

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Plant Research Fellowship  
**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0281

**Organization** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0281

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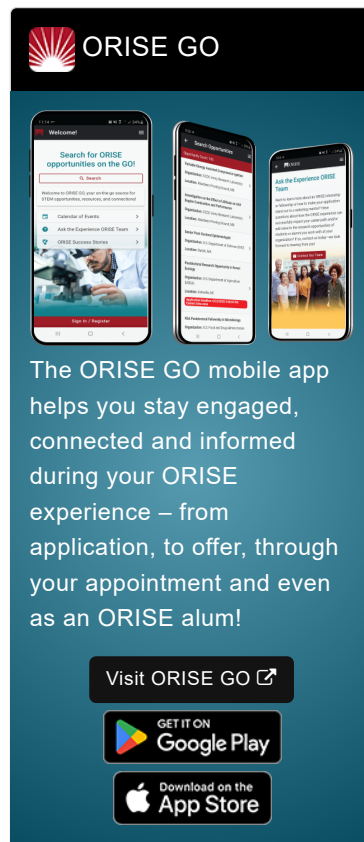
**Application Deadline** 9/11/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

**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 in Urbana, Illinois.

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:** This research supports the USDA Agricultural Research Service mission to deliver scientific solutions to agricultural challenges for producers, consumers, and the environment. Consistent with NP301 and NP303 objectives, we integrate trait discovery and disease management strategies to reduce crop losses and enhance sustainability. In alignment with ARS National Program 301, we aim to leverage plant genetic diversity and genomics to develop improved germplasm and breeding tools for resilient, high-yield crops. Our unit's objectives include identifying accessions in the National Plant Germplasm System soybean genetic resource collection with nutritional and stress tolerance traits, particularly among wild soybeans, and applying innovative breeding methods to efficiently introgress exotic and wild genetic variation for yield, seed composition, and disease



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resistance into agronomically acceptable germplasm lines with minimal drag or other undesirable traits. The training appointment focuses on screening soybean germplasm—including wild accessions—for resistance to biotic stresses. Under mentorship, you will engage in experiential learning across germplasm evaluation and data collection aligned to disease-resistance objectives.

**Learning Objectives:** Under the guidance of a mentor, you will have the opportunity to learn to:

- Understand the general process of a soybean breeding program
- Practice field-based techniques (e.g., planting, controlled pollinations, observational data collection) to connect theory to practical breeding processes.
- Curate datasets for scientific use
- Conduct quality checks for technical reporting
- Apply disease inoculations techniques for soybean diseases

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is Lilian Miranda ([Lilian.Miranda@usda.gov](mailto:Lilian.Miranda@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: September/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 \$3,750 – \$4,350 monthly.**

**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 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.Midwest@orau.org](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Midwest@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The candidate should be currently pursuing or have received

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a bachelor's or master's degree in the one of the relevant fields (Crop Science, plant biology, plant pathology or related field).

**Preferred skills:**

- Knowledge of basic lab protocols and plant pathology techniques
- Interest in Plant pathology and Plant breeding
- Experience in collecting field and Greenhouse data carefully and consistently, and using quality control best practices for acquiring, entering, and managing data.
- Knowledge of row crops

**Stipend** \$3,750.00 – \$4,350.00 Monthly

**Point of Contact** [Sara Beth](#)

- Eligibility**
- Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** LPR or U.S. Citizen
  - **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree.
  - **Discipline(s):**
    - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([10](#) )