

The Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) in Halle (Saale), Germany, invites applications for a

1 Doctoral Scholarship on

“Rural Community Resilience in Central Asia: Understanding Perceptions, Responses, and Adaptation Needs”

The Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) invites applications for a doctoral scholarship to join the [Central Asia Rural Community Resilience \(CARE\) Research Group](#) within the Department of External Environment for Agriculture and Policy Analysis. The doctoral scholarship can start on **1 November 2025**. The scholarship is envisaged for 36 months.

We are seeking a highly motivated early-career researcher interested in conducting a doctoral research on rural community resilience in three-country settings that include Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The doctoral researcher will be supervised and mentored by Dr. Nodir Djanibekov, Prof. Dr. Thomas Herzfeld (both IAMO) and Jun.-Prof. Dr. Ilkhom Soliev (Head/Chair of Environmental Sociology, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg). The doctoral researcher will explore how rural communities in Central Asia perceive and experience shocks (e.g. environmental, economic, political), the ways they respond and adapt, and their needs for new adaptation strategies. The research will focus on community-level processes and collective resilience mechanisms. The research will adopt a qualitative, community-based research approach. Depending on the specific context, the following methods will be applied:

- In-depth semi-structured interviews with rural community residents, leaders, and stakeholders
- Group discussions and participatory tools to explore shared perceptions and adaptation strategies
- Community-level surveys to assess broader community insights
- Case study methodology of selected rural communities
- Collective action experiments for understanding and facilitating community-level resilience
- Document and policy review to contextualize findings within institutional frameworks.

We expect

- Master’s degree in rural sociology, development studies, human geography, agricultural or development economics, or a related field
- Demonstrated interest in rural development, qualitative methods, and community resilience
- Research experience in rural Central Asia and in the proposed research topic is of advantage
- Familiarity with community-based research tools and participatory methods is desirable
- Willingness to engage with diverse local stakeholders and institutional actors in rural settings
- Individual commitment to research and availability to spend extensive period of time for field work in research sites of the CARE project
- Experience or interest in designing or implementing behavioral experiments is a plus
- Strong written and oral communication skills in English
- Fluency in either Kyrgyz, Uzbek, or Tajik is an advantage for fieldwork
- Communicability, openness and integrability into international team work

We offer

- A unique research and qualification opportunity within a team of young scientists in IAMO, Central Asia Rural Community Resilience (CARE) Research Group, and [Central Asia Research Group](#), and at [Department of Environmental Sociology at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg](#);
- Access to resources and support for designing own doctoral research project within the CARE research group
- Opportunity to join the IAMO Graduate School and to participate in the German Doctoral Certificate Program in Agricultural Economics (www.agraroeconomik.de)
- Institutional support to organisation and collection of relevant research data in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- Opportunity to carry out research that contributes to both social understanding and policy development
- Interdisciplinary research environment at the intersection of sociology, institutional economics, and rural development
- Financial support to participation in international academic conferences
- Daily supervision and support for developing research, preparing to field work, analysis and dissertation write-up
- Support to the preparation of publications for topical peer-reviewed journals

The successful candidate will become a member of the IAMO Graduate School and apply for a doctoral degree from the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. During the analysis and writing-up period of the dissertation, the doctoral student will be based at IAMO in Halle (Saale), while the field research is supposed to be conducted in the selected rural communities in the Fergana Valley of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan according to the schedule agreed with the supervisors. Institutional support during the field work in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will be provided by the regional partner of CARE research group – the [Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia \(CAREC\)](#). Successful applicants will receive a basic scholarship of 1650,- EUR/month, a lump sum of 100,- €/month (tax-free, without health insurance) and a health insurance subsidy of a maximum of 100,- €/month (proof of amount) to cover living costs in Germany.

Application

Interested candidates should send a set of application documents in English language that include:

1. Letter of motivation (maximum 1 page)
2. Curriculum vitae
3. Copies of all relevant transcripts and certificates of bachelor, master or equivalent courses as well as English language certificates, if the MSc thesis was not written in English (a foreign degree must be recognized as equivalent in Germany in order to be admitted to a doctoral program.)
4. Research concept on the proposed topic with the suggestion of objectives and methodology (maximum 2 pages)
5. Names and contact information of two academic referees

This set of application documents should be sent by email as a single pdf-file to application.agpolicy@iamo.de. **Application deadline: 31 August 2025.** Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.

Questions regarding this doctoral scholarship can be sent to Dr. Nodir Djanibekov via e-mail: djanibekov@iamo.de

About us

IAMO is a research institute, a foundation under public law, that pursues basic and applied research in the field of agricultural economics with a focus on the formerly centrally planned economies of Europe and Asia. It offers an excellent infrastructure and a stimulating research environment in an international, ambitious, and multidisciplinary team. IAMO is a member of the Leibniz Association, a German network of non-university research institutes. The city of Halle is located in Eastern Germany, near Leipzig, and offers an attractive and affordable living environment.

The Department of Environmental Sociology at the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg focuses on study of social drivers, process, and outcomes of environmental change. The department integrates interdisciplinary approaches from environmental sociology, institutional economics, and political ecology to study how societies perceive, manage, and transform their relationships with the environment. It emphasizes the analysis of views and values, practices and behaviours, as well as institutions and norms in areas such as water, land, biodiversity, and climate governance.

The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), established in 2001 by the five Central Asian states, the EU, and UNDP, supports the region in addressing environmental challenges. It serves as a platform for interstate and cross-sectoral dialogue, promoting innovative policies, public participation, and knowledge exchange. Today, CAREC is recognized as a leading regional hub for environmental and sustainable development.

Equality of opportunity is part of our personnel policy. Female researchers are strongly encouraged to apply. Persons with severe disabilities and persons with equivalent status will be given preferential consideration if they are equally qualified in accordance with legal requirements (please enclose proof). Please note that only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews via email.

Please note the data protection information for applications in accordance with Art. 13 GDPR on data processing in the application process under the following link:
<https://www.iamo.de/footer/datenschutz/>