

PhD position

The impact of parasitic bees & climate change on stingless bees and Indigenous beekeeping livelihoods in the Peruvian Amazon

Application deadline: **4pm Monday 6th January 2025**



Background

We invite applications for a 4-year PhD project ([standard UKRI stipend](#)) at the University of Bristol, UK. This interdisciplinary project will investigate the impacts of natural and anthropogenic threats on stingless bee colonies and the economic consequences for Indigenous beekeeping livelihoods in the Peruvian Amazon. The project has three specific aims:

1. To understand the effects of parasitic robber bees (*Lestrimelitta* spp.) and climate change on managed bee populations.
2. To assess the impact of these threats on the livelihoods of Maijuna beekeepers.
3. To evaluate the importance and economic sustainability of stingless beekeeping for Indigenous Maijuna livelihoods, with particular attention to women's involvement.

Methods

The study will use a combination of methods, including DNA barcoding for species identification, ecological surveys, quantitative surveys, and focus group discussions. Fieldwork will involve extended stays in remote areas of the Peruvian Amazon, requiring both self-reliance and the ability to work as part of a team. The working languages are English and Spanish; proficiency in English is required¹, while proficiency in Spanish is beneficial.

Team and research environment

The successful candidate will be supervised by [Dr. Christoph Grüter](#) (Bee Biology & Ecology) and [Dr. Selina Bruns](#) (Sustainability & Economics). A central pillar of the project is the collaboration with NGOs [Amanatari](#) and [OnePlanet](#), the Universidad de Ingeniería y Tecnología (UTEC), and families from Maijuna communities.

The successful applicant will join an international and interactive scientific environment with access to state-of-the-art [facilities](#) at the University of Bristol. Bristol is a vibrant city known for its thriving academic community and rich cultural scene. Bristol University has a strong commitment to sustainability and diversity and offers excellent opportunities for professional and personal growth in an engaging and supportive environment.

How to apply: Follow [this link](#) for more information about the project, including on how to apply. For informal enquiries, please contact Dr. Christoph Grüter (c.grueter@bristol.ac.uk) or Dr. Selina Bruns (selina.bruns@bristol.ac.uk).

¹For example IELTS: 6.5 on average per band, and at least 6.0 in each band; TOEFL: 88 overall, with at least R20, L19, S22, W22; certificates no older than September 2023