Molecular Biologist (Plants)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Crop Improvement & Protection Research Unit

Summary

This position is located with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Pacific West Area (PWA), Crops Improvement & Protection Research Unit in Salinas, California and will be responsible for providing research support to the Research Leader.

The initial appointment will be 13 months with ability to extend up to 10 years. Decision to extend will be up to the Hiring Manager and the needs of the unit.

Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates

U 10/12/2023 to 10/17/2023

Salary

\$57,778 - \$91,873 per year

Pay scale & grade

GS 7 - 9

Location

1 vacancy in the following location:

Salinas, CA

Remote job

No

Telework eligible

Yes—as determined by the agency policy.

Travel Required

Not required

Relocation expenses reimbursed

No

Appointment type

Term - 13 months

Work schedule

Full-time -

Service

Competitive

Promotion potential

9

Job family (Series)

0401 General Natural Resources Management And Biological Sciences (/Search/Results?j=0401)

Supervisory status

No

Security clearance

Not Required

(/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Drug test

Nο

Position sensitivity and risk

(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Trust determination process

Suitability/Fitness

(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Announcement number

ARS-D23PWA-12125069-mds

Control number

75/51700

This job is open to



Career transition (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL)

Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.



The public

U.S. Citizens, Nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

Clarification from the agency

US Citizens and Nationals; no prior Federal experience is required.

Duties

- · Duties listed represent the full performance level of the position.
- Performs a range of experiments involving application of molecular biology and bioinformatics and related methods with a particular emphasis on plant viruses and their interactions with host plants and insect vectors.
- · Plans and carries out individual experiments within prescribed approaches.
- · Performs tests and analyses by applying established analytical methods and procedures or by operating an automated analytical system according to established operating procedures.
- · Maintains official laboratory notebooks recording the methods and procedures used, any modifications of methodology applied, and the results.
- Prepares results of findings from experiments conducted, including initial interpretation of significance to the overall project, for inclusion in manuscripts and technical reports.

Requirements

Conditions of Employment

- · You must be a US Citizen or US National
- Males born after 12/31/1959 must be Selective Service registered or exempt
- $\bullet \ \ \text{Subject to satisfactory adjudication of background investigation and/or fingerprint check}$
- Successful completion of one-year probationary period, unless previously served.
- Direct Deposit: Per Public Law 104-134 all Federal employees are required to have federal payments made by direct deposit to their financial institution
- Successfully pass the E-Verify employment verification check. To learn more about E-Verify, including your rights and responsibilities, visit E-Verify at https://www.e-verify.gov/

Qualifications

Applicants must meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements by the closing date of the announcement including specialized experience and/or education, as defined below.

Basic Requirements for the GS-07 & GS-09 grade levels:

A. Degree: biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, chemistry, or related disciplines appropriate to the position.

OR

B. Combination of education and experience: Courses equivalent to a major, as shown above, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

AND

GS-07:

<u>Specialized Experience</u>: Specialized experience is experience directly related to the position to be filled and which provided the applicant with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the duties of the job.

Experience: The qualification requirements for this position at the **GS-07** grade level includes one-year specialized experience at the **GS-05** grade level, or its non-Federal equivalent, assisting in molecular biological experiments related to plant pathology, virology, and/or genetics; maintaining laboratory equipment and instrumentation; and recording experimental data.

Education: Successful completion of 1 year of graduate-level education leading to a master's degree or master's or equivalent graduate degree in a field directly related to the duties of the position. Related degrees may include plant pathology, genetics, molecular biology, horticulture, plant biology, biochemistry, or other related biological sciences.

Superior Academic Achievement (S.A.A.). (1) A grade point average of B (a GPA of 3.0 or higher) for all completed undergraduate courses, or those completed in the last 2 full years of undergraduate study; OR (2) A grade point average of B (a GPA of 3.5 or higher) for all courses in your major field of study, or those courses in your major completed in the last two years of undergraduate study; OR (3) Rank in the upper one-third of your class in the college, university, or major subdivision: OR (4) Membership in a national honor society (other than freshman honor societies) recognized by the Association of College Honor Societies.

Combination of Education & Experience: A qualifying combination of graduate education and experience as described above.

GS-09:

Experience: The qualification requirements for this position at the **GS-09** grade level includes one-year specialized experience at the **GS-07** grade level, or its non-Federal equivalent, assisting in molecular biological experiments related to plant pathology, virology, and/or genetics; maintaining laboratory equipment and instrumentation; recording experimental data; and using experimental data to prepare scientific reports.

ΛB

Education: 2 years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's degree or master's or equivalent graduate degree, if directly related. Related degrees may include plant pathology, genetics, molecular biology, horticulture, plant biology, biochemistry, or other related biological sciences.

OR

Combination of Education & Experience: A qualifying combination of graduate education and experience as described above.

Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

Education

Please see above for education qualification requirement information.

Additional information

- Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP): Visit the OPM http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/employee-guide-to-career-transition/)

 website for information on how to apply as a CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP eligible. To exercise selection priority for this vacancy, CTAP/RPL/ICTAP candidates must meet the basic eligibility requirements and all selective factors. CTAP/ICTAP candidates must be rated and determined to be well qualified (or above) based on an evaluation of the competencies listed in the How You Will Be Evaluated section. When assessed through a score-based category rating method, CTAP/ICTAP applicants must receive a rating of at least 85 out of a possible 100.
- Recruitment or Relocation Incentive may be authorized. The final determination to pay an incentive will be made by the hiring official at the time of job offer.
- If you are selected for a position with further promotion potential, you will be placed under a career development plan, and may be non-competitively promoted if you successfully complete the requirements and if recommended by management. However, promotion is neither implied nor guaranteed.
- This position may be eligible to telework up to four days per week, based upon the duties of the position. This position may also be eligible for flexible work arrangements as determined by agency policy and any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Benefits

A career with the U.S. government provides employees with a comprehensive benefits package. As a federal employee, you and your family will have access to a range of benefits that are designed to make your federal career very rewarding. Learn more about federal benefits (https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/benefits/).

Eligibility for benefits depends on the type of position you hold and whether your position is full-time, part-time or intermittent. Contact the hiring agency for more information on the specific benefits offered.

How You Will Be Evaluated

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Delegated Examining Procedures and USDA policy using category rating. Applicants who meet basic minimum qualifications will be placed in one of two or three categories: Best Qualified, Well Qualified, or Qualified. Within these categories, applicants eligible for veteran's preference will receive selection priority over non-veterans. Category placement will be determined based on applicants' quality of experience and the extent they possess the following knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) or competencies:

- Applies Technology to Tasks, Molecular Biology, and Research
 - Applies Technology to Tasks
 - Molecular Biology
 - Research

Your application, including the online Assessment Questionnaire, will be reviewed to determine if you meet (a) minimum qualification requirements and (b) the resume supports the answers provided to the job-specific questions. Your resume must clearly support your responses to all the questions addressing experience and education relevant to this position. Those determined to be in the best qualified category will be referred to the selecting official for consideration.

Note: If, after reviewing your resume and/or supporting documentation, a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications and or experience, your score may be adjusted to more accurately reflect your abilities, or you may be found ineligible. Please follow all instructions carefully. Errors or omissions may affect your rating. Providing inaccurate information on Federal documents could be grounds for non-selection or disciplinary action up to including removal from the Federal service.

Clicking the link below will present a preview of the application form; i.e. the online questionnaire. The application form link below will only provide a preview and does not initiate the application process. To initiate the online application process, click the "Apply" button to the right.

To view the application form, visit: $\underline{\text{https://apply.usastaffing.gov/ViewQuestionnaire/12125069}}$

Required Documents

The following documents are required for your applicant package to be complete. Our office cannot be responsible for incompatible software, your system failure, etc. Encrypted documents will not be accepted. Failure to submit required, legible documents may result in loss of consideration.

- Resume that includes:1) personal information such as name, address, contact information; 2) education; 3) detailed work experience related to this position as described in the major duties including work schedule, hours worked per week, dates of employment; title, series, grade (if applicable); 4) other qualifications.
- If education is required or you are using education to qualify, you must submit a copy of your college transcripts. An unofficial copy is sufficient with the application if it includes your name and the necessary course information; however, if you are selected, you will be required to submit official transcripts prior to entering on duty. Education must have been successfully obtained from an accredited school, college or university. If any education was completed at a foreign institute, you must submit with your application evidence that the institute was appropriately accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as equivalent to U.S. education standards. There are private organizations that specialize in this evaluation and a fee is normally associated with this service. For a list of private organizations that evaluate education, visit the NACES

website. All transcripts must be in English or include an English translation.

- If claiming veteran's preference, you must submit a DD214, Certificate of Release from Active Duty, which shows dates of service and discharge under honorable conditions. If currently on active duty you must submit a certification of expected discharge or release from active duty service under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the date the certification is submitted. Veteran's preference must be verified prior to appointment. Without this documentation, you will not receive veteran's preference and your application will be evaluated based on the material(s) submitted.
- If claiming 10-point veteran's preference you must provide the DD214 or certification requirements (see above bullet), plus the proof of entitlement of this preference as listed on the SF-15 Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference. The SF-15 should be included but is not required. Failure to submit these documents could result in the determination that there is insufficient documentation to support your claim for 10-point preference. For more information on veterans' preference visit FEDSHIREVETS
- Surplus or displaced employees eligible for CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP priority must provide: proof of eligibility (RIF separation notice, notice of proposed removal for declining a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another commuting area, notice of disability annuity termination), SF-50 documenting separation (as applicable), and your most recent SF-50 noting position, grade level, and duty location with your application per 5 CFR 330.

How to Apply

Please read the entire announcement and all instructions before you begin. You must complete this application process and submit all required documents electronically by 11:59p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on the closing date of this announcement.

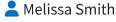
Applying online is highly encouraged. We are available to assist you during business hours (normally 8:00a.m. - 4:00p.m., Monday - Friday). If applying online poses a hardship, contact the Agency Contact listed below well before the closing date for an alternate method. All hardship application packages must be complete and submitted no later than noon ET on the closing date of the announcement in order to be entered into the system prior to its closing.

This agency provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities on a case-by-case basis; contact the Agency Contact to request this.

To begin, click "Apply" and follow the instructions to complete the Assessment Questionnaire and attach your resume and all required documents.

NOTE: Please verify that documents you are uploading from USAJOBs transfer into the Agency's staffing system as there is a limitation to the number of documents that can be transferred. However, once in the Agency's staffing system, you will have the opportunity to upload additional documents. Uploaded resumes must be less than 5MB and in one of the following document formats: GIF, JPG, JPEG, PNG, RTF, PDF, TXT or Word (DOC or DOCX). Do not upload Adobe Portfolio documents because they are not viewable.

Agency contact information



Phone

510-559-6312 (tel:510-559-6312)

Email

melissa.smith2@usda.gov (mailto:melissa.smith2@usda.gov)

Learn more about this agency (#agency-modal-trigger)

Address

Agricultural Research Service 800 Buchanan Street Albany, CA 94710

Next steps

Your application will be reviewed to verify that you meet the eligibility and qualification requirements for the position prior to issuing referral lists to the selecting official. If further evaluation or interviews are required, you will be contacted. Log in to your **USAJOBS**

(https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?

 $\underline{url=https}\%3A\%2F\%2F\%2Fwww.usajobs.gov\%2F\&data=04\%7C01\%7C\%7Ce9d4f6e94135436a083908d9e7970141\%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697\%7C0\%7C097C637795458011369787\%7CUnknown\%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoiMC4wLjinderfinester and the first of the first$ account to check your application status.

You must choose to turn on email notifications in your USAJOBS profile if you want to receive important email notifications that may impact your applicant experience (e.g. If you start an application and do not submit it prior to the closing date, USAJOBS will send an email reminder that the closing date is approaching and your application is in an incomplete status).

Multiple positions may be filled from this announcement.

Fair & Transparent

The Federal hiring process is set up to be fair and transparent. Please read the following guidance.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

(/Help/equal-employment-opportunity/)

Financial suitability

 $\underline{(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/)}$

New employee probationary period

 $\underline{\textit{(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/)}}$

Privacy Ac

 $\underline{(/Help/working_in_government/fair_and_transparent/privacy_act/)}$

(/Help/reasonable-accommodation/)

Selective Service

(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/)

Signature and false statements

 $\underline{\textit{(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/)}}$

Social security number request

 $\underline{(/Help/working_in_government/fair_and_transparent/social_security_number/)}\\$