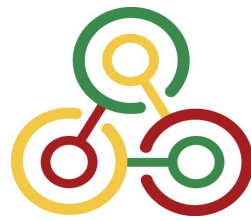




UNIVERSITY OF
HOHENHEIM



UKUDLA
African German Centre
for Sustainable and Resilient Food
Systems and Applied Agricultural
and Food Data Science

Call for Doctoral Scholarship Applications

2026

Application closing date (for German candidates): 6 February 2026

The African German Centre of Excellence UKUDLA invites applications for PhD scholarships in the area of sustainable, resilient food systems and data science. Scholarships for a doctoral degree obtained from the University of Hohenheim will be awarded for a period of 36 months (extension possible for 6 months). The scholarship holder will be based at one of the UKUDLA partner universities in South Africa or Malawi. The scholarship is financed by the DAAD with funds from the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR), Germany.



Federal Ministry
of Research, Technology
and Space



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



UNIVERSITY OF
HOHENHEIM

UKUDLA objectives

UKUDLA's primary objective is to advance the expertise of Master's and PhD students, early-career researchers, and university lecturers in agri-food systems and applied data science. It also aims to enhance teaching methodologies and mentorship programmes within these interdisciplinary fields.

For this purpose, scholarships for food systems-related doctoral studies are awarded to individuals as described below and are selected through a competitive process.

By training future academic and professional leaders, the programme contributes to the following long-term impacts:

- Qualified professionals' involvement in agri-food systems and applied data science-related research projects in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Graduates strengthening education and research in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Structural strengthening and regional networking of partner institutions and partner universities.
- Promoting knowledge exchange with and transfer to stakeholders of the agri-food systems.

Participating institutions

Successful candidates will enrol at the University of Hohenheim (Germany) and be based for full-time doctoral study at one of the network's institutions, the University of the Western Cape, the University of Mpumalanga, the University of Pretoria (South Africa), or the Lilongwe University of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Malawi).

Target group and place of tenure

- Candidates who have a master's degree in a discipline that is broadly linked to food systems or data science and are interested in how these fields intersect.
- Candidates who have not yet started with their doctoral degree.
- Candidates who are prepared to undertake the doctoral degree as full-time students and contribute to the objectives of the UKUDLA Centre of excellence.
- Candidates with strong academic and communication skills, innovative thinking, problem solving, and self-discipline, resilience and good time management. Team players with intercultural skills.
- For the duration of the 36 months (extension of up to 6 additional months possible), successful candidates will be based at one of the network's institutions in South-Africa or Malawi. Up to 12 months of the scholarship (but not more than



UNIVERSITY OF
HOHENHEIM

6 months in one year) can be spent at Hohenheim University. The scholarship rate will be reduced to 1.300,00 EUR / month during the time in Germany.

Scholarship benefits

- Stipend: A monthly stipend of EUR 1.800,00 (basic rate for South Africa) will be provided for a maximum of 36 months (extension of up to 6 additional months possible). The scholarship rate will be reduced to 1.300,00 EUR / month during the optional time (max. 12 month) in Germany. Additionally, mobility lump sums for travel/flights can be claimed.
- UKUDLA Graduate Centre educational modules, short courses, summer schools and workshops are integral to the UKUDLA project. Scholarship holders will have an opportunity to apply to participate in these educational activities.
- Research funds in reasonable amounts for material costs, equipment, consumables, labour, local travel, etc., can be applied for.

Application requirements

- Graduates with a first academic degree who have successfully completed a master's degree with above average results (final mark 2,5 "good" or better.)
- The scholarships are open to German graduates, doctoral students from state or state-recognised universities. You need to be a German passport holder or a person with unlimited residence permit for Germany. Other specific regulations may apply and should be checked in advance.
- The applicant's master's degree must be from the same field as the host faculty of the PhD candidate. Qualified applicants from related disciplines may be required to take a knowledge assessment after participating selected modules in the respective faculty.
- Applicants must demonstrate at least "good" language skills in the language of the dissertation (English). The form of proof is determined by the doctoral committee. Accepted are e.g. TOEFL (ibt) 90, IELTS (academic) 6,5 or German Abitur (with minimum 6 years of English lesson).
- Candidates must supply at least one academic reference, where possible, one from the potential supervisor.
- Clearly show motivation and strong commitment through a written statement.

Submission of Application

As a first step, all applicants must submit a completed application form, which can be completed [here](#). **The most important part will be the development of a research project proposal addressing one of the announced research topics at our website.**

The following attachments must be uploaded as part of the application:



UNIVERSITY OF
HOHENHEIM

- A cover letter including your motivation (max. 2 pages).
- A copy of your National Identification Card or, if not applicable, a copy of your passport.
- A completed project proposal form **addressing one of the announced research topics** at our website <https://ukudla.uni-hohenheim.de/en>. Download [here](#) (University Pretoria) or at the UKUDLA website at Hohenheim University (see above).
- Short CV (2 pages maximum)
- Copies of university degree certificates, including transcripts
- One recent academic recommendation letter, the potential supervisor can provide a recommendation letter.
- Letter of Support from the partner institution in South Africa or Malawi (optional).
- Letter of admission from the host university (this can be subsequently submitted before the scholarship begins if it is not available at the time of application, the Letter of Award only becomes effective if you are admitted to the selected university).

Selection procedure

Applications will go through an administrative review to ensure all qualifying criteria are met. If an application meets the specified criteria and is related to one of the research topics published at our website, it will be sent for review by the selection committee. Applications will be peer-reviewed by two selection committee members using a rating rubric. A shortlist will be produced, and selected candidates will be invited to **participate in an online interview**.

The successful candidates will be informed before the end of June 2025, to commence their scholarship earliest in July 2025.

Payment of scholarship funds

The award of the scholarship is dependent on acceptance of the student's registration at the University of Hohenheim as doctoral candidate.

The scholarship funds will be paid directly to the scholarship holder's account. Further details will be communicated after admission to the scholarship programme in the Letter of Award, Scholarship Agreement and Scholarship Calculation.

Payments cannot be made in advance/prior to the scholarship start date and the commencement of studies at the host institution. Furthermore, no additional benefits



UNIVERSITY OF
HOHENHEIM

other than those listed in this call for applications, such as benefits for family members, can be made.

Expectation

UKUDLA scholarship holders are expected to actively engage in their PhD studies, as demonstrated by the submission of a well-developed PhD proposal and regular progress reports detailing their research. They are also expected to contribute to the academic community by publishing their research findings in peer-reviewed journals. Furthermore, scholarship holders should actively participate in science communication, disseminating their research to broader audiences.

Duration and continuation of scholarship

Scholarships are awarded for the duration of the standard period of study for the PhD programme, which is 36 months (extension by a maximum of 6 months up to a maximum duration of 42 months possible). After the first and the second year of the project, your academic and research achievements will be assessed for further funding (details will be provided in the scholarship agreement).

Deadline

The deadline for applications is **6 February 2026**.

Contact and email address for queries

Application form available [here](#).

For further information see also UKUDLA website at University of Hohenheim:

<https://ukudla.uni-hohenheim.de/en>

Any questions or queries can be directed by e-mail to ukudla@uni-hohenheim.de