

## Call for UK and Chinese ECR Participants

### Workshop on Systematic Innovation for Food Security and Rural Sustainability in China

December 2021 (online and offline)

#### About the workshop

Global challenges in rural poverty, food security, climate change call for international research collaboration in sustainable agriculture and rural transformation. A UK and Chinese early career researcher (ECR) Links Workshop will be held by the combination of online and offline activities in Beijing, December 2021 (dates to be confirmed).

In the context of on-going transformation in rural China involving its 230 million small farmers and successful experience of “targeted poverty alleviation” programme (2015-2020), this workshop aims to address challenges and opportunities related to:

- Interconnecting industries (e.g. crops, animal husbandry, process), technologies. (traditional vs modern), biodiversity protection for health and nutrition food supply.
- Farmers’ participation and community development for better use of external resources and investment opportunities.
- Collaboration among multiple stakeholders to facilitate sustainable agriculture and rural transformation in China, UK and beyond.

Building on the successful completion of a GCRF project last year (see [Blog and Report](#)) and research partnerships with Chinese and UK institutions, this workshop offers a unique opportunity for ECR researchers from two countries to address the above challenges and opportunities through:

- a holistic view (interconnection between agroecological, technologic, social and policy systems)
- cross-disciplinary research collaboration
- engagement with multiple stakeholders (governments, companies, investors and traders, NGOs, farmers’ organisations).

#### Prepare your application

With support from research partnerships, internationally renowned scholars and industrial mentors (see **Guidance for applicants**), interested researchers are welcome to submit their applications on one of five themes below:

- 1) Systematic innovation for circular agriculture (Wenliang Wu and Mark Taylor).
- 2) Digital technology and rural transformation. (Fengying Nie and Yu Xiong).
- 3) Agroecosystem of non-staple grains, agricultural support and food security. (Shenggen Fan and Oliver Morrissey).
- 4) Financial inclusion for improving the access of underserved groups (Tongquan Sun and Meryem Duygun).
- 5) Sustainable tourism development and entrepreneurship (Martin Lockett and Simon Mosey).

We welcome applications from ECR researchers defined as those who have been awarded their PhD (or have equivalent experience) not more than ten years prior to December 2021, work in universities or research institutes in China or the UK with a relevant disciplinary background, and interests in interdisciplinary research.

### How to apply

Applicants are asked to prepare and submit two documents in English:

- Application Form
- A one-page (A4) abstract of academic paper, OR a project proposal reflecting your interested theme for research collaboration with other ECR researchers.

The completed application form and outline paper or proposal should be sent to **Wang Rui** ([wangrui@cass.org.cn](mailto:wangrui@cass.org.cn)) **before the deadline of 30 July 2021**.

Informal queries regarding the nature of the project or application please contact Dr. Bin Wu ([bin.wu@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:bin.wu@nottingham.ac.uk)).

### Screening process

A screening committee will assess the applications against the criteria outlined in application pack. The panellists include PIs, mentors, BC and NSFC representatives. Priority will be given to those who have research experience and demonstrate a clear vision related to one or more themes of this project. Gender balance will be emphasised.

**Up to 17 ECR Researchers** from each country will be selected and applicants will be informed of the outcome by **15 September 2021**.

### Research teams and prior to event activities

Successful applicants will be grouped into five research teams according to their applications or discussion between researchers, PIs and mentors. Led by two mentors (one from each country), online meetings will be arranged before the Workshop to:

- present academic papers, collaboration ideas or proposals.
- develop common interests, research themes and a group collaborative plan (including funding applications).

- prepare academic publications and group presentation to the Workshop.
- meet and discuss with key stakeholders for the plan of research collaboration and a field trip in China if appropriate.

## Workshop details

Taking into account the uncertainties caused by Covid-19 Pandemic, the Workshop will be organised by a combination of Online and Offline sessions in China in early December 2021 (dates to be confirmed).

### Online event

The Online event (via Teams Meeting) will be divided into two days:

#### Day One

This focuses on interdisciplinary research methodology and systematic innovation through keynote speeches, group presentations and a roundtable discussion of key issues concerned by ECR researchers.

#### Day Two

This brings together key stakeholders and ECR researchers to draw a big picture for UK-China collaboration in relevant areas, present good cases, and develop an action plan for research collaboration.

### Offline meetings

These will be arranged for all ECR researchers in Beijing either at the same time as the Workshop or soon after, once the international travel has resumed. All travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the Newton Fund Researcher Links programme.

The possibility of field visits outside of Beijing will be discussed with relevant stakeholders, including with potential funders.

## Outcomes

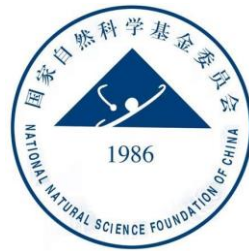
Outcomes of this project will include, but not be limited to:

- A UK-China Rural Sustainability Research Hub with five groups for long term collaboration.
- A number of high-quality publications targeted at top-international journals (AJG list 3\* or above).
- A report from each group to address challenges, trends, opportunities, and collaborative planning.
- Action plan with stakeholders for the pathways of collaboration and social impact.
- A number of local farms in rural China will be selected to host a visit of UK delegation comprised by ECR researchers, mentors and agribusiness companies after the event.

## Funding

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Co-funded by:



Delivery partner:



### **In partnership with:**

James Hutton Institute (JHI), Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), China Agricultural University, University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC), Surrey University, Agricultural Engineering Precision Innovation (Agri-EPI) Centre, and China-Britain Regional Initiative (CBRI).