Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellowship in Plant Genetics and Genomics
Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0253

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0253

How to Apply ***To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click APPLY.***

A complete application 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. Click here for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

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Application Deadline 9/11/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

ARS Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located at Thad Cochran Southern Horticultural Laboratory, Poplarville, Mississippi.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency with a mission to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table. ARS will deliver cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation's agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. The vision of the agency is to provide global leadership in agricultural discoveries through scientific excellence.

Research Project: The fellowship will involve collaborating with USDA-ARS scientists on research programs focusing on understanding the molecular, genetic, and genomic basis of traits of interest and applying the molecular genetics and genomics tools for the characterization and development of cultivars in ornamental (Hibiscus) and small fruit (Blueberry and Muscadine grape) crops. This research is a component of ARS National Programs 301 (Plant Genetic Resources, Genomics, and Genetic Improvement). Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will help conduct both basic and applied research on small fruit and ornamental crops. Methodology used in the development of enhanced plant materials encompasses field,

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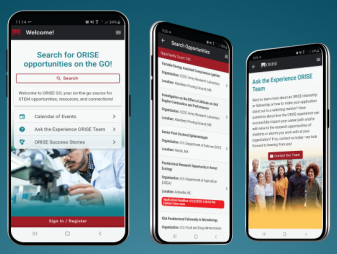

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greenhouse, and laboratory experiments. In addition to participating in the ongoing projects, you will participate in molecular genetics and genomic analysis projects by collaborating with the mentor and other scientists at the center.

Please use the following link to learn about the objectives and the approaches being used in the research project under which this fellowship resides:
https://www.ars.usda.gov/research/programs-projects/project/?accnNo=444836

Learning Objectives: Under guidance of a mentor, the participant will:

- Learn to collaborate with USDA-ARS scientists on research investigating the molecular, genetic, and genomic basis of important horticultural traits.
- Develop skills in applying molecular genetics and genomics tools for the characterization and improvement of ornamental (*Hibiscus*) and small fruit crops (blueberry and muscadine grape).
- Gain experience conducting both basic and applied research aligned with ARS National Program 301.
- Build practical skills in integrating field, greenhouse, and laboratory experiments for plant improvement and cultivar development.
- Learn to design and analyze molecular and genomic studies supporting the development of enhanced plant materials.
- Develop collaborative research skills by collaborating closely with mentors and interdisciplinary scientists on ongoing genetics and genomics projects.
- Strengthen the ability to translate genomic insights into strategies for cultivar characterization and crop improvement.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Hamidou Sakhanokho (hamidou.sakhanokho@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: November 2026. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year, but may be renewed upon recommendation of ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend range is $72,500 - $80,000 annually.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and ARS. Participants do

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not become employees of USDA, ARS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our Program Website. After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.ARS.Southeast@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should have received or be currently pursuing a doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past five years or is anticipated to be received by 8/31/2026.

Preferred skills:

- Candidates with a strong background and demonstrated experience in conducting molecular genetics and genomics research will be given preference.
- Experience in crop genetics and genomics and awareness of current and emerging trends in both domains.
- Experience in whole genome sequencing and comparative genomics
- Experience in interacting with and exchanging knowledge with diverse research groups.
- Strong data analysis skills and demonstrated experience in computational tools used in molecular genetics and genomics research
- Strong writing skills and demonstrated ability to publish research findings in peer reviewed journals.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate in diverse and interdisciplinary teams.
- Evidence of ability to conduct independent and collaborative research.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Strong oral and written communication skills for reporting research results.

Stipend $72,500.00 – $80,000.00 Yearly

Point of Contact Sara Beth

Eligibility Requirements

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 8/31/2026 12:00:00 AM.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (10 👁)