

## Announcement

# PGRIP Fellows

The Plant Genetic Resources International Platform (PGRIP) hereby invites **young researchers** to apply for financial support to join a dynamic research team at the Department of Plant Breeding, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Sweden, for a shorter **guest research visit** as a PGRIP Fellow.

**PGRIP** is a network of experts that develop activities focusing on the policies and regulatory frameworks governing the use of plant genetic resources (PGR), within three main areas: 1) access and benefit-sharing, 2) biosafety related to the technologies for managing and improving the genetic material, and 3) intellectual property systems including plant breeders' rights and patents. More information is available in Appendix 1.

The **Department of Plant Breeding** at the SLU campus in Alnarp, Sweden, is a highly dynamic environment, hosting recent strategic investments such as the competence centre for public plant breeding [SLU Grogrund](#), the [Plant Protein Factory](#), the [COST Action PlantEd](#) (CA18111) focusing on plant genome editing and much more. The Department has breeding programmes in fruit, berries and potato, and very strong expertise in genome editing technologies applied in a variety of plants. A research team focusing specifically on PGR policies and regulations is under development, and the PGRIP Fellows will be working within this team.

The financial support is provided by the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research (**Mistra**).

### Scholarships

At least four scholarships are available (depending on the budget of the successful proposals), at a maximum amount of 3 000 EUR each. Eligible expenses are limited to flight ticket, accommodation and bench fee. Additional travel expenses (bus, train etc) and per diem has to be covered by the Fellow. Salary is not covered by the scholarship. Each guest research visit should have a duration of 1-3 months and take place in the period Feb-June 2020.

### Eligibility

Eligible are PhD students and young academic researchers (maximum 8 years from PhD) from any country and any discipline. Candidates with an MSc degree will also be considered if there is sufficient available financial resources.

### Application

The application should be submitted by e-mail to Dennis Eriksson (see below contact details) not later than 10 January 2020, preferably as a single PDF file. The application will contain the following:

- 1) A description of a short-term study that fits into one of the three main areas of interest for PGRIP (as described above). The description should contain a realistic plan for the guest research period including expected outcomes. The applicant is welcome to propose a novel

research question, however a number of ideas are also listed in Appendix 2. Maximum two pages.

- 2) A short description of the applicant's research interests including how the PGRIP Fellow scholarship will be of benefit to the future research. Maximum one page.
- 3) A short CV. Maximum one page.
- 4) A list of the most relevant publications. Maximum 10.
- 5) An indicative time frame for the guest research visit (i.e. which time period, and the duration of the guest research visit).

The decision will be announced not later than 20 January 2020, by e-mail directly to all applicants.

### **Report/Output**

The Fellows are expected to deliver, within six months from the termination of the respective guest research period, either 1) a report (maximum 15 pages) describing the main results of the short study as well as how the guest research has contributed to the professional development of the Fellow, or 2) a manuscript related to the study that was carried out, intended for publication in an international, peer-reviewed journal. The second option is recommended, whenever possible, for higher benefit and impact.

### **Links**

[PGRIP website](#)

[PGRIP Fellow announcement](#)

### **Contact**

Dennis Eriksson, PhD  
PGRIP Executive Manager  
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## About PGRIP

### Plant Genetic Resources International Platform

#### Summary

Plant research and breeding are important components to tackle the challenges of providing adequate nutrition for an increasing global population as well as renewable industrial raw materials, while developing a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable agriculture. Over the past few decades, the regulatory frameworks surrounding plant breeding have become increasingly detailed and complicated. This includes international treaties and conventions on the access and benefit-sharing (ABS) of plant genetic resources (PGR), national/regional biosafety legislation related to the technologies for managing and improving the genetic material, and intellectual property (IP) systems including plant breeders' rights (PBR) and patents. The recent rapid progress in molecular plant research and breeding techniques has emphasized the need to ensure that appropriate legislation is in place in order to stimulate rather than stifle those innovations that will benefit farmers, consumers, society and the environment.

Acknowledging the multidisciplinary nature of policy making, this project addresses technical, regulatory, economic, ethical, social and other aspects of plant genetic resource management in research and breeding. The project will enhance and consolidate an embryonic network of internationally recognized experts, taking the shape of a multidisciplinary platform with a solid base in science and serving as a competence resource for the governance of plant genetic resources.

#### Objective

The main objective of the project is to establish a platform for interdisciplinary collaborations dealing with policy and regulatory developments for plant genetic resources, and to deliver related international, peer-reviewed publications. Much focus will be on the situation in the EU, however the platform will have a global profile and include perspectives from other countries as well as international treaties and relations. The goal is to establish a permanent structure that will be maintained also after the funding period of this project.

**Funding agency:** [Mistra](#) – the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research, via the research programme [Mistra Biotech](#)

**Executive Manager:** Dennis Eriksson, PhD, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden, [dennis.eriksson@slu.se](mailto:dennis.eriksson@slu.se)

**Current funding period:** 2018 – 2020

## **PGRIP Fellows**

### **Ideas for guest research topics**

#### Biosafety

- EU member state voting behavior on GMO authorizations
- Mapping (e.g. through survey) the position of various stakeholders to emerging gene technologies
- Consequences of a product-oriented biosafety legislation for plant breeding
- Options and/or consequences of “opt-in” for the cultivation of GM crops in the EU
- Historical developments of the EU GMO legislation
- Options to reform the EU GMO legislation
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#### Access and Benefit-Sharing

- Access bottlenecks for plant research collaborations
- Governing options for digital sequence information, in a CBD context
- The interrelationship between the ITPGR and the ABS protocol
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#### Intellectual Property

- “Open source” seed system
- Essentially Derived Varieties (EDV) in the context of emerging technologies
- The patent landscape of emerging genome editing technologies
- Essentially biological processes in the context of patent legislation
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