



Australian Government
Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research



**Job
information
pack**



Research Program Manager, Horticulture

Make a difference in the world. Work at ACIAR

Position Number:	0098
Classification:	Executive Level 2, Specialist 1
Salary	\$176,959 – 192,232
Branch:	Research
Location:	Canberra ACT
Employment Type:	Ongoing

Support us to grow food efficiently, improve human nutrition, empower women and girls, reduce poverty, and manage natural resources sustainably.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is a statutory agency within the Australian Government's Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio. It operates under the *Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Act 1982*.

ACIAR invests in collaborative research and knowledge-sharing partnerships to improve the livelihoods and resilience of smallholder farming, fishing and forestry communities in Africa, South Asia and the Indo-Pacific. We work with governments and institutions to grow food more efficiently, increase food system resilience, improve human nutrition, empower women and girls, reduce poverty, and manage natural resources sustainably. Our partnerships prioritise economic, social and environmental benefits for partner countries, and contribute to the development of our international and Australian partner institutions' research, policy and leadership capabilities. Further information on our current projects, programs and priorities can be found at <https://www.aciar.gov.au/>.

While ACIAR is supportive of flexible working arrangements, this position requires face-to-face contact at our headquarters in Canberra.

About this exciting opportunity

ACIAR is a small agency with a domestic and international focus. It comprises three branches: Research, Partnerships and Corporate.

Reporting to the General Manager, Research, the Horticulture Research Program Manager (RPM) will provide strategic leadership for ACIAR's horticulture research-for-development portfolio. The role shapes investment priorities, identifies emerging research opportunities and risks, and brokers partnerships that connect Australian expertise with partner-country priorities across Africa, South Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Working at an EL2 Specialist level, the RPM will advise on portfolio strategy, influence research agendas, and ensure ACIAR investments translate high-quality science into sustainable development outcomes for partner countries and Australia.

The Horticulture program supports collaborative, co-designed research that strengthens horticultural systems, improves livelihoods and nutrition, and builds resilient innovation systems. The RPM will guide investments across whole-of-chain and whole-of-system approaches, drawing on strong horticulture expertise while focusing on strategic investment, partnership development and research leadership.

We are looking for a science leader and partnership broker who can set direction for a complex portfolio, commission high-value research, and work with governments, CGIAR centres, national agricultural research and extension systems, universities, private sector partners and other stakeholders to shape shared research priorities.

The role requires deep horticultural expertise combined with the ability to translate that expertise into strategic research investment and development outcomes. The successful candidate will bring internationally credible research-for-development expertise, sound judgement and strong communication skills. They will be able to influence multidisciplinary teams, negotiate priorities across organisational and cultural boundaries, advise senior decision-makers, and represent ACIAR effectively in national and international settings.

The successful candidate will be able to provide strategic advice to the executive, identify emerging research opportunities and risks, and foster productive partnerships that deliver practical, equitable and sustainable outcomes.

The position is based at our headquarters in Canberra, and we are seeking someone with the ability to travel internationally to establish new investments or review existing project activities.

Duties

Lead ACIAR's horticulture program and contribute to whole-of-agency priorities through the following duties:

1. Set strategic direction for a horticulture research-for-development portfolio that improves productivity, profitability, food security, nutrition, climate resilience and environmental stewardship.
2. Influence investment priorities across regions by identifying emerging horticultural research opportunities, risks and partnerships that align with partner-country priorities, ACIAR strategy and Australia's international development objectives.
3. Build and sustain strategic relationships with governments, CGIAR centres, national agricultural research and extension systems, universities, industry and development partners to shape research agendas and strengthen research capability.
4. Represent ACIAR in national and international forums and provide strategic advice on emerging horticultural research opportunities, risks, partnerships and portfolio strategy.
5. Support program planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning using approaches such as Theory of Change, aligned with the ACIAR 10-Year Strategy, reporting framework and whole-of-government priorities.
6. Identify and manage strategic, scientific and operational risks across the portfolio.

Other duties:

1. Provide expert advice and strategic input across the ACIAR research portfolio, including peer review, investment design, portfolio reviews, internal committees and whole-of-agency initiatives.
2. Ensure consistent adherence to ACIAR policies, procedures and systems.
3. Provide expertise, experience and support in market scanning for research and capacity development related procurement activities.

Capability Requirements

Mandatory requirements and experience

1. Postgraduate qualifications and professional experience in a relevant field such as horticulture, plant health, crop science, agronomy, food systems, agricultural or natural sciences, development studies, or another discipline, combined with substantial horticulture expertise.
2. Significant experience providing research leadership and strategic investment advice in horticulture or closely related research-for-development fields, with a strong understanding of horticultural systems in low-income contexts and their contribution to sustainable food systems, livelihoods and nutrition.
3. Significant experience working cross-culturally and ability to communicate, problem solve and collaborate with diverse groups of stakeholders.
4. Demonstrated experience shaping and overseeing a diverse portfolio of research investments, ensuring strategic alignment, scientific quality, partner-country relevance and contribution to sustainable development outcomes.
5. A proven history of contributing to strategic research direction through insights gained from current and past investments, partnerships, and understanding of international agricultural research landscapes.
6. Demonstrated leadership in building capability, influencing multidisciplinary teams and fostering productive research partnerships across organisational and cultural boundaries.
7. Experience managing strategic investment processes, budgets, financial oversight and reporting in line with organisational policies and standards.

Desirable experience

1. Experience working in or with developing countries, especially in SE Asia, the Pacific, South Asia, and/or Africa.
2. Familiarity with program planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches, including program logic and/or Theory of Change.
3. Experience providing expert advice to government bodies on emerging trends in horticulture, opportunities, and challenges in horticulture research in an international context.

Eligibility

1. **Australian Citizenship** – our successful candidate must be an Australian citizen.
2. **Security Clearance** – our successful candidate may be required to obtain and maintain a Negative Vetting 1 security clearance.
3. **Mandatory Qualifications/Experience** – our successful candidate will have a combination of advanced academic qualifications (typically a PhD or Master's in Horticulture, Agricultural or Natural Sciences, or a related field).

Contact

After reading this “*Information Pack*” should you require additional information you are encouraged to contact Todd.Sanderson@aciar.gov.au, on 0262 170 555.

What we need from you

Tell us in 1000 words or less why you are the right person for the role, what you can offer, and how your skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications make you suitable for the position. Please highlight specific examples and achievements that demonstrate your ability to successfully perform the role.

Please note there are two options for uploading your pitch; you can input your pitch into the covering letter textbox or upload as an attachment (PDF preferred).

Try not to duplicate information that can already be found in your resume but do highlight any specific examples or achievements that will demonstrate your ability to perform the role.

Please attach a concise resume to your application which clearly outlines your work experience, educational qualifications, and relevant skills.

In the application form you will need to provide the details of two referees who can attest and validate your credentials and suitability for the role.

NB: All ACIAR employees demonstrate a commitment to the APS Code of Conduct and Values, as well as to workplace diversity and workplace health and safety. It is also expected that ACIAR employees will have appropriate cross-cultural sensitivities.