



Associate Scientist, Molecular Breeder (Ref No: DDG-R4D/AS/MB/07/18)

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

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) is a not-for-profit institution that generates agricultural innovations to meet Africa's most pressing challenges of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and natural resource degradation. Working with various partners across sub-Saharan Africa, we improve livelihoods, enhance food and nutrition security, increase employment, and preserve natural resource integrity. IITA 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 individual to work as **Associate Scientist - Molecular Breeder** in the ongoing project 'Enhancing yam breeding for increased productivity and improved quality in West Africa (AfricaYam)'. The project team is working towards a vision to increase yam productivity whilst reducing production costs and environmental impact by developing and deploying varieties with higher yield, greater resistance to pests and diseases and improved tuber quality. Led by IITA, the project involves a network of research organizations in the four main producer countries of the yam belt of West Africa: the National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) and the Ebonyi State University (EBSU) in Nigeria; two research institutes under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Ghana (the Crops Research Institute and the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute); le Centre National de Recherche Agronomique (CNRA), Côte d'Ivoire; and l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Dassa Center, Benin. Partners outside West Africa are: the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), France; the Iwate Biotechnology Research Center (IBRC), Japan; the James Hutton Institute (JHI), UK; Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS), Japan; and the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research (BTI), Cornell University, USA.

Position Responsibilities

- Contribute to genomic resource development and deployment for germplasm enhancement of yam and work with the breeder to identify priority target traits, develop breeding approaches, and implement efficient and cost effective molecular tools for the project.
- Utilize existing and novel markers and genotyping systems to develop and validate functional markers.
- Develop suitable marker-trait association approaches including QTL mapping, genome-wide association studies (GWAS) and genomic selection for relevant traits in existing and newly developed populations.
- Collaborate with breeders and scientists in related disciplines to develop and implement improved phenotyping protocols.
- Establish collaboration with advanced labs in the areas of gene/marker discovery and trait capture techniques with the aim of deploying comparative and functional genomics approaches to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of yam breeding.
- Develop strategies to translate information from sequencing and genotyping systems and the corresponding data management and analysis methods to enhance yam improvement.
- Supervise and manage national staff and graduate students as needed.
- Participate in resource mobilization with yam research teams.
- Publish research findings in peer reviewed journals.
- Participate actively in project review and planning meetings and in reporting on progress.
- Perform any other activities as may be assigned.

Educational Qualifications

The candidate should have a PhD in genetics, molecular biology, plant breeding, or related fields.

Core Competencies:

- At least 2 years of post-PhD experience in a crop breeding program.
- Knowledge and experience in plant genetics, genomics, breeding, and bioinformatics.
- Ability to integrate high quality phenotyping with genotyping.
- Experience with project activity implementation and monitoring.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Excellent spoken and written English. Fluency in French will be an asset.
- Demonstrated ability to publish articles in peer reviewed international journals.
- Ability to work as a member of a team.

Duty station: IITA Headquarters, Ibadan, Nigeria.

General information: The contract will be for an initial period of two 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: The position will remain open until a suitable candidate is found

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

Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.