La Gamba - Rainforest of the Austrians - COBIGA Scholarship and Roland Jehle Scholarship – Call for Proposals 2026

The Tropical Field Station La Gamba in Costa Rica offers a plethora of options for fieldwork, especially in the fields of biology and geology. To further open up research possibilities for advanced students and young scientists, the Society for the Promotion of the La Gamba Field Station again offers scholarships for the year 2026. Scientific research in the context of MSc and PhD as well as postdoc studies (up to seven years after completion of the PhD) can be sponsored.

The La Gamba Society reserves the right to transfer the funds to the following year if applications happen to lack the necessary quality or if the number of applications proves to be insufficient. The allotment of positively assessed applications to a specific scholarship is effected by the scientific advisory board.

The application to scholarships is also open to applicants who do not work for Austrian universities. The financial support per scholarship amounts about 2.000 € per person; **additional financial support is available** if a well-founded time and costs projection is presented and if the project can't be executed with a funding of **2.000 €**.

The next application deadlines for the 2026 scholarships are 30 May 2026 and 15 October 2026.

The application period begins on 22 April 2026 and 22 September 2026 respectively.

Application documents

- Concise description of the research plan in English on no more than 4 pages in A4 format under consideration of the following points: (1) Current status of international research on the proposed project based on the perusal of the current literature, clearly defined project goals as well as questions and working hypotheses, (2) detailed methods including time schedule, (3) bibliography of literature used to formulate the proposal and (4) budget plan.

- CV, and if applicable, a list of publications.

- In the case of MSc and PhD projects: Confirmation of acceptance by the curriculum board or the relevant university department.

- Letter of recommendation (informal) by the research supervisor. Should lab work be required, then the feasibility must be confirmed by the supervisor.

Please send your digital application as .pdf to
tropenstation.botanik@univie.ac.at

Incomplete applications cannot be considered. Formal fulfilment of all application requirements does not imply any legal entitlement to financial support. Funding will be awarded on the basis of competition for the best quality applications and in accordance with the funds available. Legal recourse is excluded.
Not eligible for funding: Work that has already been completed at the time of application, pure analyses of data already collected in Costa Rica, as well as equipment required for the field work.

Awarding
The board of the La Gamba Society reaches its decisions regarding the allocation of scholarships on the basis of competition criteria and the suggestions of the scientific advisory board. The quality and originality of research are pivotal and must be tied to a stay at the Tropical Field Station La Gamba.

To keep the assessment of the submitted research applications as transparent as possible, all assessors are required to use the following points system for the evaluation of applications. This provides applicants with important clues that highlight the relevant aspects utilized to assess a research proposal. The position of the research applications in the ranking is based on the points awarded and decisive for the granting of a scholarship. A maximum of twelve points can be reached. Exclusion criteria for the awarding of a scholarship are a score of less than six points and applications that lack the above-mentioned documents (confirmation of acceptance by the curriculum board or the relevant university department, letter of recommendation from the research supervisor, CV) or if an application shows that an applicant is unsuitable to conduct the proposed research.

Points system for the assessment of the submitted project proposals:

Category	Assessment criteria	Awardable points
Current state of knowledge on the research topic, project goals and innovative aspects	Aside from a short introduction to the research topic considering the relevant scientific literature, clear questions and working hypotheses must be formulated. In addition, the innovative aspects of the proposed research must be stated.	5
Methods (including time schedule)	In addition to a concise description of the methods involved, the following points must be taken into consideration: (a) What statistical design (number of spatial and/or temporal replicates for field research or experiments) are you intending to use? (b) For lab work: Which methods of analysis are you planning to use? (c) If applicable: Which statistical methods will be used for data evaluation?	5
Budget plan	Comprehensible presentation of costs	1
Relevance of research for the research location La Gamba	Why is the research interesting for the research location La Gamba and why is La Gamba especially suited for this type of the research?	1

As the applications by PhD candidates are generally expected to be of higher quality than those written by MSc students due to their more extensive experience, a direct competition between the two groups is to be avoided. The level of education will thus be considered in the evaluation process. Retroactive fieldwork in Costa Rica that has already been completed at the time of the application deadline, as well as pure evaluations of previously collected data from Costa Rica will not be sponsored. In the case that multiple persons apply to a scholarship whose research is closely linked, then this must be stated explicitly in the application.

Ruling
The applicants are notified about the ruling in writing immediately after a decision has been reached. You will receive a declaration of acceptance if you receive a scholarship for your research. The filled declaration must be returned to the La Gamba Society.

The formal fulfillment of all application requirements does not imply a legal right to financial support. The allocation of the scholarships is based on competition for the best applications under the consideration of existing means. There is no right of appeal.

Disbursement
The scholarship is disbursed upon receival of the **declaration of acceptance**.

Reports
An activity report (ca. two pages) must be submitted to the society no later than **two months after the completion of your stay** at the Tropical Field Station La Gamba. Furthermore, scholarship holders are obligated to send a **digital copy** of their master thesis or dissertation (in pdf format) to the society upon completion. Should peer-reviewed publications arise from the sponsored work at the *Tropical Field Station***,** then the **scholarship must be mentioned in the acknowledgements** and a pdf of the published article sent to the society.