POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Research Assistant
Organisation Unit: Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation
Position Number:
Type of Employment: Fixed term, full time
Classification: HEW 6

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

The University of Queensland (UQ) contributes positively to society by engaging in the creation, preservation, transfer and application of knowledge. UQ helps shape the future by bringing together and developing leaders in their fields to inspire the next generation and to advance ideas that benefit the world. UQ strives for the personal and professional success of its students, staff and alumni. For more than a century, we have educated and worked with outstanding people to deliver knowledge leadership for a better world.

UQ ranks in the world’s top universities, as measured by several key independent ranking, including the Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities (43), the US News Best Global Universities Rankings (52), QS World University Rankings (47), Academic Ranking of World Universities (55), and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (65). UQ again topped the nation in the prestigious Nature Index and our Life Sciences subject field ranking in the Academic Ranking of World Universities was the highest in Australia at 20.

UQ has an outstanding reputation for the quality of its teachers, its educational programs and employment outcomes for its students. Our students remain at the heart of what we do. The UQ experience – the UQ Advantage – is distinguished by a research enriched curriculum, international collaborations, industry engagement and opportunities that nurture and develop future leaders. UQ has a strong focus on teaching excellence, winning more national teaching excellence awards than any other in the country and attracting the majority of Queensland’s highest academic achievers, as well as top interstate and overseas students.

UQ is one of Australia’s Group of Eight, a charter member of edX and a founding member of Universitas 21, an international consortium of leading research-intensive universities.

Our 50,000-plus strong student community includes more than 13,000 postgraduate scholars and more than 12,000 international students from 144 countries, adding to its proud 240,000-plus alumni. The University has about 7,000 academic and professional staff and a $1.8 billion annual operating budget. Its major campuses are at St Lucia, Gatton and Herston, in addition to teaching and research sites around Queensland and Brisbane city. The University has six Faculties and four University-level Institutes. The Institutes, funded by government and industry grants, philanthropy and commercialisation activities, have built scale and focus in research areas in neuroscience, biomolecular and biomedical sciences, sustainable minerals, bioengineering and nanotechnology, as well as social science research.
UQ has an outstanding track-record in commercialisation of our innovation with major technologies employed across the globe and integral to gross product sales of $11billion+ (see http://uniquest.com.au/our-track-record).

UQ has a rapidly growing record of attracting philanthropic support for its activities and this will be a strategic focus going forward.

Organisational Environment

The Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI) is a research institute of the University of Queensland (UQ) which was established in 2010 and comprises of four research centres – the Centre for Crop Science, the Centre for Horticultural Science, the Centre for Animal Science and the Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences.

QAAFI’s team of 450 researchers, postgraduate students and support staff undertake high impact science for agriculture and food industries. The institute’s strong partnership with the Queensland Government provides our researchers with a direct link to the agriculture industry in Queensland, and world class field research facilities throughout Queensland. Agriculture is one of UQ’s highest ranked research fields nationally and internationally and QAAFI is a global leader in agricultural research in subtropical and tropical production systems.

QAAFI scientists are driven to make a difference to the agriculture and food industries and have over 150 collaborators worldwide.

Details of the research interests of the Institute may be accessed on the Institute’s web site at http://www.qaafi.uq.edu.au

Information for Prospective Staff

Information about life at UQ including staff benefits, relocation and UQ campuses is available at - http://www.uq.edu.au/current-staff/working-at-uq

DUTY STATEMENT

Primary Purpose of Position

To provide technical assistance to an avocado industry-funded project undertaking nationwide surveys for avocado sunblotch viroid. The overarching aim of the project is to provide evidence of area-freedom from this pathogen. The role will be required to liaise with farmers and participate in surveys, undertake viroid indexing, and input mapping information and results into databases. Interstate travel for durations of 2-5 days will be required. The role will also assist with ordering, management of budgets, and preparation of diagnostic reports.

Duties

Duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Research
  • Input mapping data into database.
  • Communicate with farmers by phone or email to arrange surveys.
  • Assist with sampling leaves from trees.
• Undertake nucleic acid extractions and qPCR diagnostic assays.
• Accurately and comprehensively document methodologies and results.

**Administration**
• Assist with organizing travel for the research team.
• Assist with organizing project workshop attended by all stakeholders.
• Assist with ordering laboratory reagents and consumables.
• Monitor project budget.
• Prepare and communicate diagnostic reports to farmers and project leader.
• Any other duties as reasonably directed by your supervisor

**Other**
Ensure you are aware of and comply with legislation and University policy relevant to the duties undertaken, including but not exclusive to:
• the [University’s Code of Conduct](#)
• requirements of the Queensland occupational health and safety (OH&S) legislation and related [OH&S responsibilities and procedures](#) developed by the University or Institute/School
• the adoption of sustainable practices in all work activities and compliance with associated legislation and related University [sustainability responsibilities and procedures](#)
• requirements of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, the National Code 2007 and associated legislation, and related [responsibilities and procedures](#) developed by the University

**Organisational Relationships**

The position reports to the Project Leader, Associate Professor Andrew Geering, Centre for Horticultural Sciences.
SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Qualifications and training equivalent to an undergraduate degree in biological sciences, majoring in plant pathology, microbiology or molecular plant biology.
- Experience in the use of molecular diagnostic assays, particularly PCR.
- Familiarity with regulations pertaining to working in a PC2 molecular laboratory.
- Ability to monitor budgets and interpret financial reports
- Excellent interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate effectively with clients by telephone, email and in person
- Ability to prioritise own workload, work independently and meet deadlines.
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.

Desirable

- Experience in the use of database software.
- Knowledge of horticultural industries in Australia.

Vaccinations and Immunisation

It is a condition of employment for this role that if you are required now or in the future, to work or interact in Queensland Health clinical facility; or in an equivalent clinical health facility; or health care role; or will be required to perform work tasks that put you at risk of exposure to vaccine-preventable disease you are required to be immunised against, and remain immunised against, certain vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs) in accordance with the University’s Vaccinations and Immunisation Guidelines (PPL 2.60.08). The employee is required to provide evidence of immunisation against VPDs.

The University of Queensland values diversity and inclusion and actively encourages applications from those who bring diversity to the University. Please refer to the University’s Diversity and Inclusion webpage (http://www.uq.edu.au/equity) for further information and points of contact if you require additional support.

Accessibility requirements and/or adjustments can be directed to [insert details of HR contact assisting with recruitment].