

The **University of Bonn** is an international research university offering a broad range of subjects. With a 200-year history, some 31,500 students, more than 6,000 employees and an outstanding reputation in Germany and abroad, the University of Bonn is one of the leading universities in Germany and has been awarded the status of a University of Excellence.

The Collaborative Research Center [CRC-TRR 228 "Future Rural Africa. Future-making and social-ecological transformation"](#) combines expertise from the two Universities of Bonn and Cologne to study newly emerging issues of social-ecological transformation and future-making in Africa. Project B01 "Invasive Futures: Land-use transitions" invites applications for a

## PhD student position (70%) (f/m/d)

to start from April 1st 2026 limited to 3 years and 9 months. **Application deadline is January 18, 2026.**

The research will address whether agricultural management practices differentially affect the patterns and intensity of plant invasion and assess further linkages to soil water dynamics and crop performance. The successful candidate will be supervised by Jun. Prof. Dr. Janina Dierks (head of the group [Sustainable Crop Production](#), University of Bonn) and contribute to the overarching objective of Project B01 to better understand the dynamic interactions and causal relationships between key processes affecting land-use transitions, specifically related to soil fertility, invasive control, livelihood mobility, and economic and ecological resilience.

### Your tasks:

- Plan and conduct field experiments in Kenya to determine the effect of agricultural management practices on *Parthenium hysterophorus* (Parthenium) invasion, soil water dynamics and crop performance,
- Link soil and plant data to economic experimental data to quantify the direct impact of interventions (e.g. training, subsidized inputs, or technical support) on the adoption of Parthenium management practices and their effects on soil properties, Parthenium control, and crop performance,
- Take a proactive approach and strive to work increasingly independent in conducting your research,
- Use the opportunity to shape the research based on your own ideas,
- Actively engage with a multidisciplinary research team,
- Present research results at international conferences and workshops,
- Write and publish research articles in peer-reviewed journals.

### Your profile:

- Master's degree in plant, soil, or environmental systems sciences, ecology, or related fields,
- Experience in conducting experimental work – from data collection and laboratory analyses to data analyses using statistical software environment R,
- Excellent oral and written English language and communication skills,
- Enthusiasm for advancing knowledge, open-mindedness, team spirit, and strong interpersonal skills,
- Meticulous and motivated work attitude, aspiration to keep improving and extending own skill set,
- Strong interest in plant-soil interactions, invasion ecology, soil physics, economic experiments, and/or interdisciplinary work are a plus.

### We offer:

- Stimulating, international research environment,
- Excellent network of multidisciplinary research partners,
- Opportunity to conduct research towards a Ph.D. degree,
- Support in personal career development,
- Salary according to the German Federal pay scale (70% TV-L E13).

The University of Bonn is committed to diversity and equal opportunity. It is certified as a family-friendly university. The University of Bonn seeks to increase female representation in staffing areas where women are underrepresented and provide special career support. It thus expressly encourages qualified women to apply. Applications will be handled in accordance with the NRW State Gender Equality Act (*Landesgleichstellungsgesetz*, LGG NRW). Applications from qualified candidates with a certified severe disability or from those of equal status are especially welcome.

Please submit your application electronically quoting refence **2025/288**, in **one combined PDF file** to Jun. Prof. Dr. Janina Dierks ([jdierks@uni-bonn.de](mailto:jdierks@uni-bonn.de)) by **January 18, 2026**. Make sure to specify the **email subject** as "**PhD application CRC-B01**". Application documents must be written in English and include a motivation letter (max. 1 page), names and contact details of two reference persons, CV (no photo and no date of birth), transcript of Master's degree (and diploma if available), and your Master's thesis. For further information regarding the position, please contact Jun. Prof. Dr. Janina Dierks via email, with subject as specified above.