



Nuffield  **Canada**
AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Partnership Proposal

De-risking the regenerative transition: A global search
for financing solutions that work for farmers and
ranchers

Antonious Petro | Nuffield Canada Contemporary Scholar 2025



From Farmer to Change Agent

I farmed in Egypt for over a decade before my family insisted I leave agriculture. They saw the economic instability, the impossible margins, the way hard work and **good agronomy weren't enough to build a viable future**. So, I left, trying pharmaceuticals, pursuing education, and exploring different paths, before eventually immigrating to Canada twelve years ago.

Being forced away from work I loved, from land I understood, simply because the system didn't support farmers is why I do what I do now: **Supporting the changemakers building resilient, regenerative agricultural systems for the future**

Grounded Experience, Regenerative Vision Growing Through Experience

Today, as Executive Director of Regeneration Canada, I lead a national movement to advance regenerative agriculture across the country. I've spent the past decade working directly with farmers, ranchers, and rural communities, building programs and partnerships that put producers at the center. **I'm determined to ensure Canadian farmers don't face the same impossible choice I did: between doing what's right for the land and keeping their operations viable.**

I recently completed my Master's degree in Soil Sciences at UQAT, focusing on carbon sequestration and perennial cover systems. I also serve on the board of Farmers for Climate Solutions, a coalition representing over 17,000 farmers and ranchers. This combination of hands-on farming experience, scientific training, and organizational leadership, informs everything I do. I understand both the promise and the pain of agricultural transition.



THE NUFFIELD OPPORTUNITY: A GLOBAL SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS

I was selected as a 2025 Nuffield Scholar, an honour that recognizes leadership, curiosity, and commitment to bringing global insights home to strengthen Canada's agricultural future.



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The Nuffield Canada Scholarship is one of the most prestigious leadership programs in global agriculture. Since 1950, it has supported agricultural leaders to conduct international research on topics that shape the future of farming. Each year, only a handful of Canadians are selected from across the entire country.

Nuffield scholars spend a minimum of ten weeks traveling the world, learning from global peers, and studying innovations that can strengthen Canadian agriculture. Upon return, we produce a public report and share our findings widely. Past Nuffield scholars have launched transformative initiatives, influenced public policy, and shifted practices across entire sectors.





Richards Farms, SK

My Research Objective: From Risk to Resilience: The Role of Economic Policy and Finance in Scaling Regenerative Agriculture

How can financing tools, incentive programs, and economic frameworks de-risk and support the long-term adoption of regenerative agriculture?

Regenerative agriculture can build soil health, restore biodiversity, produce nutritious food, and strengthen rural communities. Canada has pioneering regenerative producers. Many are advancing steadily. But many more remain cautious about the economic risks.

Programs exist, but they're fragmented and hard to navigate. They fund isolated practices, not whole-system transitions. These programs help with adoption but don't support what comes after. What happens in year three? Year five? When the funding stops?



Ferme Les Bontée de La Vallée, QC

How I'll Explore This Question

I'll travel to 8-10 countries investigating:

- Blended finance models combining public and private investment
- Insurance and risk-mitigation tools for regenerative systems
- Farmer-led decision-making frameworks
- How NGOs, co-ops, and extension services design effective programs



Why This Matters

What farmers are telling us is simple: They want resilient farms. They want to build soil health, adapt to climate change, and pass viable operations to the next generation. **But resilience isn't possible without economic viability.**

The barriers are real:

- Economic uncertainty is the top concern for farmers considering regenerative practices
- Existing programs often fail to align with how farms actually operate
- Financial institutions need better tools to support regenerative transitions
- Short-term incentives don't create long-term change

This research will help. I'll bring back working models, practical case studies, and ideas that can strengthen programs and create new pathways for Canadian producers.



Ferme & Fromagerie La station, QC

My Network: How These Insights Will Reach Canadians

Non-Profit Partners

My relationships span national coalitions, provincial farming organizations, Indigenous agriculture networks, and community food groups. I will:

- **Share findings through working groups and policy briefings**
- **Contribute to national advocacy campaigns**
- **Influence program design at the federal and provincial levels**
- **Host collaborative webinars and roundtables**

Direct Producer Engagement

I'm regularly invited to speak at farmer-led events across Canada.

Final Report

A comprehensive Nuffield report will be publicly released accompanied by knowledge-sharing webinars.

Publications and Media

I plan to publish my findings in outlets such The Conversation, agricultural journals, and bilingual blog posts.

The Investment:

Where Your Partnership Goes



The total cost of this international research project is **\$80,000 CAD.**

Nuffield Canada contributes \$20,000. I am seeking to raise the remaining \$60,000 through partnerships with aligned organizations that share my vision for a more resilient Canadian Agriculture.

Your investment will fund:

- Global travel to 8-10 countries including; Japan, India, Australia, France, the UK, Norway, Morocco, Brazil and the USA.
- Participation in international farmer networks, research meetings, and field visits
- Translation and bilingual dissemination of findings
- Case study development, interviews, and documentation
- Knowledge mobilization events upon return

100% of partnership funds go directly to research, travel, and knowledge mobilization. All administrative costs are covered separately. No funds will be used for salary or overhead.

Timeline

- Announcement and Orientation
- Nuffield Canada Global Learning Exchange - Victoria (BC)

Nov. 2025 -
Jan. 2026

Mar. 2026 -
Dec. 2026

June 2026 -
Sept. 2027

Jan. 2028

- Return and begin report writing
- Knowledge mobilization—webinars, presentations, publications

- Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) in Osaka/Kansai, Japan)
- International research travel (10+ weeks across 6-8 countries)
- Regular field dispatches and updates to partners

- Final Nuffield report published and released

Partnership Opportunities

Benefits	Supporter \$500	Contributor \$5,000	Major Partner \$7,500	Lead Partner \$15,000+
Logo in final report	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social media recognition	—	✓	✓	✓
Digital copy of report	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blog post thank-you feature	—	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly email updates from field	—	✓	✓	✓
Social media spotlight with photos	—	✓	✓	✓
Option to co-host findings webinar	—	✓	✓	✓
Logo on presentation materials	—	—	✓	✓
Custom team presentation	—	—	✓	✓
Co-branded case study	—	—	✓	✓
Media interview recognition	—	—	✓	✓
Named partnership on materials	—	—	—	✓
Logo on travel jacket	—	—	—	✓
Top visibility: report cover	—	—	—	✓
Exclusive leadership roundtable	—	—	—	✓
Ongoing advisory relationship	—	—	—	✓

Custom partnerships welcome. Let's co-create a partnership with mutual benefit.

Together, We Can Shift What's Possible for Farmers and the Land

Farmers shouldn't have to choose between soil health and financial survival.

I faced that choice. Too many Canadian farmers still do.

Your support makes this research possible. I'll bring back working models and practical tools to help build systems where regenerative practices make economic sense—not just environmental sense.

Let's give the next generation of farmers a real chance to stay on the land.

Ready to Partner?

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