Experiential Learning Form - Job Information

**Job Title: Project Assistant for Farmer-Collaborative Vegetable Breeding**

WL S20

**Do you already have a candidate(s) identified for this job?(Required)**

No

**Job Description(Required)**

The project assistant, under the supervision of the CSFS Academic Director and Dr. Alexandra Lyon - a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems - will assist with a range of moderately complex duties and responsibilities associated with the Canadian Organic Vegetable Improvement (CANOVI) project at the UBC Farm. This project is directed at advancing crop selection and adaptation to organic systems across Canada, and involves a network of on-farm variety trails at farms across BC and other provinces, as well as variety trails and plant breeding at the UBC Farm. During the Summer 2020 Work Learn session the project assistant will primarily work on field and greenhouse tasks related to crop production and data collection for variety trials and plant breeding at the UBC Farm. This is an excellent position for a student with an interest in plant breeding and seed as they relate to sustainable agriculture. Students are interested in continuing for the Winter/Spring 2020 work learn session are strongly preferred.

**The UBC Farm:**

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm (CSFS) is a teaching and research centre and local-to-global food hub working towards a more sustainable, food-secure future. Our living laboratory is committed to finding solutions to local and global challenges facing food systems sustainability.

The UBC Farm is the Centre for Sustainable Food System’s main teaching and research space. A 24-hectare organically managed farm, the UBC Farm is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. Situated within a 90-year-old coastal hemlock forest, the UBC Farm learning spaces include cultivated annual crop fields, perennial hedgerows and orchards, pasture, research plots, teaching gardens, and forest stands. Here we cultivate over 200 varieties of fruits, vegetables, and herbs, and also feature honey beehives and egg-laying, open-pasture hens.

**What are the student’s duties? (List in bullet points):**

* Planting, weeding, and harvesting crops grown specifically for this research project at the UBC Farm, including variety trails in several crops and plant breeding populations of carrots.
* Harvesting, cleaning, and organizing seeds from carrot plants grown in the UBC Horticulture Greenhouse as part of maintaining breeding populations.
* Collecting, tracking and recording observational and field production data for these crops into Excel spreadsheets
* Provide outreach to farmers and the public by setting up and staffing an outreach table during at least one public event
* Prepare graphs and tables from existing data using R software (optional depending on experience)

**Level of supervision provided to the student:** Student will work independently for some of the tasks, but will receive direct instruction in all new tasks and Dr. Lyon will be available for questions during some of the student’s regular work hours.

**Qualifications(Required) (list in bullet points):**

* Experience collecting, entering, and organizing field data
* Previous experience with gardening, farming, or vegetable production preferred
* Ability to perform physically demanding tasks in varying of weather conditions
* Interest in food systems and/or sustainability in agriculture
* Available for the entire summer session (vacation time will be discussed)
* Intermediate to advanced familiarity with Excel is required
* Experience with R a strong positive but not required
* Interest/availability for continuing for the Winter/Spring 2020 Work Learn Session is preferred

**Student Learning Components (UBC Vancouver Work Learn Program)(Required)**

**Orientation & Training:**

All work learns at the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm will receive the following training:

* A cohort orientation day at the UBC Farm that includes site safety, a tour of the Farm site, and an introduction to the Farm’s networking and mentorship opportunities.
* Ongoing training and supervision is provided by unit leads in students’ respective areas. (For the Events Assistant, supervised by the Operations Director and Site and Administration Coordinator)

**Feedback, Ongoing Support & Reflection:**

Student will work with Dr. Lyon to prepare a work-plan for the project term, including both learning objectives and project goals, and will meet weekly with Dr. Lyon to determine steps and progress. At the beginning, midpoint, and end of the work learn session the student and supervisor will conduct a broader meeting to overview the student’s learning goals and make adjustments as needed.

**Mentorship, Encouragement, Support, and Networking Opportunities:**

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm employs work learn students across multiple units, projects, and disciplines. This creates an environment rich with opportunity to learn and expand their network beyond their individual scope of work.

Networking opportunities include:

* Opportunity to experience interacting with a range of CSFS at UBC Farm staff, researchers, faculty members and community partners.
* Working alongside peers as a team, including regular meetings with opportunity to give input and contribute to discussion.
* Collaborating with staff outside of their immediate work area to assist with other project tasks
* Weekly drop-in co-working time for work learns to share their projects and network with other students.

**Position Classification(Required) (Please indicate as per position classification guide):** Project Assistant Step 1

**Salary / Wage(Required):** $17.69

**Hours Per Week(Required)**

20

**Total Number of Hours per Student Position(Required)**

300

**Experience Level(Required)** Intermediate experience with either field data collection OR vegetable production is preferred.

**Preferred Degrees/Disciplines(Required)** No degree requirements, preferred disciplines include agronomy, horticulture, cropping systems, agroecology, food systems, or agroforestry. Familiarity with the UBC Farm a strong asset.

**Is this Work Learn position research oriented? (Required)** Yes

**Supervisor’s Name(Required)** Alexandra Lyon

**Supervisor’s Email(Required)** alexandra.lyon@ubc.ca

**Work Learn Administrator(Required)**

Elena Donskikh

**Work Learn Administrator Email(Required)**

elena.donskikh@ubc.ca

**Anticipated Start Date(Required)**

May 1, 2020 or May 15, 2020 (please indicate)