

# The Urban Agriculture Nexus: an investigation on urban food growing in the *barrios* of Bogotá

Annual tuition fees at UKRI Home/EU rates for 3.5 years (£4,327 for 2019/20) (A small number of fee waivers at the international rate will also be available to international candidates, at the discretion of the awarding panel) plus annual stipend at UKRI rates (£15,009 2019/20)

This scholarship competition is open to all *new* postgraduate research applicants.

GCDC scholars will receive the following:

- Annual stipend at UKRI rates for 3.5 years (TBC but this was £15,009 for 2019/20);
- Annual tuition fees at UKRI Home/EU rates for 3.5 years (£4,327 for 2019/20);
- A Research Training Support Grant of £1,500 per year for the first 3 years of study; and
- Specialised interdisciplinary GCDC cohort training activities.

**Project-led Studentship – Kent School of Architecture and Planning: The Urban Agriculture Nexus in informal settlements: an investigation on the benefits of urban food growing in the *barrios* of Bogotá.**

## ***Background***

Urban Agriculture (UA) is a practice that can increase the resilience of communities in different ways, depending on the geopolitical area. While in the global south it is generally perceived as a practice of subsistence, in the global north it is promoted as a means to increase the health and well-being of gardeners as well as the local biodiversity. However, these different stances are blurring, with food security becoming a great concern as the number of households on the poverty line increases in countries such as the UK and the USA, and community building becomes a fundamental issue in, for example, informal settlements. In Bogotá's *barrios*, Colombia, UA has been practiced for subsistence at a household level, although today, programmes promoted by the local authorities start community gardens to use food growing as an activity that can ameliorate a problematic social fabric and the quality of the public realm. There are no studies that demonstrate both productive and social yields of these forms of collective food growing. This evidence is important, since municipalities in Colombia are investing significant financial resources to upgrade *barrios*. It can give the real measure of the social, environmental and economic value of UA in cities such as Bogotá and justify (or not) higher investments within upgrading programmes.

## ***Project Aim***

The aim of this doctoral investigation is to generate evidence on the significance of growing food in cities in terms of food security, good use of urban resources and improvement of the quality of the built environment, for the inhabitants of informal settlements (i.e. *barrios*) in Bogotá, Colombia. Evidence will be generated by using the FEW-meter toolkit, which is based on an assessment method developed within an ongoing research project ([www.fewmeter.org](http://www.fewmeter.org)). In this doctoral investigation, the toolkit will be customised reflecting the particular socio-economic condition of Bogotá.

## **Objectives**

This project will be developed in collaboration with the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Bogotá, enabling the doctoral student to rely on their expertise on local practices of UA and gain access to community gardens in barrios.

Objectives of the doctoral investigations are:

- a) The development of a dataset documenting resource usage and productivity (input-output analysis) as well as socio-economic benefits of community gardens in the barrios where food is grown. This will demonstrate their level of resource efficiency;
- b) Quantification of the possibility for community gardens to use urban waste (e.g. food waste and rainwater) and produce food with minimal impact on the environment;
- c) Based on the above, the formulation of urban planning guidelines and strategies for the upgrading of barrios which use urban agriculture as a means to develop a green infrastructure in dense, unplanned environments, thus improving urban ecology and the quality of public spaces; and
- d) The mapping on GIS of existing and potential UA spaces in a sample of barrios of Bogotá.

## **Supervisors**

The project will be led by Dr Silvio Caputo (Kent School of Architecture and Planning), who is an expert in UA and green infrastructure in cities. Professor Jaime Hernandez-Garcia (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogota), an expert in informal settlements and UA, will act as second supervisor.

More information: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/scholarships/search/FNADGCDC0901#>

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