



Cornell University

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M.S. Assistantships, Ecological Calendars for Climate Change Adaptation in the Pamirs, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA

The Kassam Research Group at Cornell University seeks applicants for M.S. assistantships focused on ecological calendars in the Pamir Mountains of Central Asia. Ecological Calendars are knowledge systems used to coordinate seasonal activities with the ecosystem based on close observation of environmental changes. For instance, Ecological Calendars track time by observing seasonal changes such as the nascence of a flower, the appearance of an insect, the arrival of a migratory bird, the breakup of ice, last day of snow-cover. Research on Ecological Calendars aims to build anticipatory capacity for climate change in mountain communities. Information about the Kassam Research Group can be found at: <http://www2.dnr.cornell.edu/kassam>

M.S. students will conduct participatory action research in mountain communities of Afghanistan, China, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Students will work closely with local communities and collaborate with a transdisciplinary team of scholars from China, Germany, and Italy. U.S. citizens and international students are encouraged to apply.

Support packages may include a combination of research and teaching assistantships, depending upon the qualifications and interests of the student. The option to pursue a doctoral degree focused on Ecological Calendars will be considered upon successful defense of the M.S. thesis in spring 2018.

Qualifications: B.S. in agriculture, anthropology, biology, botany, conservation science, ecology, environmental studies, or other related fields in the humanities, social or biophysical sciences. Applicants should have a record of outstanding academic performance (e.g. >3.5 GPA), strong GRE scores (>75th percentiles), and previous field experience living and working in rural communities. International students are required to provide proof of fluency in academic English by submission of TOEFL or IELTS scores (see: <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirement>). Experience of working in diverse cultural contexts and sensitivity to challenging cultural issues is essential. Existing knowledge or commitment to learn a Central Asian language is required.

How to apply: Please send cover letter describing research interests and experience; resume or CV; unofficial copies of transcripts, GRE (U.S. students only), and proof of English fluency (international students only); and contact information for 3 references to Dr. Karim-Aly Kassam at ksk28@cornell.edu by April 15, 2016. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by May 1st, 2016 and will be required to apply for admission to Cornell University's Department of Natural Resources Graduate Program: <http://dnr.cals.cornell.edu/graduate> to begin graduate study in the Fall Semester of 2016.