



Department: Department Of Agriculture
 Agency: Agricultural Research Service
 Sub Agency: U.S. National Arboretum, Gardens Unit
 Job Announcement Number:
 ARS-D8E-0179

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Overview

Agricultural Science Research Technician (Plants)

Salary Range: 31,751.00 - 41,271.00 USD per year

Open Period: Thursday, June 19, 2008
to Friday, July 18, 2008

Series & Grade: GS-0404-05/05

Position Information: Full-Time Temporary position not to exceed 1 Year

Duty Locations: 2 vacancies - Washington, DC

Who May Be Considered:

Applications will be accepted from United States citizens.

Job Summary:

Find Solutions to Agricultural Problems that Affect Americans Every Day, From Field to Table
 <P>This position is part of the Internship Program at the U.S. National Arboretum, located in <ST1:PLACE w:st='on'><ST1:CITY w:st='on'>Washington</ST1:CITY>, <ST1:STATE w:st='on'>D.C</ST1:STATE></ST1:PLACE>. The incumbent of this position assists with the maintenance, development, and research relating to a variety of woody and herbaceous plants, while receiving on-the-job training in horticulture and botany. </p><p>Your U.S. citizenship must be verified prior to entrance on duty.</P>

Duties

Major Duties:

The incumbent, in the capacity of an intern, assists with the maintenance, development, and research relating to a variety of woody and herbaceous plants. The incumbent's duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- caring for and maintaining the collections for maximum scientific and educational utilization;
- assisting in researching printed material and assembling the information in the office files;
- answering routine public inquiries concerning plants such as their care and use;
- recording inventory and accession data;
- contributing to interpretative signage and labels to identify plants correctly;
- watering, fertilizing, pruning, and controlling weeds;
- propagating and preventing insect and disease problems;
- assisting horticulturists in keeping records of plants and fertilizer applications;

- performing general grooming of the work area; and
- assisting in the maintenance of greenhouse growing and propagation areas.

Additionally, the intern is required to write a proposal for, and complete an independent study or project.

Working Conditions and Other Considerations:

The incumbent may be required to work weekends, holidays, and evening work schedules on a rotating basis during the year. Working in all weather extremes is required.

Qualifications and Evaluation

Qualifications:

Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

Basic Requirements:

One year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-04 level in the Federal service; successful completion of a full 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with major study or at least 24 hours in any combination of courses such as horticulture, botany, biology, chemistry, statistics, entomology, animal husbandry, physics, agriculture or mathematics (at least six semester hours must be directly related); or a combination of education and experience.

Specialized Experience is experience which has equipped you with the following Knowledge, Skills and Abilities - 'KSAs' required to perform the duties of this position:

1. Knowledge of the basic principals of horticulture or botany.
2. Skill identifying woody and herbaceous plant species.
3. Ability to apply greenhouse and nursery techniques and procedures.
4. Ability to keep accurate records.

Time-In-Grade Restrictions apply for all candidates considered under Merit Promotion/Alternative Merit Promotion.

Education:

If qualifying all or in part based on your education, you must submit a copy of your academic transcripts OR a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grade point average or class ranking to verify education when applying for this position. If this information is not provided, your education may not be appropriately evaluated and you may lose consideration for this position. If you are selected for this position, you will have to provide an official copy of your transcripts prior to entering on duty. Application materials will not be returned.

Education completed in foreign colleges or universities may be used to meet the above requirements if you can show that the foreign education is comparable to that received in an accredited educational institution in the United States. It is your responsibility to provide such evidence when applying. Please visit the Office of Personnel Management's website at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> for additional information on this topic.

How You Will Be Evaluated:

You will be evaluated to determine if you meet the basic and any additional requirements. The Agricultural Research Service uses a category rating process. Based on evaluation of all written materials submitted in application for the position, you will be determined to be Ineligible, if you do not meet eligibility and/or minimum qualifications criteria; Eligible, if you meet all eligibility and minimum qualifications criteria; OR Quality, if you meet quality criteria in addition to eligibility and minimum qualifications criteria. For information about how to address KSAs, please visit our website at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers>, click on 'How to Apply,' then click on 'What are those KSAs anyway?' For more information about the evaluation process, please visit our website at: www.ars.usda.gov/careers, click on 'How to Apply,' then click on the link to 'Qualifications and What They Mean.'

Benefits and Other Information**Benefits:**

A Benefits Package is not authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm.

Other Information:**Veteran's Preference:**

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 703-724-1850 or TDD 978-461-8404. Select General Information on the Federal

Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veteran's Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>.

Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA): Qualified candidates eligible under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA), a special hiring authority, will be considered. VEOA eligibles are preference eligibles or veterans who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of active service. Veterans who are released under honorable conditions shortly before completing a 3-year tour are also eligible.

Creditable Service:

Service credit for annual leave accrual may be granted for directly related non-Federal work experience or uniformed service for newly appointed individuals, or those individuals reappointed after a break in service from civilian Federal employment of at least 90 calendar days. The amount of non-Federal service to be credited will be based on the amount of directly related and documented experience that the selectee possesses as documented by the employee and which is approved by agency management.

USDA CTAP/ICTAP or Federal Displaced Employees:

Applicants requesting consideration under the CTAP or ICTAP programs must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified CTAP and ICTAP applicants within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry. If you are requesting consideration as a CTAP or ICTAP applicant, you must submit the following:

- 1) A copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- 2) Evidence of full performance level of current position;
- 3) A copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- 4) A copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action.

Relocation Expenses:

Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, as amended by Bulletins 03-402 and 05-412.5, which may be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/412-05.htm#H10>. See also http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm.

Financial Disclosure Requirement:

Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. You may be required to submit a financial disclosure report if hired for this position.

False statements:

If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):

If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

Selective Service System:

Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.

ARS Reasonable Accommodation Contact Information:

If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on 202-720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on 202-855-1234 (TDD).

How to Apply**How To Apply:**

Mail your applications so it will be postmarked by closing date. If hand delivered, be sure your application is received by closing date.

If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation as appropriate. Some of the items listed may not apply to you. NOTE: Applications received in postage paid government envelopes will not be considered.

APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

___ Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications (Go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to obtain the OF-612).

The following information is required of all applicants:

___ Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position

___ Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)

___ Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612)

___ Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) (only if claiming veteran's preference) (Visit the following web site for additional information:

<http://www.opm.gov/employ/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>

__SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veteran's preference) (Go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain form.)

__ Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:

___ Job title

___ Series/grade (if Federal employment)

___ Duties and accomplishments

___ Employer's name and address

___ Supervisor's name and contact information

___ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month/year)

___ Number of hours worked per week

___ Salary

___ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer

__ Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)

___ Certificates/licenses (current)

___ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments

___ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable
(usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)

__ Copy of college transcripts (if qualifying all or in part on the basis of education for this position) (If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look under the heading "Other Education" for information governing acceptability of this type of education.)

__ Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status (if you are a current or previous federal employee)

__ Copy of most recent performance appraisal (if you are a current federal employee)

__ Second copy of application package IF you are a candidate with competitive status. (NOTE: All status candidates who wish to be considered under both alternative merit promotion and non-status competitive examining must submit two (2) complete applications when the position is open to both status and non-status candidates. When only one (1) application is received, it will be considered under the alternative merit promotion procedures if the applicant is a current or former Federal employee with reinstatement eligibility.)

__ Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. (If you have questions about whether you are eligible for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit the web site at

http://www.opm.gov/Strategic_Management_of_Human_Capital/fhfr/default.asp

___ Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee (See pertinent section under "Other Important Information" below).

___ Self-certification of typing speed (if required as a basic qualification for the position)

___ While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience) and Selective Placement Factor(s), if present, for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications for this position. (For an explanation of KSAs, go to the web site at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/whatksa.html>).

If this is your first time applying for a federal job, or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs, go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.

Submit a narrative statement responding to the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) identified in the announcement. This information will be used to determine your eligibility and/or rating and is required.

Contact Information:

Laverne Blackwell
Phone: 301-504-1335
Fax: 301-504-1535
TDD: 202-855-1234
Email: SCIRECRUIT@ARS.USDA.GOV

Or write:

Department Of Agriculture
USDA-REE-ARS-HRD/Announcement #ARS-D8E-0179
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop #5104
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104
E-Mail: SCIRECRUIT@ARS.USDA.GOV
Fax: 301-504-1535

What To Expect Next:

Applicants will receive written confirmation from this office when their application package is received.

After the application has been received, applicants will not be notified of the status of their paperwork until a final selection has been made.

EEO Policy Statement

The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, membership in an employee organization, or other non-merit factor.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy Statement

Federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process should contact the hiring agency directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Veterans Information

Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were separated under honorable conditions may be eligible for [veterans' preference](#). For service beginning after October 15, 1976, the veteran must have served the required length of time and have a Campaign Badge, Expeditionary Medal, a service-connected disability, or have served in the Gulf War between August 2, 1990, and January 2, 1992.

The [Veterans Employment Opportunity Act \(VEOA\)](#) gives veterans access to job vacancies that might otherwise be closed to them. The law allows eligible veterans to compete for vacancies advertised under agency's promotion procedures when the agency is seeking applications from outside of its own workforce.

To claim veterans' preference, veterans should be ready to provide a copy of their DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, or other proof. Veterans with service connected disability and others claiming 10 point preference will need to submit [Form SF-15, Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference](#).

For more specifics on all veterans employment issues such as Veterans preference or special appointing authorities see the [VetGuide](#).

Legal and Regulatory Guidance

Social Security Number - Your Social Security Number is requested under the authority of Executive Order 9397 to uniquely identify your records from those of other applicants who may have the same name. As allowed by law or Presidential directive, your Social Security Number is used to seek information about you from employers, schools, banks, and others who may know you. Failure to provide your Social Security Number on your application materials, will result in your application not being processed

Privacy Act - Privacy Act Notice (PL 93-579): The information requested here is used to determine qualifications for employment and is authorized under Title 5 U.S.C. 3302 and 3361.

Signature - Before you are hired, you will be required to sign and certify the accuracy of the information in your application.

False Statements - If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; you may be fired after you begin work; or you may be subject to fine, imprisonment, or other disciplinary action.

Selective Service - If you are a male applicant born after December 31, 1959, you must certify that you have registered with the Selective Service System, or are exempt from having to do so under the Selective Service Law.

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Department Of Agriculture
USDA-REE-ARS-HRD/Announcement #ARS-D8E-0179
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop #5104
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104
E-Mail: SCIRECRUIT@ARS.USDA.GOV
Fax: 301-504-1535

[Questions?](#)

For questions about this job:

Laverne Blackwell

Phone: 301-504-1335

Fax: 301-504-1535

TDD: 202-855-1234

Email: SCIRECRUIT@ARS.USDA.GOV

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