Trellis seminar course* for 1.5 hours over 10 weeks (Wednesdays, January 10 – March 14, 2018)
- Develop and submit a monitoring and evaluation plan with the lead organization
- Submit monthly electronic reports (simple updates logging your hours) and a full trip report, which may be adapted for a blog post, to the Trellis Fund
- Submit reimbursement request forms, itemized expense sheets, and scanned copies of all receipts
- Submit a final report, documents, deliverables, and media (e.g. photos and videos) to lead organization and Trellis Fund
- Complete an exit survey/interview

*The Trellis Seminar

The Trellis Seminar is a 10 week required course that meets **every Wednesday** (January 10-March 14, 2018) for 1.5 hours from 12:30-2 PM PDT. The seminar is intended to prepare students for their project and provide useful background information and practical tools for success. Topics may include: monitoring and evaluation, survey design and implementation, communicating with your organization, developing extension materials, nutrition, and gender. The seminar will take place at UC Davis, and we will use video conferencing software to include students remotely. In addition, you may request a unit of independent study credit from your university for this seminar (however depending on your university requirements, you may need to pay for credit hours, so this is just an option).

Selection

U.S. graduate students will be selected based on how well their expertise reflects the needs of the funded projects, as well as whether this would also be a good opportunity for the student to grow.

Application Instructions and Components

Please submit a cover letter and resume for each of the Trellis Fund projects you want to apply for. You may apply for up to three projects (please indicate your preferences 1, 2, or 3 when you apply). You can view individual projects and access the online application with instructions for uploading your application documents here: rfx.piestar.com/trellis

Cover Letter (1-2 pages)

A few tips for writing your cover letter. Don't just repeat your resume; we'll read that too. Your cover letter is your chance to shine and connect your past experience with what the project is looking for. In your cover letter, tell us:

- The unique mix of skills and experience you will bring to the role and our network
- How you will thrive in the role; what have you done in past that demonstrates you can be successful?
- What about this project excites you? Why do you want to work on this project, and what are you hoping to get out of it?
- Note that while your technical expertise is important to emphasize, we are also interested in qualities such as adaptability, communication skills, and cross-cultural experiences that would contribute to a successful project collaboration between the student and the organization.
- Tell us how you will balance your coursework with your 100 hours of Trellis consulting. Explain how you will prioritize timely communication with the Trellis Coordinators and your lead organization.

Resume/CV

In your resume, please make sure the following information is captured:

- Your university name, degree and program/field of study
- Your degree start date (month, day, and year) and expected graduation date (month, day and year). If you are unsure about your graduation date, please estimate.

You may apply for up to three projects. If applying for more than one project, please apply to each project separately by submitting a customized cover letter for each project. When you apply through our online application system: <https://rfx.piestar.com/trellis>, please indicate your project preference (with preference 1 being your first choice project).

Trellis Fund Timeline

September 5, 2017	Student applications open
October 27, 2017	Student applications due
Mid December, 2017	Student application notifications sent
January – March 2018	10 Week Trellis Seminar
January – March 2018	Students and organizations begin collaboration
Mid-March – November 2018	Students travel to their host country for ~2 weeks and help implement the project with lead organization
By December 2018	All students have completed 100 hours of electronic/remote support, exit interviews, and final reporting

If you have more questions about the Trellis Fund, we encourage you to [check out the Trellis Fund FAQs](#). If you have any questions about the application process or if you would like information on past participants from your university, contact us at trellisfund@ucdavis.edu. You can also browse past Trellis projects on our website at <http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu/main/trellis.html>.

Sincerely,

The Horticulture Innovation Lab Trellis Fund Team
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