

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Please go to <https://agsci.psu.edu/global/curad/projects/wira/wiraapplicationform.doc> for program application.

Woskob International Research in Agriculture (WIRA) Scholar Program

Summary

- Program announced: **August 21, 2023**
- Applications are due: **September 7, 2023**
- Eligible institutions: Ukrainian universities with Agricultural and Related Sciences programs
- Eligible applicants: Ukrainian faculty members, university instructors
- Expected number of awards: 1-2
- Program Coordinator: Dr. Lidiia Iavorivska

Please read the entire request carefully.

Announcement

The College of Agricultural Sciences at the Pennsylvania State University (PSU) is pleased to announce an open competition for the Woskob International Research in Agriculture Scholar Program (WIRA) for the 2023-2024 academic year. This program is managed by Ag Sciences Global in the College of Agricultural Sciences.

The College of Agricultural Sciences receives the funding from the Woskob International Research in Agriculture (WIRA) Endowment to implement this program.

Goals

The WIRA Scholar Program is a Faculty Development Program (FDP) to provide opportunity for new, promising faculty members from Ukrainian agricultural universities for a professional development in curriculum improvement and teaching capacity.

The main goals of the FDP are:

- improve current programs and develop new courses
- implement new teaching skills, methods, and tools obtained at Penn State University
- expand knowledge and expertise in their fields of study
- stimulate adoption of new changes in their home universities in program development, academic crediting, implementation of new teaching techniques
- provide a link for ongoing academic, research, and outreach exchanges between home universities and Penn State University

The Faculty Development Program provides university instructors with a semester-long opportunity to expand their knowledge and expertise in their academic field by attending classes and working with College of Agricultural Sciences faculty members.

Objectives

The objectives of the WIRA FDP are to provide university instructors from Ukrainian agricultural universities with training in curriculum and course development and teaching methodology. Participants in the FDP are encouraged to establish relationships between Penn State University and their home universities. FDP fellows will have opportunity to work closely with faculty mentors from the College of Agricultural Sciences to outline new courses, to gather new teaching materials, and explain to U.S. faculty and students on teaching practices in the Ukrainian educational system. Throughout their stay at Penn State, FDP participants observe and listen to courses, attend seminars and colloquia, and may be invited to teach or co-teach classes at Penn State. Program participants do not earn academic degrees, credits, or transcripts through the FDP, and must return to their home countries after completing the program.

Fields of Study

Individuals may apply for the following fields: agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, agricultural education, extension education, crop and soil sciences, dairy and animal sciences; entomology, forestry, food sciences, horticulture, plant pathology, poultry science, agroecology, and environmental resource management.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for this program, an applicant must meet all the following seven eligibility requirements. Failure to meet any one of the requirement makes a candidate ineligible.

At the time of application, the candidate must:

- have a current full-time teaching or/and administrative assignment at a Ukrainian university that has a college, institute, or department of agriculture, natural resources, or forestry
- be a citizen of Ukraine
- hold a university degree (Specialist Degree or higher)
- have at least three years of teaching experience at an institution of higher education
- have a good command of the English language
- agree to return to Ukraine after completion of the program
- be able to receive and maintain J-1 visa and abide to its all regulations

Individuals who may NOT participate in the FDP:

- spouse or dependents of the FDP participant
- individuals who have applied for an immigration visa to any country outside of Ukraine or who have requested asylum in any country.

For the purpose of determining eligibility, "full-time" refers to applicants who are currently employed full-time by the agricultural university. Teachers or administrators who hold a combination of part-time jobs which may add up to a full-time equivalent are not eligible. Applicant's dependents are not allowed to participate in the Faculty Development Program under any circumstances.

The Faculty Development Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, or national origin.

Duration

Each FDP participant will spend a total of **four (4) months (January - April)** at the Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, United States.

Ag Sciences Global will provide logistical support for the FDP participant. The FDP program provides round-trip international and domestic transportation, medical insurance, modest monthly stipends for meals and incidentals, and covers lodging expenses.

During the four month program, the FDP participants will be provided with office space in the College's departments, with appropriate access to a computer workstation, internet, University library resources.

Expectations

FDP participants are expected to:

- develop a monthly plan of work which includes attendance of classes, library work, meeting with faculty members, research, and outreach activities
- attend classes of their choice and on the advice of the Program Coordinator, be active members of the class
- prepare weekly oral reports for the Program Coordinator
- prepare monthly progress reports for the Program Coordinator
- prepare a final program report
- participate in the academic and social life of the College of Agricultural Sciences

Participation in ALL program events is mandatory for all FDP Fellows. FDP participants will be responsible for their own cultural program while at Penn State University.

Selection Process and Criteria

Participants in the FDP will be selected through an open, merit-based competition. The candidates will be evaluated through the review of the application materials and subsequent interview or/and videoconference with the American Program Coordinator.

Electronic applications are due by 5:00 PM Eastern Time on **September 7, 2023**. Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances, no exceptions. Electronic applications must be sent to Dr. Lidiia Iavorivska at lui100@psu.edu.

A written application to the FDP (including the statement of purpose) will be read and evaluated by an American scholar who is the expert in a particular field of study. Please note that all references to the applicant name will be removed from all materials submitted to the evaluators in order to ensure the anonymity of the applicant and the objectivity of the evaluators. All applications and statements of purpose will be judged on the following criteria:

- clarity of thought and presentation
- knowledge of the field of study and demonstrated commitment to teaching
- interest in exploring different approaches to teaching and curriculum and upgrade course content in a particular field of study

Applicants whose written applications receive a successful evaluation will be invited to participate in interviews to determine the fluency of English and professional interests. The interview will be conducted at the provided time via video-conference by the Coordinator Dr. Lidiia Iavorivska in English language

only. After the interview, the WIRA scholar program committee will decide on finalists based upon each candidate's written application and interview results.

No additional English language courses will be offered in the United States. We expect the participants to be fluent in their conversations. We strongly suggest considering additional English training, if necessary, while in Ukraine.

We expect to have a final decision by **September 15, 2023**. Notifications of acceptance or rejection will be sent only by email.

To Apply to the FDP

A complete application to the FDP consists of:

- Completed application form
- Statement of Purpose
- One letter of recommendation
- Curriculum Vitae
- Photocopy of the first page of the Ukrainian foreign passport

These documents should be sent as PDF attachments to the email: lui100@psu.edu (no .doc, .jpg, or .tiff formats accepted).

Application Instructions

Application and Statement of Purpose (PDF)

The application must be completed in English in electronic format using Microsoft Word, which should then be converted to a PDF document for submission.

Download the application and Statement of Purpose to your computer. Open this file in the Microsoft Word. Complete the sections, using "TABS" to move between fields. When you finish, save this file under a new filename. Please answer each question thoroughly.

The Statement of Purpose outlines your work plan while in the U.S. This will be the most important section for evaluation purposes.

Curriculum Vitae (PDF)

The Curriculum Vitae must be in English language. Indicate your last name, first name and patronymic, home address, work and home telephone numbers, fax number (if applicable) and email address (if applicable) at the top of the page. Give your educational background: institutions of higher education attended, the degree(s) you hold (e.g. Dyplom, Spetsializatsia, Dyplom Kandydata Nauk, etc.) and the year in which the degree was received. Give the history of your employment, describing your current position first.

Letter of Recommendation (PDF)

Letter of Recommendation can be in English or Ukrainian language and scanned into the PDF format file (150 dpi). An eligible recommendation includes administrators, advisers, supervisors and other professionals who are familiar with you and your professional abilities, and who can evaluate your ability to participate in the FDP. The letter of recommendation from the university administration stating their interests and support is preferred. Family members or relatives are not eligible to write letters of recommendations.

The original letters of recommendation must have original signatures. It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify recommenders that confidentiality of the letters cannot be assured if the applicant intends to translate the letters himself or herself.

FDP candidates are strongly encouraged to visit the College of Agricultural Sciences website (<http://agsci.psu.edu/>) and relevant departments to learn about the faculty members, their interests, courses offered by the College of Agricultural Sciences or other colleges. This information will be extremely helpful for an applicant to consider the scope, objectives of the development program.

- [College of Agricultural Sciences home page](#)
- [Departments at the College of Agricultural Sciences](#)
- [Schedule of courses](#)
- [Penn State University Library](#)
- [General Penn State website](#)

Important Things to Note

- All application materials must be submitted electronically by **September 7, 2023** at 5:00 PM Eastern Time.
- All materials must be submitted in English.
- No application documents will be returned to the applicant either during or after the competition.
- All application evaluations will remain confidential.
- Applicants must be living in Ukraine at the time of the interview. Interviews will be conducted via Zoom.
- Project administration reserves the right to verify all information given in application. In the event that there is a discrepancy or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.
- Participation in ALL program events is mandatory for all FDP Fellows.
- No dependents may accompany FDP Fellows to the United States.

Contact information

If you have questions about the program or application, please contact Dr. Lidiia Iavorivska at lui100@psu.edu or visit our website at <https://agsci.psu.edu/global/curad/projects/wira>.