



Yam Breeder (Ref No: DDG-R4D/YB/03/18)

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

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.

A highly motivated individual is required to lead genetic improvement of yam (*Dioscorea* spp.) at IITA. The successful individual will work within a team that includes scientists with expertise in breeding, genetics, biotechnology, social science, agronomy, seed systems, food technology, and plant health management. This team collaborates actively with national yam programs and universities in West Africa as well as research institutes in France, USA, and UK. It is expected that the successful applicant will lead the engagement of IITA's yam breeding in these partnerships and with relevant cross CGIAR activities, including the Excellence in Breeding Platform.

Position Responsibilities:

This position aims to develop highly productive yam varieties and breeding populations with resistance to diseases and pests, good food and nutritional qualities, and desirable physiological and agronomic traits adapted to different agro-ecozones of sub-Saharan Africa, especially West Africa.

The main duties of the successful applicant will include the following:

- Use of innovative approaches for the exploitation of genetic diversity and genomic data from a range of *Dioscorea* species in germplasm enhancement and improvement of yam.
- Integrating conventional yam breeding with genomics-assisted breeding in collaboration with biotechnologists.
- High quality research on genetics of, and breeding for, resistance/tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses, and enhanced nutritional and end-use quality traits.
- Publishing research results in high quality scientific journals and representing IITA in scientific and partnership meetings, including through oral presentations.
- Contributing to IITA relationships with partners in national agricultural research and extension systems (NARES), the private sector, and advanced research institutes.
- Fostering an effective mechanism for delivery of improved yam germplasm to NARES and the private sector.
- Co-supervising post-graduate thesis research with university lecturers and mentoring the next generation of yam breeders.
- Providing technical backstopping and other assistance in building yam breeding capacity of national programs.
- Mobilizing research resources through grant proposals and managing research funds effectively.

Educational Qualifications

The candidate should have a PhD degree in plant breeding or related discipline and a good knowledge of genomics.

Core Competencies:

- Extensive experience in a field-breeding program, and adequate exposure to molecular biology to implement genomics-assisted breeding.
- A strong peer-reviewed publication record.
- Organizational, planning and budget management experience.
- Donor relations and project management experience including proposal writing and oversight of compliance matters resulting in continuously donor funded projects.
- Ability to work as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in a cross-cultural environment.
- Excellent leadership, mentoring, management, interpersonal, and team building skills.
- Demonstrated strong capabilities in statistical data analysis.
- Fluency in oral and written English. Working knowledge of French is an advantage.

Duty station: Ibadan, Nigeria

General information: The contract will be for an initial period of three years. 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: 19th April 2018

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

Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.