Food for Security: evidence from Cauca, Colombia (SEGURA)

Job description

The Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) at the University of Oslo has a vacant 3-year PhD-position to work with the project “Food for Security: evidence from Cauca, Colombia (SEGURA)” funded by the Research Council of Norway.

The PhD candidate will work with the work package 3 “Food security and culture” that will study food cultures and cuisines of various groups in Cauca, with a particular focus on displaced women in Cauca. The work in this WP will be framed as a PhD project in social sciences or interdisciplinary fields. The PhD candidate will conduct 6 months fieldwork in Cauca, Colombia to study households’ food provisioning and consumption strategies and practices in depth.

More about the position

The fellowship period is 3 years and the PhD candidate will work with the work package 3 “Food security and culture” that will study food cultures and cuisines of various groups in Cauca, with a particular focus on displaced women in Cauca. The work in this WP will be framed as a PhD project in social sciences or interdisciplinary fields. The PhD candidate will conduct 6 months fieldwork in Cauca, Colombia to study households’ food provisioning and consumption strategies and practices in depth.

Achieving food security and improved nutrition, the second of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, is one of the most pressing development challenges in the world today. Recent FAO estimates suggest that much of the world’s food insecure population resides in conflict-afflicted regions. The SEGURA project is an interdisciplinary study of how conflict shapes, and is shaped by, food security. We focus on local, institutional and gender perspectives that frame individuals’ and households’ relationships with food production and consumption in situations of conflict. To address these research and policy knowledge gaps, we will conduct detailed qualitative and quantitative case studies in Colombia, a country that—after five decades of civil war—began the peace process in late 2016 through a peace agreement. Our study will zoom in on the region of Cauca. The dynamics in Cauca includes a wide range of societal and local factors that represent challenges to food security and peaceful development. With Colombia and the Cauca region as its study setting, the overarching objective of the project is to explore the interconnectedness between conflict and food security, and how to improve food access among vulnerable households affected by conflict.

The appointed candidate will be admitted to one of the PhD programs of the University of Oslo. The PhD programme consists of mandatory and elective courses with oral and written examinations and a major research component.

It is expected that the appointed candidate actively participates in the activities of the research school at SUM.

The appointed candidate is expected to work in close collaboration with the rest of the SEGURA research team, including partners in Popayan, Colombia.

Qualification requirements

An academically relevant education corresponding to a five-year Norwegian degree programme, where 120 credits are at master’s degree level. Relevant academic fields include - but are not limited to - human geography, development studies, social anthropology, gender studies, development environment and cultural change, peace and conflict studies. Research experience, or practical work experience with regards to food security will be seen as a positive asset.

- GPA of minimum B and minimum a B for the Master thesis.
- Document proficiency in both written and oral English.
- Document sufficient knowledge of Spanish to be able to conduct fieldwork in Colombia.
- Document experience with qualitative research methods.

Personal skills

- Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team
- Well-structured in approach to work and time use
- Ability to work independently
- Motivated to work in an interdisciplinary research environment
- Enthusiasm to contribute positively to the work environment at SUM

We welcome applications that:

- Propose how to empirically unpack the meaning of “cultural acceptable food” in situations of forced displacement and conflict, that is, with explicit consideration of the context in which the cultural values of diverse groups evolve in response to internal and external forces.
- Propose to study how food insecure groups engage in dynamic relationships with foods and food systems in contexts of forced displacement and conflict including how vulnerable groups sustain means of production and human-land relations that are relevant for diverse social and ecological values.
Propose innovative research methodologies that cross traditional boundaries, for example by combining the use of qualitative and quantitative methods with visual methods.

We offer

- a challenging and friendly working environment
- salary 432 700 NOK - 473 100 per year depending on qualifications
- favourable pension arrangement
- attractive welfare arrangements
- workout during hours, 1.5 h pr week

How to apply

The application should include

- A letter of intent (max 1.5 pages)
- A research proposal
- The applicants complete CV
- Electronic copy of Master’s thesis if available
- Certified copies of relevant transcripts and diplomas
- Documentation of proficiency in English and Spanish
- Contact details for two references

Research proposal: The proposal should specify a clearly defined research question, clearly defined aims and objectives, a brief description of a relevant conceptual or theoretical framework to answer the research question, a methods section that demonstrates clearly how the methods relate to the research question and the objectives, and a list of references. A progress plan. The maximum word count is 1500 (excluding references and progress plan).

Propose how to empirically unpack the meaning of “cultural acceptable food” in situations of forced displacement and conflict, that is, with explicit consideration of the context in which the cultural values of diverse groups evolve in response to internal and external forces and/or Propose to study how food insecure groups engage in dynamic relationships with foods and food systems in contexts of forced displacement and conflict including how vulnerable groups sustain means of production and human-land relations that are relevant for diverse social and ecological values. And/or Propose innovative research methodologies that cross traditional boundaries, for example by combining the use of qualitative and quantitative methods with visual methods.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview, the interview will be conducted in English and Spanish.

Formal regulations

Please see the guidelines and regulations for appointments to Research Fellowships at the University of Oslo.

No one can be appointed for more than one PhD Research Fellowship period at the University of Oslo.

According to the Norwegian Freedom of Information Act (Offentleglova) information about the applicant may be included in the public applicant list, also in cases where the applicant has requested non-disclosure.

The appointment may be shortened/given a more limited scope within the framework of the applicable guidelines on account of any previous employment in academic positions.

The University of Oslo has an agreement for all employees, aiming to secure rights to research results etc.

Contact information

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Head of office Gitte Egenberg (gitte.egenberg@sum.uio.no)

About the University of Oslo

The University of Oslo is Norway’s oldest and highest ranked educational and research institution, with 28 000 students and 7000 employees. With its broad range of academic disciplines and internationally recognised research communities, UiO is an important contributor to society.