

Opportunity Title: Plant Genetics Research Assistant

Opportunity Reference Code: ARS-USVL-2016-0136

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

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How to Apply A complete application package consists of:

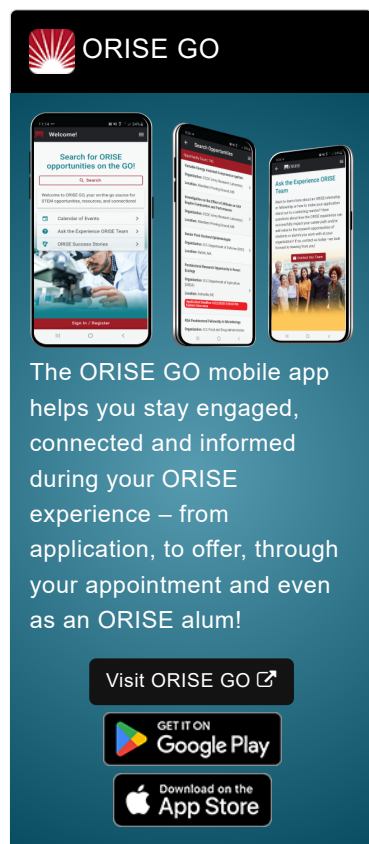
- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Selected candidate must provide proof of completion of the degree before the appointment can start. Proof must be sent to ORISE directly from the academic institution including graduation date and degree awarded. All transcripts must be in English or include an official English translation.
- A current resume/CV

If you have questions, send an email to USDA-ARS@orau.org. Please include the reference code for this opportunity in your email.

Description A Plant Genetics Research Assistant opportunity is available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) U.S. Vegetable Laboratory (USVL) in Charleston, South Carolina.

The incumbent will work on a research project focused on the breeding and genetics of vegetable Brassica crops including broccoli, cabbage, collards, mustard and other leafy green Brassicas. Primary responsibilities will involve assisting in the setup, transplanting, maintenance, and harvest of small field plots of experimental plants. Day to day field maintenance will include irrigating, fertilizing, and weeding plots. When plants in plots reach a mature harvest stage, the incumbent will assist in rating and harvesting the experimental plants and taking appropriate yield and quality notes. During the winter months, the incumbent will work in greenhouses caring for experimental plants grown in pots. A significant amount of time in the winter greenhouses will be spent making controlled hand pollinations to advance all plant breeding stocks to a new generation. All pollinations will be followed to pod formation and maturity when seed will be harvested from plants, allowed to dry, threshed, and then packaged up for future use. The incumbent will also assist on a plant pathology project aimed at identifying resistance to a bacterial leaf blight disease in collard (*B. oleracea*) and in the turnip (*B. rapa*) species. Activities for this project will involve planting accessions to be evaluated, maintaining plants through a seedling stage when they will be inoculated with a pathogenic bacteria, and then evaluated for resistance about 10 days post inoculation.

The appointment is full-time for nine months and may be renewed based upon recommendation of the ARS and availability of funding. The selected applicant will receive a stipend as support for their living and other expenses during this appointment. Stipend rates are determined by ARS officials, and are based on the applicant's academic and professional background. The participant must show proof of health and medical insurance. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE. The



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participant will not enter into an employee/employer relationship with ORISE, ORAU, USDA, ARS, or any other office or agency. Instead, the participant will be affiliated with ORISE for the administration of the appointment through the ORISE appointment letter and Terms of Appointment.

While participants will not enter into an employment relationship with ARS, this position requires a pre-employment check and a full background investigation.

This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-U.S. citizen applicants should refer to the [Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens Details](#) page of the program website for information about the valid immigration statuses that are acceptable for program participation.

This is an equal opportunity program open to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, mental or physical disability, covered veteran's status or genetic information.

For more information about the ARS Research Participation Program, please visit the [Program Website](#).


Qualifications To be eligible, applicants must have received a bachelor's degree in biology, horticulture, plant science, or a related field within five years of the desired starting date.

Experience in the following areas is desirable.

- Conducting small field plot experiments and gathering data from said experiments
- Care and maintenance of experimental plants in the greenhouse
- Work with plants in the Brassicaceae family
- Conducting controlled pollinations of plants, as well as experience harvesting, processing and handling seed
- Working with and operating some basic field equipment including tractors, transplanters, fertilizer spreaders, sprayers, etc.

Eligibility • **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree.

Requirements • **Discipline(s):**

- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([3](#) )