



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
www.ars.usda.gov

"Solving Problems for the Growing World"

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement Number: **ARS-X5E-0148**

Demo/Alternative Merit
Promotion

Position Title/Series/Grade:

Research Geneticist (Plants)
GS-0440-12/13

Employment Type: Full-time - Permanent

Grade and Salary Range:

GS-12 \$62,886.00 - \$81,747.00 Per Year
GS-13 \$74,782.00 - \$97,213.00 Per Year

Location of Position:

U.S. National Arboretum, Floral & Nursery Plants
Research Unit, Washington, D.C.

Who Can Apply:

All U.S. Citizens

Opening Date: April 4, 2005

Closing Date: **May 31, 2005**

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

Contact Information

Human Resources Specialist:

Li z Parker
(301) 504-1351

DC Relay Service: (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

Send Applications to:

USDA, Agricultural Research Service
Human Resources Division
Attn: Li z Parker
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5104
Beltsville, MD 20705-5104

Fax: (301) 504-1535

E-mail: scirecruit@ars.usda.gov

Applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

For information about the organization and location, visit the location's website at www.usna.usda.gov.

Applications will also be accepted from USDA Surplus and Federal Displaced Employees in the commuting area.

Major Duties:

You will conduct basic and applied research to provide the genetic information necessary to 1) develop stress-, disease-, and pest-tolerant cultivars of important landscape trees; 2) increase the diversity and improve the adaptability, longevity, and effectiveness of trees planted in urban landscapes, with particular attention to native germplasm and to fast-growing shade trees suitable for smaller spaces, as street trees, and under utility lines; 3) investigate introgression and the impact of introgression between cultivated selections and native populations and examine barriers to inter-population and interspecific crosses; 4) develop cultivars of interspecific hybrids and of native tree genera that minimize introgression and undesirable fruit; and 5) select superior genotypes that can be efficiently clonally propagated without becoming invasive. In addition, you will directly supervise one lab-oriented horticulturist and one gardener.

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

Basic Requirements

You must have at least a bachelor's degree in genetics or one of the basic biological sciences that included at least 9 semester hours in genetics. Courses dealing with genetics, some phase of genetics, or specific techniques that are applied in genetics work are acceptable. Examples include courses in genetics, plant or animal genetics, molecular and cellular biology, mathematics and statistics (as they apply to genetics), population dynamics, cytology, and certain techniques, such as those dealing with irradiation.

A Ph.D. is highly desirable.

This position has a positive education requirement. You must provide a copy of your academic transcripts OR a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grades received 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.

Additional Requirements:

For the GS-12 level: You must demonstrate at least one full year of specialized experience as described below. To be creditable, such experience must have been equivalent to the GS-11 level in the federal service; OR possess a Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree in genetics, plant genetics, or a directly related field, provided major emphasis was placed on genetics. Acceptable combinations of education and experience will also be considered in determining minimum qualifications.

For the GS-13 level: You must demonstrate at least one full year of specialized experience as described below. To be creditable, such experience must have been equivalent to the GS-12 level in the federal level.

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

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

1. Knowledge of plant breeding, plant genetics, and related sciences, such as plant, population, and quantitative genetics; plant breeding; plant ecology; plant pathology; horticulture; and biochemistry.
2. Ability to conduct research using appropriate experimental design, genetics techniques, and statistical analyses.
3. Knowledge of the trees of the world, particularly their geographic and genetic variability, and their potential for landscape, street, and utility line use in the United States.
4. Ability to plan, conduct, and publish results of research in peer-reviewed scientific journals and make presentations at scientific meetings in the area of plant breeding/genetics.

To be considered for a research scientist position, you must submit a one-page abstract of your MS thesis and/or PH.D. dissertation. Also submit a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, recognition; any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitation); and publications.

Vacant research positions may be filled at one of several grade levels depending upon the scientific impact of the person selected. A peer review may be required to determine the appropriate grade level of the position and supplemental materials may be required from the selectee.

Research scientists have open-ended promotion potential. Research accomplishments and their impact on the duties and responsibilities of positions are evaluated periodically. The grade level is limited only by the individual's demonstrated ability to perform research of recognized importance to science and technology. *Final grade level may be determined by a peer review panel.

Other Important Information

Benefits Package:

A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.htm.

Veteran's Preference:

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 478-757-3000 or TDD 478-744-2299. 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>.

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 Bulletin 03-402, which may be found at: 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.

USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:

USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees 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 placement 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. Applicants 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, to verify reassignment eligibility.

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.

Reasonable Accommodation:

Reasonable accommodation is provided to applicants with disabilities. 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). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

Civil Rights Policy Statement:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider. Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).

**** Application Package Checklist on following pages**

Application Package Checklist

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.

- Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (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)
- Social security number
- Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) (if claiming veteran's preference) (Visit the following web site for additional information:
- SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veterans 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 the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures).
- 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.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and scroll down to the subject heading, “Category”.)
- 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>).

As an Applicant for a Research Scientist Position, you must also submit the following:

A one-page abstract of MS thesis and/or Ph.D. dissertation

A resume of any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitations); and publications.

A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, and recognition.

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.