

## Call for Expressions of Interest: Science Lead

### Experienced Science Manager in International Agricultural Research for Development

The **Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)** is looking for a 'Science Lead' to participate in an innovative project that will develop and trial a model for market-driven collaborative value chains. The model will incorporate collective farming systems, and intensive and circular agriculture principles to create sustainable and ethical production systems in the smallholder farming community of Kwale, Kenya.

This project will be led and managed by a team of two: a **Project Leader**, with proven experience in applied research for development, and a **Science Lead**. The Expression of Interest seeks individuals interested in the role of Science Lead. We are interested to hear from researchers with experience in leading and managing core science elements of international research-for-development projects.

#### **The Project:**

ACIAR has approved a Concept Note to proceed to detailed design and approval for a 5-year, comprehensive research program, working in and with an already identified rural community in Southern Kenya. From the start of the project, researchers will engage several private firms and governments who are contributing funds and in-kind. The project will also benefit from established cross-sector partnerships spanning community, government, private sector, research and NGOs, some of which already exist and others that will be developed throughout the project. The project will firmly focus and prioritise Kenyan resources and maximise research benefits for all.

The project scope requires sound scientific research design and the completion of outcome-focused research in areas including but not limited to: production and sustainable/climate adaptive farming practices; economics/cost-benefit analysis; effective water use and management; healthy soils and their management; anthropological study/social systems ; market-led value chain analysis, design and improvement; monitoring, evaluation and learning; and effective communication and dissemination of applied scientific outcomes.

#### **The Role:**

Contracted into the project, the Science Lead will work closely with the Project Leader and both the Australian- and Kenyan-based researchers, community members and project stakeholders. The Science Lead will contribute to the design, implementation and outcome delivery of the core science elements, and their monitoring and evaluation. They will also be instrumental in ensuring the science elements contribute to the development outcomes of the project. The time allocation required (% FTE, similar) will be established in the project design process.

The Science Lead will directly contribute to collaborative preparation of preliminary and full proposals and the selection of researchers to join the project team. More details about project over page.

#### **The desired candidate will be:**

- a skilled leader and manager of scientists, project stakeholders and processes, who is knowledgeable in research and application of the disciplines of science required in the project. An understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics of working in the target region would also be advantageous.
- a communicative 'integrator' of ideas, people, processes, problem solving and solution seeking, who is capable of facilitating decision making and interacting with, and supporting and organising people (including researchers, senior office holders in public and private entities, community leaders and rural communities)
- a science manager with sound chains and systems thinking that investigates thoroughly, and bases design and decision making on delivering outcomes that have lasting impact for the customers of the project, that is the farmers, their communities and their chain partners.
- based in Australia or Kenya, and notwithstanding travel constraints arising from COVID-19, travel to and within Kenya and Australia will be required.

**Project: AGB/2021/123 - Kwale Agricultural Research for Development Project, Kenya**

The AGB/2021/123 - Kwale Agricultural Research for Development Project project builds on previous ACIAR research and an established non-ACIAR program (Kwale Agribusiness Program; KAP), improving the likelihood of adoption and lasting impact post project. Work to date has focused on community engagement in developing alternative farming approaches on traditional smallholder farming units, and proving the feasibility and effectiveness of the agronomics and economics. New and existing cross-sector partnerships involving households and communities, input supply and off-take sectors (including community owned and operated cooperative), international marketers, NGOs, County and National Governments are core to the project.

New science-based research is required in sustainable and ethical production systems and value chain development for multi-crop and multiple-use (circular) agribusiness, and in social sciences for community developed collective farming and chain operations.

The project will enable participating communities to become more resilient through developing viable and sustainable farming systems and market led value chains originating from both

- a) traditional smallholder farming units and
- b) remediated mining land used for larger scale collective and market led agribusiness.

Community and family livelihoods will benefit from improved food security and nutrition, diversified and improved income and income certainty from market oriented multi-crop / enterprise farming and supply systems, awareness of and connection to markets and through community operated collective larger scale agribusiness.

Delivering and disseminating this proof of concept for wider application, in Kenya and wider Africa, will also require strong monitoring, evaluation and communications.

The project is due to start in July 2022 and continue for a 5-year term.

**Working with ACIAR**

This is one of several initiatives under the [ACIAR Agribusiness Program](#), which works and co-invests with private firms. ACIAR Agribusiness seeks to improve the livelihoods and benefits for smallholders and their communities in developing countries, like Kenya.

ACIAR Agribusiness invests side-by-side with private entities, where our strategic goals are also key to improving the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (economic, social and environmental) of commercial value/supply chains linking smallholder farmers and their private sector chain partners to markets.

For more information about ACIAR and the ACIAR Agribusiness Program please click on the following links:

[Home page \(aciar.gov.au\)](#) | [Agribusiness \(aciar.gov.au\)](#)

**Interested parties please email your Expression of Interest by**

**COB 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to:**

Howard Hall, ACIAR Agribusiness Research Program Manager

Email: [howard.hall@aciar.gov.au](mailto:howard.hall@aciar.gov.au)

We will acknowledge and respond to all applications received.

A panel of ACIAR Senior Executives and Research Program Managers will make the final selection in consultation with the Project Leader.