



Transforming African Agriculture



Head, Genetic Resources Centre (Ref No: DDG-R4D/H/GRC/06/21)

Background: The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), with headquarters in Ibadan, Nigeria, invites applications for the post of **Head, Genetic Resources Centre**.

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.

Plant and animal genetic resources are the foundation for sustainable agriculture and global food security. Genetic diversity enables plants to adapt to new pests and diseases as well as to threats from climate change, drought, soil erosion, and more. Today, we are losing genetic resources at an unprecedented rate, while the world's capacity to maintain food security decreases. Agricultural sustainability is dependent on a strong conservation component. IITA's conservation activities started in the mid-seventies with the establishment of a genebank. Depending on species, collections are either stored in field-, seed-, or in vitro genebanks. IITA's genebank holds the plant material (germplasm) of major food crops of Africa. This germplasm is held in trust on behalf of humanity under the auspices of the United Nations. It is distributed without restriction for use in research for food and agriculture.

At the same time there is a need for research and innovation to enhance conservation efficiencies for both seed and clonal crops. The facilitation of germplasm use by CGIAR breeding programs and others is also important, for example with respect to traits important for climate change and nutrition

Position Responsibilities

- Provide essential oversight, leadership and management of genetic resources conservation and research, at the Genetic Resources Centre, Ibadan, in the context of One CGIAR.
- Secure maintenance and preservation of the international collections maintained at IITA and update standard international operational procedures as appropriate.
- Maintain a strong research program on secure conservation methods for clonally propagated crops.
- Develop a strong research program on germplasm characterization, combining agromorphological and molecular data with the objective of a) evaluating the diversity of the collections and b) developing decision support tools for optimization of germplasm management.
- Develop germplasm evaluation programs in collaboration with respective breeding programs.
- Work closely with the Germplasm Health Unit on germplasm indexing and sanitation.
- Supervise all germplasm exchanges and ensure harmony with the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

- Contribute to capacity building in the conservation and use of plant genetic resources worldwide.
- Liaise with Global Crop Diversity Trust and other work within the Genetic Innovation Science Area of One CGIAR particularly in terms of use of germplasm in breeding programme and market intelligence.
- Lead a programme of work on enhancing germplasm use both directly and through breeding with a focus on climate change and nutrition.
- Establish or strengthen collaboration with national partners and Advanced Research Institutes.
- Communicate research results through peer-reviewed high-impact journals and other media.
- Participate in mobilization of resources to support research activities.
- Collaborate with breeding programs to enhance germplasm use.
- Take part in the development of global conservation strategies.
- Perform any other job-related duties as may be assigned by the supervisor.

Education Qualifications

The candidate should possess a Ph.D. in plant breeding, genetics, conservation biology or related fields from a highly recognized university.

Core Competencies

- A minimum of 8 years of experience in genetic resource conservation and use of seed and clonally propagated collections.
- Familiarity with *in situ* conservation.
- Experience in management of Genebank operations with multiple species.
- Publication in high ranking scientific journals on *ex situ* conservation of plant genetic resources, genetic resource diversity assessment or evaluation, or conservation of clonally propagated species.
- Experience with database management and application of genomic tools in germplasm management.
- Ability to create strong and sustainable links with diverse partners.
- Ability to work as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in a cross-cultural environment.
- Excellent leadership, interpersonal, and team building skills.
- Knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa and good contacts with NARS scientists in the region is an added advantage.
- Proficiency with written and spoken English; knowledge of French is an asset.

Duty Station: Ibadan, IITA Headquarters, Nigeria.

General Information: The initial appointment is for three years. IITA offers a competitive remuneration package paid in US dollars.

Applications: Applications must include a 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 of Human Resources. 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 is committed to building a diverse workforce, particularly welcoming applications from women.

While all applications will be acknowledged, please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.