

PhD studentship (Full-time)



Institution	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China
School	School of Science
Supervisors	Principal supervisor: Dr Sekar Raju (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University) Co-supervisor: Professor Alan McCarthy (University of Liverpool) Co-supervisor: Dr Malcom Horsburgh (University of Liverpool)
Application Deadline	Open until the position is filled
Funding Availability	Funded PhD project (world-wide students)
Project Title	Community structure, function and degradation potential of the plastisphere microbiome
Contact	Please email Sekar.Raju@xjtlu.edu.cn with a subject line of the PhD project title

Requirements:

The candidate should have a first class or upper second class honours degree, or a master's degree (or equivalent qualification), in Biological Sciences with specialization in Microbiology or Molecular Biology. Experience and an interest in DNA/RNA analysis, bioinformatics, statistics and biofilm microbiology/biochemistry is desirable. Evidence of good spoken and written English is essential. The candidate should have an IELTS score of 6.5 or above, if the first language is not English. This position is open to all qualified candidates irrespective of nationality.

Degree:

The student will be awarded a PhD degree from the University of Liverpool (UK) upon successful completion of the program.

Funding:

The PhD studentship is available for three years subject to satisfactory progress by the student. The award covers tuition fees for three years (currently equivalent to RMB 80,000 per annum) and provides a monthly stipend of 5,000 RMB as a contribution to living expenses. It also provides up to RMB 16,500 to allow participation at international conferences during the period of the award. It is a condition of the award that holders of XJTLU PhD scholarships carry out 300-500 hours of teaching assistance work per year. The scholarship holder is expected to carry out the major part of his or her research at XJTLU in Suzhou, China. However,

he or she is eligible for a research study visit to the University of Liverpool for up to six months, if this is required by the project.

Project Description:

Microplastics are of great environmental concern due to their toxicity to aquatic life and their potential for supporting biofilms that harbor and disseminate pathogenic microorganisms and antibiotic resistance genes. Though the effect of microplastics on marine environments has been widely studied, their impact on freshwater environments has only been recognized recently. This project will investigate the microbiome associated with different non-biodegradable and biodegradable plastics in freshwater. The functional characteristics of the colonizing species and their ability to degrade plastics will be investigated by the application of multiple molecular microbiological approaches. This project will be supervised by Dr Sekar Raju (XJTLU), Professor Alan McCarthy (UoL) and Dr Malcom Horsburgh (UoL).

For more information about the doctoral scholarship and PhD programme at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU), see:

<http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/study-with-us/admissions/entry-requirements>

<http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/phd/feescholarships.html>

How to Apply:

Interested applicants are advised to contact **Dr Sekar Raju (Email: Sekar.Raju@xjtlu.edu.cn)** with the following documents for initial review and assessment (please include the project title in the email subject line).

- CV
- Personal statement outlining your interest in the position
- Two reference letters with company/university letterhead
- Proof of English language proficiency (an IELTS score of 6.5 or above), if the first language is not English
- Verified school/university transcripts in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- Verified certificates of education qualifications in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)

Informal enquiries may be addressed to **Dr. Sekar Raju** (Sekar.Raju@xjtlu.edu.cn), whose personal profile is linked below,

<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/departments/academic-departments/biological-sciences/staff/sekar-raju>