



PhD Scholarship in Sustainable Development in Social dimensions of tree health / Environmental management

Title: *Mapping social values, attitudes and practices to inform effective ecological and cultural restoration of 'lost' tree species*

Type of Funding: The project is funded by the Defra supported Centre for Forest Protection, led by Forest Research and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, with international fee support from University of St Andrews

Supervisor(s): Dr Mariella Marzano (Forest Research), Dr Rehema White (University of St Andrews), Professor Richard Buggs (Kew Gardens)

Project details

We invite applications from qualified and highly motivated students for a 3.5-year PhD studentship to investigate the feasibility, acceptability, and value of tree species restoration to different stakeholders. We will use the iconic elm as an exemplar case study for restoration of large tree species that are partially 'lost', but also explore other tree species that we are in the process of losing (e.g. ash) or that are threatened by future loss (e.g. oak, Scots pine).

The goal is to understand social acceptability, benefits and risks associated with possible routes to tree species restoration. This research will use a transdisciplinary approach and primarily qualitative research methods to provide novel theoretical insights and practical recommendations on the social and cultural dimensions of forest resilience and ecological restoration. Three key themes will be investigated

- **Acceptability** – Which species restoration methods are preferred and where? What are the risks and benefits in different contexts?
- **Values, attitudes and experiences** - How are treescapes valued by stakeholders and wider society? What are stakeholder expectations for restoration success?
- **Decision-making** –What form of awareness raising and engagement is required to enable informed, dialogical decision making?

The successful applicant will primarily be based in the School of Geography and Sustainable Development, University of St Andrews, but travel will be required for residencies with the other institutions and for fieldwork.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria: 1) An Honours (at least 2.1) and practical experience or a Master's degree (with distinction or merit) in a relevant degree, including social science; 2) Interest in application of transdisciplinary research to address sustainability challenges; and 3) Desire to work across academic, policy and practice arenas. The University of St Andrews strives for equal opportunities.

Award details

The PhD scholarship will cover: 1) A maintenance grant of approximately £17,000 per year (aligned with NERC rates); 2) A research training support grant of £750 per year; and 3) Full tuition fee at UK or international student rates as required.

The studentship will begin in **January 2023**.

How to apply

Candidates must submit an online application by **31 October 2022**. See information at: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study/apply/postgraduate/research/> . Apply to the programme “PhD Sustainable Development (Arts)”. Include a covering letter on your interest in the topic and approach, and a proposal.

Selection process

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed November 2022 (online).

Supervisor/Contact details

For informal inquiries, contact Dr Mariella Marzano (mariella.marzano@forestresearch.gov.uk) or Dr Rehema White (rehema.white@st-andrews.ac.uk). Please include “Tree health PhD studentship” in the subject line of your email.