

Applications are due Mar. 31st for May or September Start and Oct. 1st for January Start

INTRODUCTION TO FWNET

The NSERC-CREATE FWNET (Food & Water Nexus Education & Training) is a new training program hosted at the University of Saskatchewan (USask). Funded by NSERC since 2022, FWNET capitalizes on the water and agri-food expertise and facilities on campus to train and mentor highly skilled graduates for a variety of careers with an inter- and trans-disciplinary approach.

Invitation to apply. FWNET seeks applications from future FWNET trainees to form the next cohort of graduate students in this unique program. If you would like to be part of this unique opportunity, here is what you need to know to apply.

INFORMATION FOR FWNET FELLOWS

You are a future FWNET Fellow if:

- ✓ You seek to be part of a vibrant and rapidly evolving research training program associated with food & water nexus.
- ✓ You are an entering or continuing graduate student (Master's, PhD) in an approved program at USask.
- ✓ You are entering or continuing graduate student (Master's, PhD) in an approved program at University of Regina, or University of Guelph, or University of Waterloo with a CREATE co-supervisor from your home institution (see table 1).
- ✓ Your current or proposed research interests intersect agriculture and water sciences
- ✓ You embrace opportunities to develop professional skills to prepare you for your future career.
- ✓ You value an equitable, inclusive, and diverse research training environment.
- ✓ You appreciate interdisciplinary networking and mentorship opportunities.

Requirements for FWNET Fellows:

- **Research:**
 - Your research aligns with any of these themes:
 - Plant-soil-water interactions at the root-zone level
 - Nutrient and agrochemical stewardship and climate change
 - The socioeconomics of production decisions and food-water policy
 - Any other theme relating to the intersection of food and water
 - Optionally having a co-supervisor to emphasize interdisciplinary approach
- **FWNET courses:**
 - 2 c.u. Experiential course (4 days field trip)
 - 3 c.u. Introductory F&W Nexus course online
 - 1 c.u. Communication, professional and Leadership Skills course
 - Training series in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
- **Meetings**
 - Join events including seminar series with external speakers, as arranged.
 - Participate in annual workshop - with expert lectures, student posters, networking.

FWNET Fellowships – Call for Applications and Terms of Reference

FWNET Fellowship Terms Updated February 06, 2024

- **Submit annual report:** to document course work, professional skills and FWNET event participation. The report will also capture publications, presentations, and other outputs and achievements. Fellows seeking an additional year of funding demonstrate that their research programs are still broadly in line with FWNET.
- **Notify FWNET of career directions:** so that FWNET can celebrate your achievements following graduation/completion.

Optional additional opportunities for FWNET Fellows:

- **Mobility:** Apply for a travel subsidy for conferences or to visit experimental facilities that complement those available on campus
- **Internships:** Apply for a 4-month internship with industry, after completing the professional skills development training
- **Leadership:** Take the opportunity to lead, design and promote new opportunities within FWNET or elsewhere

INFORMATION FOR FWNET SUPERVISORS

You are a future FWNET supervisor if:

- ✓ Your research is positioned at the intersection of agriculture & water sciences
- ✓ You embrace an interdisciplinary community and are interested in networking with researchers and trainees outside of your discipline
- ✓ You support your trainee to engage in professional development and other FWNET activities
- ✓ You contribute to FWNET beyond supervision, as matches your expertise

Eligibility of FWNET supervisors

Any faculty member from USask is eligible to receive FWNET matching funding to support MSc or PhD trainee(s). A co-supervisor is encouraged but not required and does not necessarily need to be a faculty member or formally a co-supervisor under CGPS rules.

As a multi-university Initiative, FWNET follows NSERC guidelines specifying that each of the co-applicant universities that will be involved in the grant must have at least one co-applicant listed in the proposal. This ensures access to the CREATE funds for all trainees involved at that university. The funds will be administered by the co-applicant regardless of whether or not the trainees at their university are under their direct supervision.

For instance, we would only transfer matching funds to the partner universities through the listed co-investigator(s) as follows:

University	Faculty Name	Program
University of Regina	Margot Hurlbert	Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy
University of Waterloo	Merrin Macrae	Geography and Environmental Management
University of Guelph	Aaron Berg	Geography

Table 1. List of co-applicants from external universities of the grant holder.

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Responsibilities of FWNET Supervisors

- **Support Fellows** to engage in the full range of FWNET activities
- **Engage in the Interdisciplinary Network of FWNET** through networking activities
- **Participate in core EDI Training** and show willingness to embrace EDI principles to foster an inclusive training environment.
- **Attend Annual Workshops** as a focal point of networking and student presentations; participation at this event is required by both trainees and supervisors
- **Acknowledge FWNET** on publications, presentations etc. resulting from *any* work involving the FWNET Fellow. Items should be reported through the annual reporting form. The following are acceptable wording:
 - <Name> is a trainee in the FWNET NSERC CREATE.
 - <Name> acknowledges financial support from the FWNET NSERC CREATE.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FWNET FELLOWSHIPS

FWNET Fellowship Level	Minimum annual stipend	Maximum payable by FWNET (/year)	Minimum Matching funds required (/year)	Maximum duration of funding**	Other funding available***
MSc or another Master's	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	2 years	Up to \$1,500
Ph.D.	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$12,500	3 years	

** All awards are for twelve months, with possibility of extension to maximum duration subject to satisfactory progress.

*** Funding available for annual conference attendance and for publication costs.

A. Matching Funding Fellowship: The FWNET 50% of a standard stipend is requested, as detailed in the table. Funds must be matched from another source which must be secured at the time of the award and indicated in the application form. Scholarships or fellowships from other sources should be taken in preference. If the other scholarship is worth more than 100% of standard stipend, the FWNET contribution will be zero. Any changes to other funding sources, or changes in academic program, must be reported promptly. Awards are contingent on fulfilment of program requirements and submission of annual progress reports, as well as availability of grant funds.

In line with CGPS guidelines, prospective Fellows seeking funding should have a good academic track record, with a grade point average (GPA) of at least 80%. For entering Master's students and direct entry PhD students the GPA of the last 60 credit units is used while for PhD candidates with a Master's, the GPA of courses taken during a Master's is used. *The 80% GPA may be reviewed on a case by case basis for students with extenuating circumstances which have impacted their grades. The recruitment committee may choose to waive the requirement.*

We highly encourage that trainees have two co-supervisors to enhance interdisciplinarity.

B. Zero Funding Fellowship: Candidates with full funding elsewhere may apply to become a trainee. If accepted, they are expected to fulfil requirements of FWNET trainees. The minimum GPA may be waived if other criteria are deemed acceptable.

C. Merit Bonus: Candidates with partial or full funding and outstanding academic record could request a one time or annual stipend bonus to reward academic excellence and will be adhere to all required components of the training program.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Project descriptions should demonstrate strong relevance to food & water nexus research. For stipend support, interdisciplinary collaborations and new directions are especially encouraged.

How to Apply:

Applications are due March 31st for May or September Start and October 1st for January Start

1. Trainees link with a supervisor to propose research of mutual interest. Trainees and supervisors submit a collaborative application to FWNET.
2. Trainees seeking an introduction to a prospective supervisor can send their background and interests to fwnet@usask.ca and the FWNET team will attempt to match them with prospective supervisors.

Instructions for submission

Email a PDF Document: Send to fwnet@usask.ca a single .PDF file, name **TraineeName.Department.FWNET-Application.pdf**. Include all documents in the following order:

- Completed “Application for FWNET Fellowship” (fillable word-form)
- Trainee CV (2 page abbreviated format)
- Copy of Trainee Transcripts

Other Documentation Required: (separate from e-mailed document PDF – do not attach)

- MSc and PhD candidates: submit application to College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies through the department of primary supervisor.

Evaluation Considerations

Applications will be considered by the FWNET Recruitment Committee. The committee will rank the proposals on the following criteria:

1. Scientific excellence of proposed research
2. Quality of the trainee¹ (CV, transcripts, statement of intent)
3. Alignment with FWNET objectives

¹ For a zero funding request, the minimum 80% GPA may be relaxed. Evaluation will still other factors including trainee intent.

Considerations of candidate selection for funding will include ensuring a diversity of research areas, disciplines and backgrounds. The selection committee members will be chosen to include diverse perspectives and will engage in unconscious bias training. FWNET will also strive to reduce barriers to equity, diversity and inclusivity as a goal of enriching the program in an effort to achieve excellence. We aspire to include members of underrepresented groups, and to support all trainees to successful outcomes. For this round of applications, trainee applicants and their supervisors are invited to self-identify as a confidential part of their application form. We will monitor whether proportional representation of underrepresented groups change between applications and awards. This will inform our planning of future recruitment processes.

For more information regarding the program or application, send e-mail to fwnet@usask.ca