

ADVERTISEMENT FOR 2026 PHD SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THE FACILITY FOR ACTION FOR CLIMATE EMPOWERMENT TO ACHIEVE NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (FACE NDC) PROJECT

Supported by:



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CALL FOR APPLICATION FOR PhD SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THE FACE-NDC PROJECT AT THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FOR 2026 INTAKE

The Copperbelt University, through the School of Natural Resources and the School of Engineering, is one of the five consortium partners in the Facility for Action for Climate Empowerment to Achieve Nationally Determined Contributions (FACE-NDC) Project, whose implementation timeline spans from 2023 to 2030. Other partners include: The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the University of Zambia (UNZA). FAO is the lead partner, whereas the International Climate Initiative (IKI) from Germany is the principal funder. The FACE-NDC project seeks to empower the Zambian society to achieve the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through enabling them to adopt climate-friendly behaviours and to support transition to a green economy with a focus on three (3) sectors namely: forestry, agriculture and energy.

As one of its goals, the FACE-NDC Project will be providing five (5) scholarships at PhD education levels for candidates to undertake their studies at the Copperbelt University in thematic areas pertaining to climate change, natural resources management and renewable energy. Therefore, the Copperbelt University hereby requests for applications for FACE NDC scholarships for PhD studies, on full time basis only. Recipients of these scholarships will be expected to be at the University pursuing full time studies for the duration of their sponsored study programmes.

Eligibility criteria

The call is open to Zambian nationals only, aged 35 years and below.

Females are strongly encouraged to apply as these scholarships will be awarded to a minimum of 50% females. Priority will also be given to candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those from low-income households, under-represented communities, and remote or rural areas.

Ineligibility

Employees within public administration, including Government Ministries or other governmental bodies **are not eligible** for these scholarships.

Note also that one's average annual income will be considered during the screening process of the scholarship award.

Applicants for the FACE NDC scholarship **should not** already be enrolled in another Programme at the Copperbelt University.

Thematic areas for PhD study

PhD Scholarship applicants will be expected to have been admitted in the following programmes: PhD Renewable Energy; PhD Climate Change and Sustainable Development; PhD Natural Resources Management and PhD Sustainable Agriculture. The scholarship distribution will be as follows: 2 for PhD Renewable Energy; 1 PhD Climate Change and Sustainable Development; 1 PhD Natural Resources Management and 1 PhD Sustainable Agriculture.

The thematic areas of applied research will be situated within the research area of renewable energy, climate change, natural resources management, agriculture, forestry and behavioural science and will include, but are not limited to, the following themes:

1. Renewable Energy Innovations and Technologies
2. Rational Use of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation
3. Modelling energy solutions
4. Energy Storage Systems
5. Renewable Energy and Integrated Development Planning
6. Renewable Energy and Socio-cultural Change
7. Grid Integration of Renewable Energy
8. Policy, Governance and Management of Renewable Energy
9. Off-grid and Decentralized Energy Solutions
10. Climate Change and Resilient Energy Infrastructure
11. Energy for and from agrifood systems
12. Impacts of climate change on crop productivity

13. Climate change effects on natural capital and ecosystem services
14. Bioenergy potential of diverse crop species
15. The role of non-timber forest products in climate mitigation and adaptation among rural communities
16. Behavioural drivers of sustainable food choices and meat substitution in Zambia
17. Behavioural interventions to reduce food waste among young people
18. Adoption of fuel-efficient and time-saving cooking practices in Zambian households
19. Intergenerational social norms related to open-air waste burning
20. Youth influence on sustainable packaging choices in retail environments
21. Behavioural approaches to improving youth-led tree planting and seedling survival
22. Effectiveness of public behaviour change campaigns on sustainable consumption
23. Climate change communication and message effectiveness among rural and urban youth
24. Formal and non-formal education pathways for behaviour change and climate action
25. Shifting gender norms in leadership, technical roles, and climate action among girls and young women
26. Gender norms, food allocation, and women's nutrition in sustainable diets
27. Peer influence and social norm formation around climate change among youth groups and school clubs
28. Behavioural barriers to adoption of diversified cropping systems in Zambia
29. Chitemene as a cultural and behavioural land-use practice in Zambia
30. Farmer acceptability of alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture
31. Behavioural determinants of crop residue management and open-field burning
32. Fertilizer and pesticide use as behavioural decisions in smallholder agriculture
33. Seed choice behaviour: traditional versus improved varieties in Zambia
34. Inclusive community forest management: gender, youth participation, and power dynamics

Requirements:

1. Possess a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from relevant fields including Forestry, Biomaterial Sciences, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Natural Resources Management, Climate Change, agriculture.
2. Unconditional admission offer (except for funding) for the upcoming academic year to at least one of the following programs that are linked to the project at the Copperbelt University:
 - a. PhD in Natural Resources Management
 - b. PhD in Renewable Energy
 - c. PhD in Sustainable Agriculture
 - d. PhD in Climate Change and Sustainable Development
3. At least three (3) recommendation letters, with one from previous academic supervisor, highlighting the applicant's academic and research capabilities;

4. A strong and novel research concept note of not more than 1000 words showcasing the applicant's research questions, methodology, and it should state clearly how the generated knowledge will contribute to the collective uptake of green economy innovations, and climate change mitigation practices in the domains of natural resources and renewable energy;
5. A curriculum vitae showing demonstrated research experience through publications, conference presentations, or research projects.
6. Statement of purpose (motivation letter).

Scholarship value

This scholarship covers: full tuition fees, one-off research grant (paid in the second year), and a minimal living allowance paid once a year.

Submission of Application

The application for the **scholarship** should be addressed to the undersigned and submitted not later than **24th March, 2026**.

Note that the shortlisting of applicants will be done within two weeks of the closing date. Interviews will be conducted for the shortlisted candidates with the panel including CBU and FAO staff.

Final shortlisted candidates will be required to undertake an in-person written test prepared by FAO and applied in collaboration with the University, in line with requirements by the Funder, IKI.

The Coordinator,
FACE NDC Project,
Copperbelt University,
School of Natural Resources,
P.O. Box 21692,
Kitwe

Applications shall be made through Email only to dean.snr@cbu.ac.zm and copied to benjamin.mubemba@cbu.ac.zm; gillian.kabwe@cbu.ac.zm; edna.musonda@cbu.ac.zm; face-ndc@fao.org

If there is any clarification, technical and administrative support that is required, applicants may contact Dr. B. Mubemba on [0966149658](tel:0966149658) and/or email: benjamin.mubemba@cbu.ac.zm; and Prof. G. Kabwe on 0974355949 and/or email: gillian.kabwe@cbu.ac.zm

All candidates will be informed of the outcome of their application. The University will also publish the list of selected candidates on the University's website and other official social media platforms.

