

PhD Opportunity

Dr. Ho Yi Wan, Associate Professor and Director of the Landscape Ecology, Informatics, Artificial Intelligence (LEIA) Lab at the University of Florida is recruiting a PhD student to begin in Spring/Fall 2026.

Project Theme

This position will focus on the intersection of food deserts and biodiversity, examining how environmental change influences both ecological resilience and food access. Possible research directions include:

- Mapping and analyzing the overlap of food deserts with biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and ecosystem services.
- Modeling socio-ecological drivers of food availability and ecological health across changing landscapes.
- Evaluating interventions (e.g., agricultural practices, restoration, conservation strategies) for their effects on communities and ecosystems.
- Applying GIS, remote sensing, spatial statistics, and AI-driven informatics to integrate ecological and social data.

Position Details

- Start Date: As early as Spring 2026.
- Degree: PhD
- Fully funded (stipend, tuition, and benefits).
- Environment: Interdisciplinary and collaborative lab in UF's Department of Wildlife Ecology & Conservation, with strong connections to UF's AI and informatics infrastructure.

Qualifications

Applicants should have:

- An M.S. degree in ecology, geography, environmental science, computer science, or a related field.
- Strong interest in biodiversity, food systems, and socio-ecological interactions under environmental change.
- Background in GIS, remote sensing, spatial/landscape ecology, and programming (R, Python).
- Strong writing and communication skills.

Desirable but not required: experience with socio-ecological fieldwork, stakeholder

engagement, or machine learning/AI applications.

Application Instructions

Please submit the following as a single PDF to Dr. Ho Yi Wan (wanhoyi@ufl.edu):

1. CV / resume.
2. A 1–2 page statement of research interests and career goals, including how your expertise and vision will contribute to the mission and ongoing projects of the LEIA Lab.
3. Contact information for three references.
4. Up to three recommendation letters (strongly recommended to be submitted at the time of application).

Review of applications and interviews will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

About the Lab

The LEIA Lab (Landscape Ecology, Informatics, Artificial Intelligence) integrates landscape ecology, informatics, and AI to study how environmental change shapes biodiversity and human well-being. We emphasize actionable, interdisciplinary science that informs conservation, resilience, and sustainability. Learn more at hoyiwan.com

Contact

wanhoyi@ufl.edu

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