

Graduate Research Training Program (GRTP) Policy

The Graduate Research Training Program (GRTP) at ICARDA was established in 1986. This program is administrated by the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU) with the operational support of the Training Coordination Committee (TCC) of the Center.

The GRTP is considered a powerful tool for building regional capacity and improving partnership with NARSs. It is mainly intended to assist national scientists to conduct their M. Sc. and Ph.D. graduate research in collaboration between ICARDA and national universities. Men and women who are selected for the program should be registered at recognized universities within the ICARDA region or outside. Successful candidates will have an opportunity to conduct their thesis research under joint supervision of the concerned university and ICARDA scientists.

The present categories of the ICARDA Graduate Research Training Program (GRTP) are as follow:

I- Non-ICARDA Students (from NARS):

Students applying for GRTP must be either registered or have an acceptance for registration at recognized university. Selected students will conduct all or part of their thesis research either at ICARDA research stations in Syria or at their national programs in collaboration with one of the center's six regional programs and the course work will be carried out at the university of registration. Topics of the GRTP studies are to be related to ICARDA's mandated research and must have direct relevance to the national program. An ICARDA scientist or more will supervise the student's research work in the capacity of a co-supervisor(s) and members of the student's advisory committee. The Graduate Research Training Program is open to students from ICARDA's region and other developing and developed countries. Selection of candidates is made on competitive basis through a GRTP selection committee comprising of the Training Coordination Committee (TCC) members.

In terms of financial support to non-ICARDA GRTP candidates, students may fall under the following sub-categories:

I-A. Partially Financed Students (Partial Awards):

This implies that, depending on budget availability, the candidate requires support from ICARDA in some of the following: Technical supervision, use of ICARDA field and laboratory facilities, local transportation, local accommodation, insurance, cost of thesis preparation, costs of international travel for one or two visits to ICARDA's headquarters in Aleppo during the duration of the study. If needed and approved by the Head of the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU), per diem and en-route expenses will only be paid for the period of their visit to ICARDA headquarters up to a maximum of six and eight months for M. Sc. and Ph.D. thesis, respectively.

Selection Process:

Partial-award graduate students are selected as follows:

1. Nominations are accepted from National Agricultural Research Programs and recognized National Universities.
2. ICARDA Mega Projects and Units review the nominations and send their comments to the Head of HRDU for consideration by the selection committee.
3. The selection committee for GRTP (composed of the Training Coordination Committee members) meets once a year (around mid-March or whenever is needed) to review applications and select appropriate candidates.
4. Upon a favorable decision by the selection committee, the Head of HRDU in consultation with the concerned Mega Project Directors/Unit heads and Regional Programs Coordinators prepare an official letter of acceptance and detailed contract for the approval of the Director General. Unsuccessful candidates will also be notified.
5. Criteria for selecting GRTP students generally include:
 - Outstanding undergraduate academic performance
 - Established links between ICARDA scientists and the University/NARS staff
 - Significance of thesis research for national agricultural research program priority needs;
 - Compatibility of thesis research proposal with ICARDA research interest and resources
 - Fluency in English
 - Preference accorded to universities within ICARDA collaborative program agreements.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Awards:

Terms and conditions of the partial GRTP award will be specified in each contract. However, the followings are the terms and conditions of these awards in general:

1. Foreign students will be provided a prepaid economy-class air or surface tickets. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin of the training participants, will also be paid as en route expenses to each participant. If necessary, Syrian students will be reimbursed the actual cost of their surface travel.
2. If applicable, each student will be paid a subsistence allowance in Syrian currency for a maximum of six months for M. Sc. and eight months for Ph.D. thesis. Subsistence allowance will only be paid for the students while they are at ICARDA headquarters in Aleppo.
3. Local transportation related to training activities is provided on regularly scheduled ICARDA buses.

4. Each student is assigned a shared or single room in ICARDA-leased apartments as available. Reimbursement for renting own apartments or rooms is not permitted and facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
5. Students working in their own countries with the ICARDA Regional Program Coordinators are not entitled for per diem, local transportation, and accommodation. Field and laboratory research supplies and material are the responsibility of the students NARS.
6. Each student will be provided the following insurance coverage:
 - a. Accidental death/injury group policy
 - b. Health insurance.

This covers medical costs. Dental and optical coverage are not provided.

7. ICARDA host research mega projects/units will make available to the students the necessary research material and equipment's.
8. If applicable, expenses of thesis preparation will be provided up to a maximum of USD 500 and 1000 for M. Sc. and Ph.D. studies, respectively, or equivalent in Syrian currency for thesis completed in Syria.
9. Settlement of costs of thesis preparation will only be made after the student's final examination and submission of two approved copies of the student's thesis to HRDU. ICARDA's technical and financial support to graduate studies must be fully recognized and acknowledged in the thesis.
10. If applicable, ICARDA will cover costs of one-two visits of the major university supervisor(s) to ICARDA or the research sites.
11. Each non-host country student is allowed a maximum non-accompanied airfreight allowance of 20 Kilograms of training materials at the time of his/her departure.
12. One overnight recreational/cultural trip per year will be provided for each training participants exceeding three months stay at ICARDA.

These provisions become effective on the student's registration at the Human Resources Development Unit and terminate at the end of his/her training.

I-B. Special Project/Self-Financed Students:

Self-financed graduate students and/or students financed by special projects may also require part or all logistic arrangements similar to those mentioned for the partial award students. However, costs of these arrangements will be fully covered by the student or the special project in accordance with the cost categories listed in the ICARDA "Manual of Training Procedures".

Selection Process:

Self-financed graduate students and/or students financed by special projects are selected as follows:

1. Nominations are accepted from national agricultural research programs and recognized national universities.
2. In consultation with the Head of HRDU, the concerned ~~mega project/unit~~Mega Projects/Units review applications and select appropriate candidates.
3. Upon a favorable decision by the selection committee, the Head of HRDU in consultation with the concerned ~~Mega Project Director/Unit Head~~Mega Project Directors / Unit Heads and Regional Programs Coordinators prepares an official letter of acceptance and detailed contract for the approval of the Director General. Unsuccessful candidates will also be notified.
4. Criteria for selecting graduate students in this category are similar to those mentioned for the partial award graduate studies.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Awards:

Terms and conditions of these training awards will be specified in the contract of each student as per the agreement between ICARDA and financing source. Other general terms and conditions are similar to those mentioned for the partial awards.

I-C. High-Cost Awards (Full award):

Based on budget availability, ICARDA may provide financial support to cover full costs of a limited number of GRTP awards. Nomination for these awards is open to students from CWANA region and other developing and developed countries. Selection of successful candidates is made on competitive basis:

Selection Process:

A full financed GRTP student is selected as follows:

1. Depending on budget availability, the HRDU annually sends an announcement with application forms for scholarship awards to support M. Sc. and/or Ph.D. thesis research at or through ICARDA to selected national programs of the region.
2. Nominations are accepted from national agricultural research programs and recognized national universities of the region.
3. ICARDA Mega Projects/units will review the applications and send their recommendations to HRDU for consideration by the selection committee.
4. The selection committee for graduate studies composed of the Training Coordination Committee (TCC) members will meet once a year around mid-March or whenever needed to review applications and select the appropriate candidates.
5. Upon a favorable decision by the selection committee, the Head of HRDU in consultation with the concerned ~~Mega Project Director/Unit Head~~Mega Project Directors / Unit Heads and Regional Programs Coordinators prepares an official

letter of acceptance and detailed contract for the approval of the Director General. Unsuccessful candidates will also be notified.

6. Criteria for selecting successful candidates to full GRT awards are similar to these mentioned for the partial awards.

Terms and Conditions for the Training Awards:

Each full award GRTP student is entitled to the following support:

1. Foreign students will be provided a prepaid economy-class air or surface tickets. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin of the training participants, will also be paid as en route expenses to each participant. If necessary, Syrian students will be reimbursed for the actual cost of their travel.
2. Each student will be paid a subsistence allowance in Syrian currency for a maximum period of 18 months for M. Sc. students and 24 months for Ph.D. students. No extensions will be granted. Subsistence allowance will only be paid for students conducting their research at ICARDA in Aleppo or at other locations than their home countries.
3. All local transportation related to training activities is provided on ICARDA regularly scheduled buses.
4. Each student is assigned a shared or single room in ICARDA-leased apartments as available. Reimbursement for renting own apartments or rooms is not permitted and facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
5. Each student will be provided the following insurance coverage:
 - a. Accidental death/injury group policy,
 - b. Health insurance.

This covers medical costs. Dental and optical coverage are not provided.

6. ICARDA host Mega Projects/units will make available to the students the necessary research material and equipment's.
7. Expenses for thesis preparation will be provided up to a maximum of USD 500 and 1000 for M. Sc., and Ph.D. students respectively, or equivalent in Syrian currency for thesis completed in Syria.
8. Settlement of costs of thesis preparation will only be made after the student's final examination and submission of three approved copies of his/her thesis to the HRDU. ICARDA's technical and financial support to the graduate studies should be fully recognized and acknowledged in the thesis.
9. ICARDA will cover travel and accommodation costs for one-two visits of the major university professor(s) to ICARDA or the research sites.
10. Each non-host country student is allowed a maximum non-accompanied airfreight allowance of 20 kilograms of training materials at the time of his/her departure.
11. One overnight recreational/cultural trip per year will be provided for trainees exceeding three months stay at ICARDA.
12. Students conducting all or parts of their research work/courses at universities in other than their home countries will be paid a reasonable monthly subsistence to

cover accommodation, tuition fees, insurance and per diem. This amount will be determined by the Head of HRDU and the concerned Mega Project Director/Unit head and regional program coordinator.

These provisions become effective on the student's registration at the Human Resources Development Unit and terminate at the end of his/her training.

II. ICARDA Students:

ICARDA personnel policy encourages regional staff members to improve and up-grade their technical knowledge through several means including graduate research training. Similar to the non-ICARDA students, selected staff members to be eligible for an award should be registered at universities within CWANA region or outside, and are expected to conduct all or part of their thesis research work at ICARDA sites under the joint supervision of the concerned university and ICARDA scientists.

Categories of the ICARDA Graduate Research Training Program Awards are as follow:

II-A. Partial Awards:

This category mainly includes ICARDA staff members registered at the host country universities. Examples of this category are ICARDA headquarters staff members registered at Aleppo University and staff in the Regional Programs registered at universities where the ICARDA Regional Programs are located.

Selection Process:

Selection of ICARDA staff members for graduate research training in this category is the responsibility of the concerned ICARDA Mega Projects/Units Approval of successful candidates is the responsibility of the ICARDA Mega Project Directors/unit heads and finally the DDG (R).

Terms and Conditions of the Award:

Terms and conditions of this award will be specified in each contract to be prepared by HRDU in consultation with the Personnel Department and concerned ~~Mega Project/unit~~Mega Projects/Units. However, followings are general terms for this award:

1. Salary and other benefits of the successful candidate will be maintained during the period of the award for a maximum duration of three years for M. Sc. and four years for Ph.D.
2. ICARDA research Mega Projects/units will make available to the (GRT) staff member the necessary research material and equipment's.

3. Expenses of thesis preparation will be provided by the concerned Mega Projects/units up to a maximum of USD 500 and 1000 for M. Sc. and Ph.D. studies, respectively, paid in local currency at the official rate.
4. Settlement of costs of thesis preparation will only be made after the student's final examination and submission of three approved copies of his/her thesis to the concerned Mega Projects/units, Library, and HRDU. ICARDA technical and financial support to the graduate studies must be fully recognized and acknowledged in the thesis.
5. The concerned Mega Projects/units will cover costs of one-two visits of the major university supervisor to ICARDA or the research sites.

These provisions become effective upon receiving the approved contract. All ICARDA costs are borne by the respective Mega Projects/units.

II-B. Awards at Regional Universities:

This category includes ICARDA staff members registered at regional universities other than those located in the place where the staff member is employed. Example of this category are ICARDA headquarters staff members registered in regional universities such as these located in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt.

Selection Process:

Selection process of ICARDA staff members to these graduate-training awards is the same as mentioned in II-A.

Terms and Conditions of the Award:

Terms and conditions of these awards will be specified in each contract to be prepared by HRDU and approved by DDG (R). However, the followings are general terms and conditions for this category of GRT awards:

1. The candidate will be granted leave of absence for the period required to be spend at the university
2. Salary of the candidate will be paid in USD for the period he/she is spending at the university of registration for a maximum of three years for M. Sc. and four years for Ph.D.
3. The concerned Mega Projects/units will provide each GRT student a prepaid economy-class air or surface ticket. A fixed amount, based on the country where the university is located, will also be paid as en route expenses to each candidate. These arrangements are applicable for each trip (maximum of four trips) to the university during the period of the award.
4. Local transportation related to training activities at the university site up-to a maximum of USD 100.00/month will be paid.

5. Accommodation allowance at the university sites up to a maximum of USD 300.00/month will be paid.
6. ICARDA research Mega Projects/units will make available to the (GRT) staff member the necessary research material and equipment's needed for research.
7. Expenses of thesis preparation will be provided by the concerned Mega Projects/units up to a maximum of USD 500 and 1000 for M. Sc. and Ph.D. studies, respectively.
8. Settlement of costs of thesis preparation will only be made after the student's final examination and submission of three approved copies of his/her thesis to the concerned Mega Projects/units, Library, and HRDU. ICARDA technical and financial support to the graduate studies must be fully recognized and acknowledged in the thesis.
9. The concerned Mega Projects/units will cover costs of one-two visits of the major university supervisor to ICARDA or to the research sites.

These provisions become effective upon receiving the approved contract.

II-C. Awards at International Universities:

This category includes ICARDA staff members registered at universities outside CWANA region.

Selection Process:

Selection process of ICARDA staff members to these graduate-training awards is the same as mentioned in II-A.

Terms and Conditions of the Award:

Terms and conditions of these awards are similar to this mentioned in II-B, except that an adjustment will be made to cover accommodation and local transportation of the student. The exact amount to be paid for each student will be determined by the concerned Mega Projects/units and approved by DDG (R). Detailed contract will be prepared for each GRTP student by HRDU in consultation with the Personnel Department and the concerned Mega Project/unit Mega Projects/Units and regional program coordinator.

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January 15, 2006