



The International Centre for Underutilised Crops

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Dear colleagues,

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With best wishes,
Hannah

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1. Funding & Job opportunities

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1.1 Opportunity for biofuel value chain study

Within the framework of SNV - WWF project "Sustainable biofuel value chain development in an Existing African Oil Palm Plantation in Honduras" we are looking for a graduate student to do a 80-100 days study to better Hondupalma's competitiveness of its African palm value chain (north coast of Honduras).

Interested candidates are requested to contact wbron@snvworld.org. Please feel free to share these ToR with any other contacts you may have.

Kind regards,
Willem A. Bron
Advisor Territorial Competitiveness / Bioenergy Program leader Biofuels/Bioenergy CA SNV - Netherlands Development Organisation Tegucigalpa, Honduras, C.A.
Tel: + 504 2369233 Fax: + 504 2324997
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1.2 Robert S. McNamara (RSM) Fellowships

The Robert S. McNamara Fellowships Program provides support to young researchers working in academic and research institutions from eligible countries preparing a doctoral thesis. Research grants cover residence costs for a 5 to 10 month period in a renowned university or research center. Fellows are expected to advance their research work mainly by using the facilities and resources provided by the host institution and by interacting with peers.

Who Can Apply?

Only lecturers and researchers from eligible countries working on their doctoral thesis can apply for the fellowship. Candidates should be under 45 years, and have completed any course work or exams required for their doctoral program.

What Does the Program Support?

The purpose of the grant is to help fellows advance their doctoral research work through a residency period of five to ten months in a host institution in a country other than their home country or country of residence. During the research period at the host institution, the fellows are expected to have access to essential resources such as reference books and research publications, databases, and software; attend seminars and eventually courses; and to benefit by interacting with peers.

Host Institution

Candidates should be accepted or invited by a host institution which would designate an academic advisor to assist the fellow during his research period. Host institutions should also commit to provide the fellow with basic amenities such as office space and access to a computer, and to facilitate his/her research activities.

Fellowships Award

Eligible candidates are evaluated by external reviewers based on three criteria: academic performance, teaching and research experience, and relevance of the proposed research program. The top candidates are submitted to the Selection Committee, which includes World Bank senior experts and Donors representatives, for final selection. In addition to the merit criteria, the Selection Committee takes into account other factors such as availability of budget, geographical diversity and gender balance.

Grants

Candidates are requested to submit a budget for their fellowship covering the costs related to their research program: travel; insurance and living expenses; fees for courses and participation to seminars; and a books and software allowance. The grant amount to be awarded to each fellow will be decided by the Selection Committee. The maximum amount of the grant is US\$ 25,000.

Fellow's Commitment

Fellows are required to issue two reports, a mid-term report during the fellowship period and a final report containing the results of the research. The results of the McNamara fellows research work may be considered for publication by the World Bank. Fellows are expected to return to their home countries and resume their academic or research position upon completion of the fellowship. They are also expected to mention the McNamara fellowship award in any publication related to their doctoral research work, including their thesis, and to provide the Program with a copy of their thesis upon graduation.

Find more information about the RSM Fellowship Programme at <http://go.worldbank.org/O3VJZQ76W0>

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1.3 Call for Submissions for the SEED Awards 2008

Do you have an entrepreneurial or innovative idea that is locally- driven and has great potential to contribute to sustainable development in developing countries? Are you finding new ways of simultaneously improving incomes and strengthening livelihoods; tackling poverty and marginalisation; and managing and conserving natural resources and ecosystems? Are you developing a new concept that brings together people and organizations from different backgrounds - a project that challenges partners to pool their human, financial, and natural resources?

Do you need support to make your idea a reality, or to help you grow?

If so, then we would like you to tell us about your idea.

The SEED Initiative is seeking submissions for "The 2008 SEED Awards for Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development". We welcome innovative ideas from any group in a developing country, which is working in partnership with others to generate environmental and social benefits in an entrepreneurial way.

SEED Award Winners receive a tailored package of support services to help them to become established and to increase their impact. This includes access to relevant expertise and technical assistance, meeting new partners and building networks, developing business plans and identifying sources of finance. The Award is not a cash prize - but the services offered have a value of US\$25,000.

The call is open until the 16th March 2008.

For further information please see the attached document. More details are also available at www.seedinit.org where you can also find the application form and learn about previous Award Winners.

We look forward to receiving your application and to reading about your ideas.

With best regards
Dr Helen Marquard
Executive Director
The SEED Initiative

For information about the SEED Awards:

www.seedinit.org
seedawards2008@seedinit.org
Tel: +49 30 8900068 99

For any other queries about the SEED Initiative: helen.marquard@seedinit.org
Tel: +44 1420 488 544

The SEED Initiative
- Supporting Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development
c/o The World Conservation Union (IUCN)
28 Rue Mauverney
Gland CH-1196
Switzerland

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2. Workshops & Training Courses
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2.1 4th International Symposium on Persimmon

On behalf of the Organizing Committees, we are pleased to present to you the First Announcement on the IV International Symposium on Persimmon which will be held in Firenze-Faenza-Caserta (Italy) on November 8-13, 2008 under the auspices of the International Society for Horticultural Science.

The event will have an itinerant character, in order to visit different Italian areas in which persimmon is cultivated.

Sections on the main topics related to Persimmon cultivation (genetics, breeding, cultural practices, post-harvest; etc.) Will be scheduled taking into account the most recent scientific and technical findings, not disregarding the value of persimmon in economy, history, tradition, landscape and human health.

The meeting will have a participative nature with round tables and workshops open to all operators (researchers, horticulturists, nurseries and fruitgrowers, dealers, etc.) Involved in persimmon growing

and utilization, with a special attention to private sector ("The private voice", as reported in the Programme). Official language will be English.

Further information will be periodically upgraded on this website .We warmly encourage all interested people to visit this web site now and in the coming months for news and deadlines.

Programme

The event will be developed in 3 sites: Firenze (Florence) for themes related to traditional and ornamental uses and nutraceutic value of persimmon; Faenza (Province of Ravenna), an important centre of persimmon production in North Italy, for topics dealing with plant and fruit production and marketing; Caserta, town located in the area of first development of persimmon cultivation in Italy, where participants will afford the problems of natural resources and pest management in persimmon cultivation. The itinerant meeting will give the opportunity to visit persimmon nurseries, orchards, packing houses, and to appreciate attractive towns and landscapes.

Different events will accompany the Symposium, such as "Book exhibition" and "Product exhibition" (Firenze); "Pomological exhibition" and "Container for marketing exhibition" (Faenza); "Fresh fruit and processed fruit exhibition and tasting" (Caserta). "Exhibition of pictures" (projected from PC) and "Show your activity on persimmon", a small area devoted to show the private activity of participants with leaflets and gadgets, will follow the whole trip.

In order to improve interaction between research and production, participants of the private sector will have the chance to put on the table their problems and demands with "The voice of the private sector".

For more information visit the Web pages of the Symposium: <http://www.4persimmon2008.it/default.asp>

Deadlines and important dates

February 15, 2008: Submission of provisional titles from participants April 30, 2008: Submission of abstracts from participants May 31, 2008: Acceptance of abstracts from Scientific Committee June 30, 2008: Submission of form for Exhibitions (books, products and pictures) from participants June 30, 2008: Submission of form for "Show your activity on persimmon" from participants (private sector) July 31, 2008: Early Registration and Hotel Accommodation from participants October 31, 2008: Submission of full papers from participants October 31, 2008: Late Registration and Hotel Accommodation from participants

We look forward to welcoming you in Florence, Faenza and Caserta!

The Conveners Prof. Elvio Bellini and Dr. Edgardo Giordani
E-mail: elvio.bellini@unifi.it , edgardo.giordani@unifi.it

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2.2 Master degree in environmental management at ANU

The Australian National University (ANU) is the leading university in Australia and it has been ranked among the top twenty in the world. Citizens of many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have now an opportunity to study environmental management at the ANU with World Bank funding.

If you are interested to study for a Master degree in environmental management with us, visit the web site of the Crawford School of Economics and Government
http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/portal/master_emd.php

Applications to the World Bank, to start studies in 2009, close at the end of March 2008. To apply you will need a letter of offer from a university. For information on how to apply at ANU contact Dianne Dunne, Program Administrator, at dianne.dunne@anu.edu.au

Best wishes,
Associate Professor Luca Tacconi

Director, Environmental Management and Development Program Crawford School of Economics and Government ANU College of Asia and the Pacific J.G. Crawford Building (Blg 13) The Australian National University Canberra 0200 ACT Australia

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3. Publications & Information

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3.1 Mahathir Science Award 2008

The Academy of Sciences Malaysia is proud to invite nominations for the Mahathir Science Award for the year 2008. This prestigious award is bestowed on any scientists, institution or organization worldwide in recognition of contributions and innovations towards solving problems in the tropics through science and technology and to be awarded to the most deserving based on merit. As such, this extends beyond the boundaries of Malaysia in order to encourage excellence in tropical science that will accord direct benefits to countries in the tropics and indirectly to the global community.

Please request the brochure and the nomination form from Seetha Ramasmy. We would highly appreciate if you could disseminate this information and nominate deserving candidates for the award. The deadline for submission is 31 March 2008.

Seetha Ramasamy
Science Officer
Academy of Sciences Malaysia
902-4 Jalan Tun Ismail
50480 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 603-2694 9898
Fax: 603-2694 5858
Email: seetha@akademisains.gov.my

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4. ICUC-related information

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4.1 Working from Tanzania

I have temporarily moved my office to AVRDC in Arusha, Tanzania for last minute preparations of the upcoming Symposium on Underutilized Plants. Preparations are moving ahead smoothly, and as of today, we have 200 registered participants. I am accessible through email as usual, in Sri Lanka, Sushilla Rajamanie is 'holding the fortress'.

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5. ICUC network

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In this section we introduce new and old subscribers to ICUC-News to encourage greater interaction and benefit from the great diversity of readers. If you haven't done so, please send a brief introduction of yourself and your interest in underutilised crops to h.jaenicke@cgiar.org. We will not publish your email or phone contacts and if anyone is interested to establish direct contact, please write an email to me.

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I am Aruna Ramachandran working as a Junior Research Fellow in Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Anaikatty, Coimbatore
- 641 108 India, I am very much interested to explore the world of underused crops in India and other countries.

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N.Jayakumar I am working as an 'Economist' in MS Swaminathan Research Foundation under the project entitle Enhancement of income and employment of rural livelihoods through neglected and underutilized crops. I would like to learn more about this.

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I am Peter Lapinskas and have been working on the commercialisation of novel oilseed crops for over 25 years. I was on the organising committee of the conference "New Crops and Uses" at Southampton in September 2006. Further details are on my website at www.lapinskas.com.

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B R Choudhary. I am working in All India Coordinated research Network on Underutilized crops.

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Championing underutilised plant species for food, nutrition and sustainable development