



## **Project Leader (Ref No: DDG-R4D/PL/AY/06/16)**

**Background:** The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) invites applications for the internationally recruited position of **Project Leader**.

IITA is one of the world's leading research partners in finding solutions for hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. Its award-winning research-for-development (R4D) approach addresses the development needs of tropical countries. IITA works with partners to enhance crop quality and productivity, reduce producer and consumer risks, and generate wealth from agriculture. IITA is a non-profit organization founded in 1967 in Nigeria and governed by a Board of Trustees. IITA works on the following crops: cowpea, soybean, banana/plantain, yam, cassava, and maize. It is a member of CGIAR, a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Please visit <http://www.iita.org/> for more information on IITA.

IITA seeks a highly motivated and qualified individual with experience in leading interdisciplinary and international projects to serve as 'Project Leader' for a project on 'Enhancing Yam Breeding for Increased Productivity and Improved Quality in West Africa (AfricaYam)' supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). Project activities involve collaborative research between IITA and the national yam programs of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria; the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS), and the Iwate Biotechnology Research Center (IBRC) in Japan; the James Hutton Institute (JHI), UK; the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), France; and the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research (BTI), Cornell University, USA. This project is focused on breeding superior yam varieties for high yield, good quality and resistance to diseases (anthracnose and yam mosaic virus). It also includes regional testing of promising breeding selections; phenotyping bi-parental populations, mapping and genome-wide association studies for key agronomic and quality traits; generation of genomic tools for genotyping populations, genome-wide association studies, and testing the feasibility of genomic selection; constructing and using a 'open access' database for curation and integration of yam research data; and capacity building.

The successful candidate will oversee and coordinate project activities to ensure that outputs are delivered on time, within budget, and meet quality assurance standards according to an agreed results framework and results tracker. He/she will be assisted in execution of these tasks by a Project Administrator and a Project Assistant. The Project Manager will report to the Regional Director for Western Africa and the Director in charge of Biotechnology and Crop Improvement.

### **Position/Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate an inter-disciplinary, international and culturally diverse project team; manage financial assets and ensure implementation of AfricaYam as per the project results framework and results tracker.
- Apply best practices and tools for project management, including budgeting, procurements, data management, troubleshooting, as well as high quality monitoring and evaluation (M&E) with support from IITA's M&E officer.
- Manage contracts between IITA and project partners and ensure synergy between project partners.
- Coordinate the required technical and financial reporting to the donor in consultation with project members, IITA's Project Administration Office and the Finance Directorate.
- Facilitate the operations of the project's Technical Advisory Committee.

- Coordinate organization of project events, including training/technical workshops and annual planning and review meetings.
- Support relevant partners in project execution, management and sharing of information and knowledge, and effective stakeholder participation.
- Ensure effective communication within the project team, identify shortfalls and devise contingency plans.
- Represent the project to external stakeholders at scientific and other regional meetings.

### **Educational Qualifications**

The candidate should have a PhD degree in plant or agricultural sciences or other relevant discipline from a recognized university.

### **Core Competencies:**

- At least 10 years of post-PhD experience.
- Experience in managing multidisciplinary and international projects and demonstrated skills in team building and creation of synergies between project partners and activities.
- Experience in working with a wide range of partners, including national and international research institutes, universities, development actors and farmers' organizations.
- Familiarity with agriculture and farming systems in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Proficiency in the use of project management software, databases, internet-based tools and other electronic communication tools.
- Fluency in oral and written English; knowledge of French would be an asset.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Willingness to travel extensively within the West Africa sub-region.

**Duty station:** Abuja, Nigeria

**General information:** The contract will be for an initial period of three years with possibility of renewal based on performance and availability of funding. IITA offers internationally competitive remuneration package paid in U.S. Dollars.

**Applications:** Applications must include covering letter which should address how the candidate's background/experience relates to the specific duties of the position applied for, curriculum vitae, names and addresses of three professional referees (which **must** include either the Head of the applicant's current or previous organization or applicant's direct Supervisor/Superior at his/her present or former place of work). The application should be addressed to the Head, Human Resources Service. Please complete our online application form using this link: <http://www.iita.org/careers>

**Closing Date:** 30 June 2016

**IITA is an equal opportunity employer and particularly welcomes applications from women candidates.**

*Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.*