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The Germany-CGIAR++ Science and Impact Hub
Junior Scientists Program (JSP)

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Letter of Motivation for the Junior Scientists Program Scholarship

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Laura Lucia Dinu and I am currently doing my Master's in Nutritional Science and Home Economics at Justus-Liebig University in Gießen. During my studies, I set my academic focus on food security, global nutrition, and the intersection of gender and nutrition. Therefore, I was very excited when I got to know about the Junior Scientists Program through my professor Dr. Keding. Her modules "Sustainable Diets and Nutrition Security" and "International Nutrition Security and Development" opened a new study field for me that inspired me to get to know more about agricultural and nutritional development work.

To find out more about this field, I completed an internship at Shining Eyes India, an organisation working on nutrition, health, and agricultural initiatives for the Santal population. My task during the internship was to independently implement a fermentation project in the local hospital and the surrounding villages to improve the nutritional status of the Santal people. Although this was a major challenge for me at first, I came to enjoy my work there and the thought of contributing to a sustainable improvement of the nutrition motivated me to put my heart into this project. Now, I can proudly look back to this internship knowing that working in the nutritional development field can be challenging but at the same time it is a very important and impactful work.

After this experience, it became clear to me that I want to write my MSc thesis with my professor Dr. Keding within this field. Getting me in touch with the PhD student Irene Induli, I got to know that the focus on the contribution of fruit and vegetable vendors to nutrition security would be a valuable addition to her study "Co-creating market linkages to enhance availability, affordability, and accessibility of fruits and vegetables in Kilome and Makadara sub-counties, Kenya" by the Alliance Bioversity International & CIAT. It would be an honour to conduct my research at this CGIAR Centre among other scientists from whom I could learn so much about the work at an international research centre.

While writing my Bachelor's thesis on "(Media) Frames and Political Positions: An investigation into the reactions of associations to the new DGE recommendations" (available for viewing at <https://doi.org/10.22029/jlupub-19067>), I realised that I really enjoy working scientifically. Before writing this thesis, I was not familiar with the method of the framing analysis that was needed for this kind of data analysis, though it was no problem for me to dive into this method and implement it in my thesis. This experience strengthened my scientific curiosity and my motivation to accept new challenges.

The JSP scholarship would allow me to fully concentrate on my research in Nairobi, optimally prepare for my stay, and make the dream to work at a CGIAR Centre come true while at the same time learning more about the culture, daily life, and people's perspectives in Kenya. Moreover, it is of high relevance for my career goals as I would love to work one day in science or in the nutritional development sector.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you!

Kind regards

