

CALL FOR RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS



Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS) and



ForestAction Nepal (FAN)

Master's Level | Academic Year 2026/27

Total Available Funding: NPR 100,000

GRANT AT A GLANCE	
Issuing Authority	Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science and ForestAction Nepal
Program Level	Master of Science in Agriculture
Department	Department of Agricultural Ecology
Number of Grants	2 (Two) Individual Research Grants
Grant Amount per Award	NPR 50,000 per student
Total Funding Pool	NPR 100,000
Research Domain	Organic Agriculture & Sustainable Farming Systems
Application Opens	September 9, 2026
Application Deadline	October 10, 2026
Results Announced	Within October 20, 2026
Research Duration	1 year
Submission Mode	Via email: fa@forestaction.org Note: The email subject line shall follow the format: Submission of Research Proposal_Postgrad_IAAS_Name of applicant

1. Introduction and Background

Agroecology is a holistic approach to farming that applies ecological principles to agricultural systems, aiming for sustainable, productive, and socially just food systems. It acts as a science, a set of practices, and a social movement that promotes local, biodiversity-enhancing, and fair food economies. Recognizing the critical importance of evidence-based research in advancing agroecological practices within our national agricultural context, the Faculty of Agriculture is pleased to announce the Call for Research Grant Proposals for the academic year 2026/27.

This grant program is designed to support two postgraduate students from Department of Agricultural Ecology conducting original, field-based research in agroecology and allied sciences. By encouraging young researchers to engage in practical agronomic challenges, the program seeks to build a generation of agricultural scientists committed to sustainable food systems.

2. Program Objectives

The Organic Agriculture Research Grant Program aims to:

- Support original research that advances knowledge in organic farming, soil health, and agro-ecology.
- Encourage critical inquiry and evidence-based problem solving among bachelor's-level students.
- Bridge academic learning with real-world agricultural practice and community engagement.
- Contribute to the national body of knowledge on organic agriculture and food security.
- Prepare students for advanced academic and professional careers in agricultural sciences.

3. Priority Thematic Areas

Proposals must address one or more of the following thematic areas:

3.1 Soil Health and nutrient cycling

- Closed-loop nutrient management: composting and vermicomposting applications to maximize on-farm resource recycling.
- Green manure and living mulches: Trials focusing on nitrogen fixation and biomass production for soil self-sufficiency.
- Rhizosphere and microbiome dynamics: Analysis of soil-root interactions and or microbiome to enhance natural plant immunity and nutrient uptake.
- Carbon-based amendments: Evaluating biochar and organic matter for long-term soil structure improvement and water retention.

3.2 Agroecological Crop Production and Pest Management

- Ecological pest management (EPM) using organic inputs
- Bio-pesticide efficacy and application methods
- Variety selection and performance under organic conditions
- Intercropping and polyculture systems

3.3 Agroecological Transition and Ecosystem Services

- Study on transition to agroecology
- Biodiversity assessment
- Climate-resilient organic farming strategies
- Carbon sequestration potential in organic systems

3.4 Market, Value Chain, and Socioeconomics

- Market access and certification barriers for smallholder organic farmers
- Consumer perception and willingness to pay for organic products
- Economic profitability analysis of organic versus conventional farming
- Gender dimensions in organic agriculture adoption

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1 Applicant Requirements

- Must be currently enrolled as a master's level student at the institution.
- Must be a full-time student during the proposed research period.
- Each applicant may submit only one proposal per cycle.

4.2 Institutional Requirements

- The research must be conducted under the official supervision of a faculty member from the department.
- Research activities must be carried out within Nepal.

5. Grant Details and Budget Framework

Each of the two awardees will receive a grant of NPR 50,000.

Funds may be used for direct research-related expenses as outlined below:

❖ Sample of Budget Breakdown

Budget Category	Max. Allocation (NPR)	Notes
Field Materials & Supplies	20,000	Seeds, soil amendments, etc
Laboratory Analysis	14,000	
Data Collection	6,000	Research conducted a survey can include the transportation cost being within the grant amount.
Documentation & Reporting	5,000	Printing, binding, photography, data storage
Miscellaneous / Contingency	5,000	
TOTAL	NPR 50,000	Per individual grant recipient

Note: Non-research-related expenses are not eligible for reimbursement.

6. Application Process

6.1 Required Document

1. Research Proposal (at least 10 pages) should be prepared following the guidelines of IAAS.
2. Curriculum Vitae / Resume (maximum 2 pages)

6.2 Submission Instructions

- The research proposal may be submitted in English/Nepali.
- Late submissions will not be considered under any circumstances.
- All submitted materials become the property of the institution and will be treated confidentially during the review process.
- Each student is eligible to receive the grant only once, to ensure broader opportunities for others.

6.3 Important Dates

Milestone	Date
Application Portal Opens	September 09, 2026
Application Submission Deadline	October 10, 2026
Panel Review	October 11-18, 2026
Grant Awards Announced	October 20, 2026
Orientation for Awardees	November 1 st Week
Research Period Begins	November, 2026
Mid-Term Progress Report Due	April, 2027
Research Period Ends	November, 2027
Final Report & Presentation	January- March, 2028

7. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee comprising members from ForestAction Nepal and IAAS. Proposals will be scored according to the following rubric:

Evaluation Criterion	Max. Score	Weight
Relevance to agroecology and priority thematic areas	25	25%
Scientific rigor, clarity of objectives, and methodology	25	25%
Feasibility within the 6-month period and budget	20	20%
Potential for impact and originality of the research	15	15%
Quality of writing, structure, and presentation	10	10%
Motivation of the applicant	5	5%
TOTAL	100	100%

The committee reserves the right to request oral presentations or interviews from shortlisted applicants. The committee's decision is final and not subject to appeal.

8. Awardee Obligations and Reporting Requirements

8.1 Fund Disbursement

- 50% of the grant (NPR 25,000) will be disbursed upon signing the Grant Agreement.
- Remaining 50% (NPR 25,000) will be released upon satisfactory submission of the Mid-Term Progress Report.

8.2 Progress Reporting

- Mid-Term Progress Report: covering work completed, preliminary findings, and expenditure to date.
- Final Research Report: comprehensive report including abstract, full methodology, results, discussion, conclusions, recommendations, bibliography, and budget report.

8.3 Publication and Acknowledgment

- Awardees are encouraged to submit their findings to peer-reviewed journals or institutional publications.
- All publications and presentations resulting from this grant must acknowledge the Organic Agriculture Research Grant Program/ Funding organization (ForestAction Nepal).
- The institution retains the right to use research data for academic and outreach purposes, with full credit to the student researcher.

9. Ethical Guidelines and Research Integrity

- Plagiarism, data falsification, or any form of academic misconduct will result in immediate termination of the grant and recovery of disbursed funds.
- Field research must comply with national environmental regulations and cause no undue harm to local ecosystems.

10. Contact and Further Information

For questions, clarifications, or additional information, please contact:

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