



Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST)
Ministry of Forests and Environment,
Climate Change Management Division

Detail Information for Applying EbA Research Grants

Background

Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) has entered into an agreement with Climate Change Management Division, Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) for the management of research grants for Bachelors, Masters and PhD students under Catalyzing Ecosystem Restoration for Climate Resilient Natural Capital and Rural Livelihoods in Degraded Forests and Rangelands of Nepal (EbA II) project being implemented by MoFE. The main objective of the EbA II research grants is to provide research grants to students that are pursuing their research in a bid to generate knowledge in the area of EbA and develop skilled professionals. The research grant will support students to undertake research work for completing their dissertations.

Universities of Nepal have now started integration of climate change into Environmental Management course. However, the focus has remained on climate change in general and it is not EbA focused. Effective implementation of EbA need appropriate policy, institutional setup and knowledge generation from field demonstration activities. Limited studies have been done in these fields. Similarly, very few studies have been done in the field of valuation of ecosystem goods and services. Knowledge in these fields is important for designing cost effective climate adaptation measures and integrating EbA into DRR and providing policy feedback to three tiers of government for mainstreaming EbA into their planning system.

It is expected that this research supports will help to generate scientific information and knowledge base and provide better understanding of EbA that will ultimately help in better planning and implementation of EbA interventions to adapt to the effect of climate change.

Eligibility

The applicants must be Nepalese citizens studying Bachelor's and Master's degree program at institutions in Nepal. For the PhD research grant, the applicants must be Nepalese citizens studying PhD degree from the universities of Nepal or abroad but conducting their research in

Nepal. Priority will be given to the enrolled PhD students who have already completed PhD credit course as per the requirements of their university and can submit PhD thesis within the project period. Qualified girls, women and women from Inclusion groups (*dalit, janjati*, backward geographical areas, Person with Disabilities-PWDs, and marginalized community) will be given priority. The applicants should demonstrate the need for financial support. Master's and Bachelor's level students applying for this grant shall not accept other grants for conducting the same thesis/research. However, PhD students should produce the evidence if any other funding applied for or has already secured for the same research. At least 33% scholarship quotas will be reserved for women candidates.

Thematic Research Area

For Bachelors level students

For the undergraduate students, they can either choose research topics on the themes presented below for Masters and PhD level students or additional topics like but not limited to exploring and documenting case studies of EbA practices, ecosystem health and biodiversity assessment, conservation agriculture practices, water conservation on the dry land, local approach on DRR among others. *Priority will be given to the proposal focusing the following research topics on biodiversity assessment to be carried out within wards of 10 Municipalities from Dolakha, Salyan and Achham.*

Possible research topics on biodiversity assessment

- a) Stock and diversity of plant and animal species
- b) Perception and understanding of communities on biodiversity, ecosystem services and their support to reduce climate vulnerability
- c) Threats and challenges to the species diversity and opportunities/options of promoting biodiversity to better adapt the changing climate
- d) Identification, Conservation and Sustainable use of site-specific biodiversity and fair and equitable benefit sharing of ecosystem goods and services
- e) Economic, ecological and social values of biodiversity including promoting eco-tourism and nature-based livelihoods
- f) Functions of biodiversity products and services focused to community livelihoods benefits
- g) Perception of local communities on the changing availability of NTFP in National Forests
- h) Documentation of traditional agricultural crop varieties and the impact of climate

change in conserving the traditional crop varieties

For Masters and PhD level Students

The broad themes of the research for graduate researchers (Masters and PhD) are presented below:

- A. Economics of EbA:** Research and studies on Economic or Financial analysis of EbA interventions and their benefits. Comparison of the cost and benefits of nature based solutions or EbA and other practices of climate change adaptation measures.
- B. Nature based solutions for adapting the adverse impact of climate change:** Climate change and community vulnerability, application of nature based solutions for addressing the vulnerability, Mainstreaming nature based solutions in climate change adaptation planning, integration of EbA with disaster risk reduction, soil erosion control and increase water harvesting, integrated sub-watershed management planning and EbA effectiveness.
- C. Ecosystem Management for Climate Adaptation:** Management of Forest, Rangeland, Agriculture and wetland ecosystems to help adapt to the adverse impact of climate change to the local communities; Identifying, exploring the linkage and rationale for success or failure of existing and or new agriculture and forestry practices which provides multiple benefits to the ecosystem and maximize output to the communities, reduces disaster risk and address the adverse impact of climate change to people and their environment.
- D. EbA and Livelihoods:** Multiple benefits of EbA interventions to the indigenous and local communities through green enterprise development; eco-tourism and livelihood improvements; economic and ecological impacts of livelihood activities.
- E. Gender Equality, Social Inclusion and Good Governance in EbA:** Gender equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in ecosystem based climate change adaptation, gender equality policies and practices in natural resource based community livelihoods, women's leadership in ecosystem restoration and forest management, integrating GESI in ecosystem based climate change adaptation planning process, or governance in ecosystem goods and services management.

Geographic Area

Although there is no restriction on the geographic area for the research, priority will be given for field studies from EbA II project districts (Achham, Salyan and Dolakha). Additional priority will be given to the students coming from the project districts. Bachelor's level

students need to limit their study sites on wards of 10 municipalities of Achham, Salyan and Dolakha districts.

Number of Research Grants and Amount

The research grant per student shall not exceed NRs 70,000 for Bachelors, NRs 90,000 for Masters and NRs 350,000 for PhD students. The grants will be provided to 10 Bachelors level students, 7 Masters level students and 5 PhD researchers on installment basis.

Research Timeline

The research period will be the maximum of one year for Bachelor and Masters level students and three years for PhD students. Within this period, the entire research activities should be completed and final reports including abstracts of the research findings should be submitted to NAST. The final thesis has to be submitted to the NAST after final defense/viva in the respective universities/colleges of the students/researchers.

Research Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated competitively, based on:

- Relevancy, clarity on the research method, goals and objectives
- Identification of research gap, setting up objectives and methodological clarity to achieve the set objectives
- Contribution to the knowledge base for nature-based solution
- Selection of research sites
- Study/Relevant Work experience (only for PhD researchers)
- Financial details