

Postdoctoral Fellow – Cowpea Physiologist (Ref No: DDG-R4D/PDF/C/PSY/03/22)

Background: The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) invites applications for the internationally recruited position of **Postdoctoral Fellow – Cowpea Physiologist**.

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.

Cowpea, *Vigna unguiculata*, is an important grain legume in sub-Saharan Africa, where it contributes both to the food and nutritional security of millions of people. At IITA, Cowpea Breeding Program is conducting research targeting the development of target product profiles associated with key market segments (e.g., homemade flour for soup making and addition to porridge and flour dough for bread; industrial flour; boiled grain mixed with ugali or other cooked meal or eaten as a snack with corn; dried young leaves as a vegetable; the dual purpose for fodder and grain). The “must-have traits” for all these product profiles include resistance to both biotic and abiotic stress factors. Among the abiotic stresses, heat and drought are identified as key traits.

The successful candidate for this current recruitment will play an important role in understanding how heat and drought impact cowpea and identifying sources of tolerance to deploy the genes associated with these traits into our breeding programs. The ultimate aim is to develop improved cowpea varieties tolerant to drought and heat.

Position Responsibilities

The tasks of the Postdoctoral Fellow – Cowpea Physiologist are to:

- Establish efficient field and screen house phenotyping methodologies for heat and drought tolerance in cowpea.
- Identify cultivated and cross-compatible wild cowpea genotypes with drought and heat tolerance.
- Investigate the physiological basis for cowpea's drought and heat tolerance and adaptation mechanisms.
- Contribute to understanding the genetic basis for drought and heat tolerance and identifying associated QTLs.
- Contribute to resource mobilization and strengthening NARS partners' capacity in crop physiology.
- Provide guidance and direction to national staff.
- Publish research results in reputable international journals.
- Co-supervise research of postgraduate students.
- Perform any other job-related duties as may be assigned by the cowpea research team lead.

Educational Qualifications

The candidate should have a Ph.D. degree in Crop Physiology or other relevant fields from a highly recognized university with two to three years of work experience in a similar role, preferably in an international non-profit & non-governmental setting.

Core Competencies

- Experience in legume research.
- Ability to investigate processes responsible for the primary productivity of crop communities.
- Knowledge of advanced statistical tools and database management.
- Demonstrated field research experience in international agricultural research for development-focused projects or programs.
- Ability to work as a multi-disciplinary team member in a cross-cultural environment.
- Fluency in written and spoken English is required, and a good working knowledge of the French language is an advantage.
- Possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills, sound judgment, and a high level of respect for confidentiality.

Duty Station: Kano, Nigeria.

General information: The contract will be for an initial period of two years. IITA offers an internationally competitive remuneration package paid in US Dollars.

Applications: Applications must include a cover 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 Service. Please complete our online application form using this link: <http://www.iita.org/careers>

Closing Date: 31st May 2022

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.