

# Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy

Call for Applications for the 2017 Short-Term Visiting Scholars Program at Michigan State University under the Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project funded by USAID Nigeria Mission November 2016

## Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project

The Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project is a five year initiative funded by the Nigeria Mission of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and implemented jointly by Michigan State University (MSU) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). (For further information on the project, please see the project brochure at: <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/pamphlet.pdf>.)

The project has three principal integrated objectives, namely: 1) strengthen the national capacity for greater evidence based policy processes in agriculture by increasing the capacity of Nigerian analysts to undertake and make widely available relevant evidence-based policy analysis; 2) promote and foster informed policy dialogue among all stakeholders in the agricultural sector through an inclusive, transparent, and sustainable process at the country level, building blocks for a well-integrated and developed national policy system; and 3) support federal and state government efforts to improve their capacities to plan and implement effective policy analyses and programs, as well as to demand and absorb policy research in their policy process.

Building on the capacity strengthening component of the project, several short-term graduate student visiting scholar positions for Nigerian students at Masters and PhD level will be offered at Michigan State University (MSU), East Lansing, Michigan, United States of America over the 5 year life of the project. In academic year 2017 (August 2017-May 2018), FIVE short-term post graduate student scholar positions are on offer: 3 at the Masters level and 2 at the PhD level. The Masters Level positions will be awarded for a maximum 1 semester, and the PhD Level ones, for a maximum of 2 semesters. The student's primary academic supervisor (from a Nigerian University) is expected to actively participate in the program. The advisor will be invited (and funded) to visit MSU for a period not exceeding 30 calendar days.

The invitation has three accompanying obligations while the supervisor is at MSU: 1) give at least one presentation in the faculty of agriculture and 2) another in an African studies research forum as well as 3) interacting with other MSU faculty in related areas. It is the project expectation that this interchange will enhance on-going research collaboration between MSU faculty, IFPRI researchers and Nigerian scholars. Upon return to Nigeria, the professor will organize presentations and seminars for students at department, faculty and university levels at the home institution. The professor's visit must occur within the duration of the residence at MSU of their student, the short term scholar.

Short term visiting scholars will enroll in analytical/technical courses such as Statistics, Econometrics and Agricultural Development. The courses will be taken for credit, and depending on the Nigerian University requirements, will be available to count towards the scholars Nigerian degree program. Also



while at MSU, the scholar will be expected to continue research work on their selected topic in addition to the course work. They will work under the supervision of MSU faculty/IFPRI researchers. The scholars tenure will be considered a full time position with the expectation that the scholar will invest the requisite amount of work, study and time to be successful. See (blog address) to review the experiences of the current scholars.

### **Eligibility**

Applicants must be Nigerians studying in the area of Agriculture, at Post Graduate level in an Accredited Higher Education Institution in Nigeria. Applicants must be of good academic and moral standing in their academic institution having the equivalent of a minimum GPA of 3.5 out of 5 (or equivalent for a 2<sup>nd</sup> class, upper division). With regards to good moral standing, applicant must be found to be fit and proper persons and in no way have any pending disciplinary cases before a duly recognized and constituted disciplinary body. Applicants must also have a demonstrated interest in an area being studied by researchers working under the Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project (see appendix A under the full scholar program description on the project website at <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/index.htm#N>), and must be willing to accept the responsibilities attached to participation (see appendix B under the full scholar program description on the project website at <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/index.htm#N>).

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Candidates will be selected on the basis of their previous research and academic achievements, the short write up (included in the application packet), their ability to demonstrate strong commitment to research and their academic advisor's willingness to participate in the program.

### **What the Short-Term Visiting Scholars Program at Michigan State University Will Cover**

The Short-Term Visiting Scholars Program will cover travel related costs, lodging and meals, and a monthly stipend of \$1,000 for up to 3 months for the Masters Level, and for up to 9 months for the PhD level. Travel related costs are limited to visa fees, visa procurement travel related costs, and round trip air tickets from Nigeria to East Lansing, Michigan USA. Other benefits include medical insurance for the duration of the short-term visiting scholar program at Michigan State University. Due to the short-term nature of the program, no support in any kind whatsoever is provided for dependents.

### **How to apply**

Applicants must submit the following documents:

- A completed expression of interest application form: found at <http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/App.pdf>
- A short write up on the role of research in the Nigeria Agricultural Policy Process and how the applicant's work fits into this.
- A writing sample (e.g. research paper, chapter of University Project/Thesis etc.)
- Official Copy of Student's academic transcripts (must be signed and stamped by the Registrar of the Institution of Study).
- Updated CV showing publications and awards
- A letter of recommendation from the applicant's head of department or dean on official letter headed paper
- A statement from applicant's primary academic advisor indicating willingness to support the application and the advisor's availability to work with the Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project and participate under the Academic Advisor segment of the Award. Form downloadable at:

<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/willing.pdf>

Application documents must be submitted to [FTFNAPP@msu.edu](mailto:FTFNAPP@msu.edu) by 11:59PM (Nigerian Time) on 23 February 2017. The email should have on the subject line: *Application for 2017 FTFNAPP Short-Term Visiting Scholar Program at MSU*. All application materials need to be submitted as attachments to a single e-mail, preferably in a “zip” file. Successful applicants who have been shortlisted will receive word of acceptance and details on next steps by April 1, 2017.

All enquires related to this call should be addressed to: Project Specialist, Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project, Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48823 and submitted to: [FTFNAPP@msu.edu](mailto:FTFNAPP@msu.edu)

Appendix A: Research Topics of the Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project.  
<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/A.pdf>

Appendix B: Feed the Future Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Short-Term Visiting Scholar Responsibilities.  
<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/B.pdf>

Appendix C: USAID Conditions of Sponsorship for US Based Activities  
<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/C.pdf>

Appendix D: USAID TraiNet Visa Compliance System  
<http://fsg.afre.msu.edu/fsp/nigeria/D.pdf>