

Scientific Visit Sponsorship

1. BACKGROUND

Forests are the key to addressing interconnected global challenges of sustainable development. These for example include climate change, food and water security, biodiversity conservation as well as the transformation towards a bioeconomy. All these issues will underpin society's ability to prosper within the renewable boundaries of our planet.

The International Union of Forest Research Organizations ([IUFRO](#)) is conscious of the importance of connecting the young forest science community to address challenges facing forests and forestry. Broadly, we strive to provide these future leaders with international experience to better equip them to address future global challenges and identify, create and fully utilise emerging opportunities.

In 2025-2026, IUFRO's Special Programme for Development of Capacities will offer a limited number of sponsorships, each up to EUR 5 000, for *Scientific Visits (SV)* as part of its Scientist Assistance Programme (SAP). These sponsorships are specifically intended for early-career scientists¹ affiliated with IUFRO member organizations, enabling them to conduct research at a forest research institution abroad.

The desired outcome is to provide both the beneficiary and their affiliated institution with the opportunity to build research collaboration and capacity and to provide opportunities extending beyond the initial scientific exchange. The goals for the beneficiary are broad and could include for example, skills development, establishing productive relationships with scientific peers in the host country, using the visit to benefit their own research and, if possible, publishing of scientific material.

The duration of a scientific visit should be between 2 and 3 months. The exact length will depend on factors such as the complexity and scope of the proposed project, the location of the host institution, and the availability of complementary funding sources. Applicants are encouraged to justify the duration based on their research objectives and logistical considerations.

While the delivery of a scientific publication (such as a journal article, chapter(s) in a book or similar publications) is not an official requirement, applicants are nevertheless encouraged

¹ Early Career Scientist – is a scientist who has completed their MSc or PhD degree in forestry or related fields, is 35 years old or younger, and who is locally affiliated with an institution of research and higher learning in their country of residence.

to submit proposals with such a goal in mind. This scientific publication would preferably be co-authored by the beneficiary and at least one scientist of the respective member institution hosting the visit.

2. HOW TO APPLY

Potential applicants are required to contact the potential host institution prior to applying for an SV sponsorship. Together they shall develop and agree on essential elements for the SV sponsorship application including a project proposal and work plan, timing and duration of the proposed visit, and a mentor in the host country.

Candidates interested in applying for an SV sponsorship should complete the online [SV Application Form](#), submit their complete application documents in one PDF including all required application documents (listed below) **by 31 July 2025**. The PDF document should be submitted with a filename following the format “SV_FirstnameLastnameCountry.pdf”

Please submit the documents to this link [Application Files](#)

Required application documents:

- ☐ Work plan outlining the details of the scientific visit, approved by host institution (template in ANNEX 1)

Endorsement letter by applicant’s host institution (template in

- ☐ ANNEX)
- ☐ Endorsement by the applicant's Head of Department
- ☐ Curriculum vitae of applicant
- ☐ Curriculum vitae of mentor

The application deadline is **31 July 2025**. Only complete applications will be considered.

Project proposals should address a topic of significance to IUFRO's Post-2020 Strategy (<https://www.iufro.org/publications/iufro-post-2020-strategy>), in particular by addressing one or more of the five thematic areas defined in the strategy (see ANNEX 3).

The duration of the scientific visit should be agreed between the applicant and host institution and last approximately three months, unless additional funding has been sourced to undertake a more extensive exchange. In this case, the activities funded by the additional funds should be included in the work plan.

We emphasise that applicants should contact the host institution which they plan to work with prior to applying for support. Applicants should have tentatively agreed on the scope of scientific project, the associated work plan and the suitable dates for the planned research visit with the potential host institution. The applicant will be responsible for all arrangements that need to be made prior to and during scientific visit.

Applicants will be asked to confirm their acceptance of the sponsorship by returning a signed acceptance letter via email within one week of receiving the offer.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The applicants will be selected on a competitive basis following the selection criteria provided below. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by the 30th September 2025.

The following criteria will be used to select successful candidates:

- Originality and relevance of the research topic
- Applicant's previous experience and work on the proposed research topic
- Overall quality of the work plan
- Feasibility of the work planned at the host institution
- Geographic and gender balance

Applicants that have not previously been awarded a sponsorship for a scientific visit will have preference.

4. FUNDING

The maximum amount for sponsorship is EUR 5.000. The funding should cover travel and subsistence costs for the period of the sponsorship. We strongly encourage seeking complementary funding sources.

5. HOST INSTITUTION

The applicant will be responsible for obtaining the agreement of the host institution before submitting their application. While the applicant needs to be affiliated with a member organisation of IUFRO, the host institution need not necessarily be a member institution.

Once selected to receive a sponsorship, beneficiaries will be required to contact the host institution and initiate the intended project well in advance of their visit.

6. REPORTING

Beneficiaries are expected to provide IUFRO with short monthly updates on the scientific visit to be published on the IUFRO website, as well as appropriate social media platforms.

Upon the conclusion of the scientific visit, the beneficiary will be expected to deliver a detailed report on the work conducted, conclusions drawn, skills acquired, professional relationships established and future plans relating to the visit within four weeks of leaving the host institution (template in ANNEX 4).

In the case of an intended scientific publication, a draft should be provided, co-authored by at least one scientist from the member institute hosting the visit.

7. TIMELINE

15 April 2025	Open call for applications
31 July 2025	Deadline for application submission
August 2025	Evaluation and selection
September 2025	Decision and sponsorship acceptance
January – March 2026	Mobility period starts at the host institution
June 2026	Completion and Reporting

8. CONTACT

Should you have any questions regarding the SV sponsorship application, please contact IUFRO-SPDC at spdc@iufro.org.

ANNEX 1

WORK PLAN TEMPLATE

(to be submitted as part of the application)

Please use the format below as applicable. The maximum length of the work plan is three pages (excluding cover page).

A. Cover Page

Technical Data

- a. Project title
- b. Date of preparation
- c. Contact person's name, title/affiliation and contact information

B. Project Details *(max. 3 pages)*

1. Project Description

- a. Purpose and scope of the project
- b. Relevance of the research topic (if possible, include reference to relevant thematic areas of the IUFRO Post-2020 Strategy)

2. Objective and outputs

- a. Objective
 - A clear specification of the main objectives of the project
- b. Output
 - Expected technical outputs (reviewed and other publications and articles, reports, seminars, technical improvements, etc.) of the project

3. Methodology

- a. Method(s) to be used
- b. Which data will be used and how will it be collected

4. Time schedule

- a. Describe main activities and their timing in a table format

5. Links to other relevant activities

List here other recent or ongoing projects and activities of relevance to the proposed project.

ANNEX 2

ENDORSMENT LETTER

MUST BE ON OFFICIAL HEADED PAPER OF THE HOST UNIVERSITY/INSTITUTION

OBJECT: Invitation for a *Visit* to our university/institution supported by a *Scientific Visit Sponsorship*

Dear Sir/Madam,

We hereby invite you to the *(name of the university/institution)*, *(name of the Department/Faculty)*, from *day/month/year* to *day/month/year* (XX working days), in order to *(please give the purpose of the Visit)*. During your *Visit* at our university/institution, we will help you in carrying out the following activities:

(List of activities to be carried out by the applicant)

(Add any practical arrangements/comments you deem necessary)

For all matters linked to your *Visit*, you can contact *(name of contact person, with contact details)*

Yours sincerely,

SIGNATURE of the person legally authorised to represent the host university/institution

POSITION of the person legally authorised to represent the host university/institution

OFFICIAL STAMP or SEAL of the university/institution

ANNEX 3

Thematic Areas of IUFRO's Post-2020 Strategy

Access the document: [IUFRO Post-2020 Strategy](#)

To react to the most pressing challenges and hazards that affect both forests and society, the work and collaboration in IUFRO is focused on five thematic areas: Forests for People; Forests and Climate Change; Forests and Forest-Based Products for a Greener Future; Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Biological Invasions; and Forests, Soil and Water Interactions.

All of them are strongly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, a global framework guiding the forest-related policy processes in the coming decade, and thus the direction of the future of IUFRO's strategic development.

Forests for People addresses key dimensions and challenges regarding the relationship between forests and society as individuals or communities, as well as the institutional arrangements supporting people's livelihoods and quality of life. (Linked to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 15 and 16)

Forests and Climate Change focuses on the impacts of climate change on forests and how to increase their resilience and adaptive capacity. Climate change is a global challenge neglecting national borders and affecting every forest on every continent. Global temperatures are increasing and, regionally, more extreme and intense weather events are occurring, coupled with increased stress and disturbances. These effects on forests affect human well-being and health, thus requiring efficient mitigation and adaptation strategies. (Linked to SDGs 13, 15, 6, 7)

Forests and Forest-Based Products for a Greener Future addresses the provision of wood and forest-based products and how the environmental performance of existing biobased forest products can be improved. It includes the use of forests as a source of renewable energy and the potential for new and innovative forest-based products in the future. (Linked to SDGs 8, 9, 11, 12, and 15)

Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Biological Invasions focuses on how the loss of biodiversity may be prevented or mitigated across ecosystems and landscapes and how management regimes could be adapted to enhance biodiversity and control biological invasions. (Linked to SDGs 2, 3, 14 and 15)

Forests, Soil and Water Interactions addresses the contribution of forests, especially natural forests, to the resilience of water supply for humans and the delivery of related ecosystem goods and services. (Linked to SDGs 6 and 15)

ANNEX 4

SCIENTIFIC VISIT REPORT

Scientific visit reports should be well structured, clear, logical and complete. They should be based on the approved work plan and follow the structure of a scientific publications. Reports should be three to five pages long. Additional materials, such as publications, may be annexed to the report if desired.

Reports should contain the following information:

1. **Cover Page** Technical Data
 1. Project title
 2. Dates of the visit
 3. Beneficiarie's name, title/affiliation and contact information
2. **Objectives** (Purpose of the *Visit*)
3. **Methodology**
4. Description of the work carried out during the *Visit* (include the workplan) and main **results** obtained
5. **Discussion** (significance of the main results)
6. **Conclusions**
7. **References:** bibliography, websites, etc.
8. **Future collaboration** with host institution (if applicable)
9. Initiated or projected **publications**/articles resulting or to result from the *Scientific Visit* (if applicable)
10. **Confirmation by the host institute** of the successful execution of the mission (in the form of a signed letter)
11. **Abstract** of the SV (2 paragraphs) for IUFRO website
12. **Experience and Feedback report** (overall experience, career & skills impact, suggestions)

Other comments (if any)

