



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Five Fully-Funded One-year Masters Fellowships in GM Crop Risk Assessment

The International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) is an international, intergovernmental organisation conceived as a centre of excellence for research and training in genetic engineering and biotechnology with special regard to the needs of the developing world, and implements a comprehensive programme on biosafety centred on capacity building and dissemination of scientific information. The ICGEB is currently offering five biosafety fellowships in the framework of a capacity building initiative focused on sub-Saharan Africa.

The prime objective of this initiative is to strengthen the ability of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa to fully integrate into the worldwide effort to assure full and balanced consideration of biosafety issues in pursuing the appropriate uses of modern biotechnology in agriculture. A key activity is the provision of support to local and regional regulatory systems overseeing the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and as such, the ICGEB is offering, in the first instance, five fully-funded fellowships for a one-year MSc course “Managing the Environment” (specifically the Risk Assessment of GM Crops pathway) at the world renowned Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, Aberystwyth University, UK (<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/>) **commencing on 28 Sept 2009.**

The course (<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/ibers/studying/taught-postgraduate-courses/msc-man-env/>) has been designed to provide students with the principles of environmental risk assessment, knowledge and experience of the processes required to compile a risk dossier in different geographic regions and an understanding of how to evaluate the relevance of underpinning scientific data. Training is provided on the risk assessment process from the perspective of a GM regulator, a commercial breeder of GM crops, a governmental funding body of GM risk assessment research or a publicly-funded research scientist. The importance of context is illustrated through a series of case studies covering a diversity of crop-transgene-location combinations. Training in problem formulation, designation of assessments endpoints, evaluation of publicly available data and identification of critical gaps in knowledge, as well as the concept of tiered risk assessment are essential elements of the course. Students are also provided with the practical experience of the processes involved in compiling and evaluating a range of risk dossiers across different geographic regions and with different GM crops exhibiting divergent risk profiles, and are expected to learn how to access, evaluate and compile data from the literature for inclusion in dossiers.

The fellowships are for a period of 1 year and provide: 1) a stipend calculated to cover the cost of normal annual local living expenses for one person; 2) travel to and from the fellow's country of origin; 3) medical insurance for the duration of the fellowship; and 4) course registration fee.

Eligibility requirements:

The ideal applicants will:

- be nationals from a sub-Saharan African country (not necessarily currently based in Africa);
- hold a university degree (in a biotechnology- or environment-related field) with an equivalency to or higher than a UK lower 2nd class honours (see the table of equivalency with other EU and non-EU Higher Education qualifications at <http://www.aber.ac.uk/pga/Comparability.html>) and have at least three years of experience in a field of direct relevance to GMO biosafety;
- hold an English Language Proficiency Certificate with a minimal proficiency as outlined for “Biological Sciences (MSc Managing the Environment)” found at <http://www.aber.ac.uk/pga/web/EngLangRequirements.htm> (in the middle subject column of the top table). See lower table on the same webpage for those applicants for whom their scholastic education was conducted in English;
- preferably be directly involved in international, national or local GMO regulatory processes in government, industry, academia or NGOs, for example regulators, officers and scientists working in National Competent Authorities, Scientific Advisory Committees, institutional biosafety committees, and phytosanitary services, or be people who are regularly called upon to advise such entities in a biosafety capacity

Application forms can be downloaded from www.icgeb.org/biosafety/MScFellowships.html and must be submitted to the address below on or before **15 May 2009**. Applications endorsed by a Member of the respective National Biosafety Authority or Committee will take precedence in the selection process.

Applications from women are particularly encouraged.

Send applications (preferably by Email; subject line - “Masters fellowship”) to:

ICGEB Biosafety Unit
Padriciano, 99
34012 Trieste
Italy

Tel. +39-040-3757320; Fax: +39-040-226555; Email: africabu@icgeb.org