The Impact of Industry 4.0 in Agricultural Supply Chains
ESRC DTP Joint Studentship

Aston University and Loughborough University

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

We are now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Joint Studentship between Aston University (where the student will be registered) and Loughborough University to commence in October 2019.

The PhD project will explore the impacts of the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) on agricultural supply chains. Next generation farming practices have evolved over the last decades, entailing changes to the existing agricultural operational and supply chain models (i.e. smart farms, agricultural technology, precision farming, and digital farming). The evolution of ‘smart farming’ is still new, and there is resistance to the adoption of such a paradigm, especially from small and medium sized farms. Towards this end, further research in the field is needed, with a strong focus on the impact of Industry 4.0 in agricultural supply chains and the associated benefits and challenges. The ultimate aim of the study is to identify how agricultural supply chains will be transformed due to Industry 4.0 and to establish an understanding of the associated benefits and challenges of this transformation.

The project will contribute to the areas of Operations, Supply Chain, Agriculture and Information Technology Management.

Research Environment

The successful applicant will become a member of Operations and Information Management group of Aston Business School and will have close links to the School of Business and Economics at Loughborough University. The candidate will benefit from the research-oriented communities of both the institutions and close links with the industrial sector.

Supervisors

Professor Pavel Albores (Aston University)
Dr Konstantina Spanaki (Loughborough University)
Dr Stella Despoudi (Aston University)
Entry criteria

The ideal candidate will have a background in Operations, Supply Chain, Information Technology, Agriculture or closely related fields. Applicants must have a minimum of a good undergraduate degree (2.1 or higher) and we welcome applicants with a higher degree in one of the aforementioned fields or closely related areas. Applicants with significant industrial experience are also encouraged to apply.

Applicants from non-English speaking countries should have an IELTS score of 7 or above - for UK graduates this requirement is not necessary. The candidates must also comply with the ESRC eligibility criteria (see below).

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the Joint Studentship application form available online here. Please email (a) your application, (b) CV, and (c) cover letter to rdp@aston.ac.uk with the subject line ‘DTP ESRC PhD Agriculture 4.0’. Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide two references.

Application deadline: Friday 1st March 2019

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria. To check your eligibility, visit: www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/

Informal enquiries about the research project prior to application can be directed to Dr Konstantina Spanaki (K.Spanaki@lboro.ac.uk) and Dr Stella Despoudi (s.despoudi@aston.ac.uk).