



Training Opportunities at AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center

Introduction

The mission of AVRDC is to improve nutrition and reduce poverty in the tropics through vegetable research and development. Its major research programs are conducted at AVRDC headquarters in Shanhua, Taiwan. To enhance its outreach efforts, training centers operate in Tanzania and Thailand and research networks have been established across the world.

AVRDC offers many opportunities for scientists and students to participate in its research and development (R&D) programs. Through these opportunities AVRDC is developing a team of well-trained and highly motivated scientists engaged in vegetable research, extension, policy formulation, and production. These training opportunities also provide AVRDC a means of strengthening its R&D capacity in critical areas.

Opportunities for Scientists

Postdoctoral Fellows

Postdoctoral Fellowships are awarded to Ph.D. holders who are actively pursuing R&D on vegetables. Stipends for Post-Doctoral Fellows are determined according to the number of years since the degree was awarded and to evidence of scientific achievement. Post-Doctoral Fellows with less than three years postdoctoral experience are in the lowest stipend category level; those with more than seven years experience and evidence of significant achievement are in the highest category. Financial support is through AVRDC, usually from funds made available directly to AVRDC from collaborative projects funded by bilateral or multilateral development agencies. Postdoctoral fellows can conduct research at the AVRDC headquarters or at one of its regional or bilateral programs. Terms are for one to three years.

Visiting Scientists

Visiting Scientists are generally senior research scientists and university professors from developing countries who, on the basis of expertise and experience in research on vegetables (minimum of two to five years experience since earning a Ph.D.), are accepted by AVRDC to strengthen collaboration between itself and a national agricultural research system (NARS) partner. Financial support for a visiting scientist is arranged by himself or herself, often with the assistance of his or her organization. Visiting Scientists can conduct research at the Center's headquarters or one of regional or bilateral programs. Terms are for six months to one year.

Sabbatical Scientists

Sabbatical Scientists are experienced scientists, generally from developed countries, who collaborate with an AVRDC scientist on a specific R&D topic. The sabbatical scientist, or the sabbatical scientist's employer, or a fund granting organization unit must assume travel, salary and all other financial expenses. Partial funding may be considered by AVRDC. AVRDC provides an office and access to research facilities (labs, greenhouses and fields) at the AVRDC headquarters or at one of its regional or bilateral programs. Terms are for six months to one year.

Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

1. Applicants from NARS research or educational institutions engaged in vegetable R&D who have on-going collaborative projects with AVRDC.
2. Same as (1), but with applicants from institutions that do not have collaborative projects with AVRDC.
3. Applicants who possess expertise that complements that available at AVRDC, but which is critical to successfully implement R&D on a new front.

A scientist seeking an appointment as a Postdoctoral Fellow, Sabbatical Scientist or Visiting Scientist should forward a copy of his or her curriculum vitae, a brief description of current research work, and a two to three page summary of past research work to the Director General of AVRDC. A new Ph.D. graduate should submit a copy of his or her thesis abstract. A brief research proposal that describes the proposed study and its expected output must be enclosed. AVRDC scientists will review the proposal. Proposals that pass review will be circulated to AVRDC scientists to determine if one or more agrees to accept the applicant into his or her component of its R&D program. Priorities are given to applicants with strong employer endorsement.

Opportunities for Graduate Students

AVRDC is not a degree granting institution. However, AVRDC collaborates with universities in many countries to make the facilities and expertise of the Center available to students interested in tropical vegetables for thesis research.

The acceptance of a graduate student is contingent on English proficiency and admission on a university. The student must arrange admission to the university. If the university requires course work, the candidate should complete it before arriving at AVRDC. A candidate must be endorsed by his or her NARS employer and/or university adviser.

A memorandum of agreement between AVRDC and the university must exist or must be arranged before the graduate student can be accepted at AVRDC. The AVRDC scientist who agrees to guide the student's research must be accepted by the university as a member of the student's thesis advisory committee.

Provided funds are available and all parties agree, the thesis research can be conducted at the AVRDC headquarters or one of its regional or bilateral programs.

Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

1. Candidates from developing countries whose expenses are assumed by their university, by AVRDC from an externally funded collaborative project that it manages, or by a fund granting organization.
2. Candidates from developed countries whose expenses are covered by his or her university or who are independently supported.
3. Candidates from developing countries whom are unsupported financially, but from a country regarded as very deficient in vegetable R&D capacity.

Opportunities for Research Interns, Production Interns and Research Fellows

Research and Production Interns

Research Interns are full-time researchers who have a university diploma plus several years of experience. They come to AVRDC to conduct research, under the supervision of an AVRDC scientist, on topics of mutual interest to AVRDC, the trainee, and the trainees' employer. Terms are for one to six months. Production interns come to AVRDC for general training on vegetable cultivation. Interns can be accommodated at the AVRDC headquarters or one of its regional or bilateral programs.

Research Fellows

Research fellowships are full-time R&D or apprenticeship programs for employees of NARS. Applicants must have an M.S. or B.S. degree as well as several years of experience. The fellowships are intended to augment AVRDC's R&D capacity as well as to provide the Research Fellow an opportunity to improve his or her skills, knowledge and experience. Research is conducted under supervision of an AVRDC scientist as a component of its R&D program. Fellowships are usually for one year with a possible extension for another year.

Selection Criteria (in order of priority)

1. All Research Interns, Production Interns, and Research Fellows must be endorsed by their employers.
2. Applicants from NARS in developing countries with which AVRDC has collaborative projects. AVRDC may support the candidates either from the core fund or from an external project.
3. Applicants from institutions in developing countries engaged in vegetable R&D, whose financial support is arranged by the nominating institution.
4. Applicants from institutions in developed countries with which AVRDC has collaborative projects and whose financial support is arranged by the nominating institution.
5. Applicants from institutions in developing countries engaged in R&D, but whose institution cannot arrange financial support.
6. Applicants who are not affiliated with NARS but who have outstanding academic records or specializations of interest to AVRDC and have demonstrated potential through scientific accomplishments. Applicants must be citizens of developing countries.

Opportunities for Undergraduates

Undergraduate students can apply to AVRDC for internships of two to twelve months. If a scientist accepts a student, he or she will work on a topic within the scientist's R&D program. Funds permitting, the student will receive a nominal stipend from AVRDC. All expenses, including meals and lodging at the headquarters facilities, are borne by the students directly.

Undergraduate students may also apply for internships to conduct their thesis at the Center. If a scientist accepts a student to serve his/her adviser who must become an Affiliate Professor of the university. Through a special program, the student receives a nominal stipend to cover the costs, including lodging, meals, insurance, and other incidental expenses. The students, however, are responsible for all the traveling expenses coming to AVRDC and going back to their countries.

Contacts

As noted, scientists seeking appointments as Postdoctoral Fellows, Sabbatical Scientists, or Visiting Scientists should communicate directly with the Director General, AVRDC, Taiwan.

For further information and application forms for other opportunities listed in this document, communicate with one of the following offices:

Headquarters Capacity Building Program,
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AVRDC, PO Box 42
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