The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands
is recruiting a Research Assistant in the Terrestrial
Conservation Area

Deadline for application: 15th May 2020

Latest starting date: 1st June 2020

Duration: One year (possibility of renewal)

Introduction

One of the current research projects conducted by Charles Darwin Foundation for Galapagos Islands (CDF), is Galapagos Verde 2050 (GV2050). This is a long-term adaptive management initiative dedicated to studying terrestrial restoration and sustainability. Specifically, GV2050 works on a) developing efficient management protocols for the ecological restoration of degraded areas and conservation of endangered plant species, and b) developing sustainable agricultural practices among local farmers. These two components are integrated as key elements dedicated towards increasing local livelihoods in Galapagos, as well as combating the effects of habitat degradation, invasive species, climate change.

As a continuation of this research initiative, CDF is recruiting a Research Assistant in the field of Botany/Ecology/Agronomy, with extensive experience in Horticulture and Plant Propagation for the GV2050 project.

This professional will be committed to the conservation of the terrestrial ecosystems of Galapagos National Park by developing and strengthening a successful propagation and horticulture program. The person in this position will expand the GV2050 capabilities of growing, caring, and propagating over 50 species of endemic, threatened, or keystone species from Galapagos, which are part of the restoration project. Additionally, the selected person will continue to establish, build, and strengthening the CDF relationships with local stakeholders and will assist with a variety of logistic-related activities within the GV2050 project.

Position objective

The person to be hired will primarily be responsible for overseeing the development of the propagation and horticulture program in the project, but they will assist with other aspects of the project as required. They will ensure the care of all seedlings as well as designing and conducting experiments to develop better methods for germination and plant care. The successful candidate will be detail oriented and also ensure that the logistics of GV2050 run smoothly by contributing towards laboratory management, accounting, fieldwork preparation and training, and report writing. The successful candidate will have excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to write technical reports and communicate with the public, as well as background in applied
scientific research, experimental design, and analysis. Physically fit, they will have a cheerful, positive, and self-driven commitment towards both labwork and fieldwork.

**Required profile**

- Undergraduate or Postgraduate degree in a field of botany and ecology (ideally with a focus in horticulture and propagation).
- Previous extensive and demonstrable work experience (minimum 2 years) in plant propagation and horticulture.
- Knowledge of GIS (ArcGIS and/or QGIS) and confident use of a GPS unit.
- Confident use of design and drafting software such as Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, and MS Office (Access, Excel, Word, PowerPoint).
- Basic knowledge of statistics, data management, and data analysis.
- Have least one peer-reviewed scientific publication (published or in press).
- Previous working experience within multicultural and interdisciplinary teams.
- Excellent physical health and ability to work in the field under difficult and often isolated conditions. Due to the nature of GV2050 activities, the research assistant must be able to provide significant physical efforts, such as carrying and unloading heavy items and walking long distances whilst carrying personal items, camping equipment, water and food. Previous camping and fieldwork experience is essential.
- Bilingual in English and Spanish.
- Self-driven and ability to work independently without continuous oversight.

**Preferred profile (additional to the requirements listed above)**

- Interest in working in conservation science through ecosystem restoration and sustainable agriculture.
- Working experience with both sexual and asexual plant propagation, in-vitro germination, ecological restoration, sustainable agriculture, ecological monitoring, and/or integrated pest management, are greatly valued.
- Ability to write technical reports and scientific publications in both English and Spanish.
- Experience analysing scientific data, including basic data management and analysis with R.
- Understanding of the scientific method and basics of experimental design.
- Ability to work under pressure and to fulfill tight deadlines.
- Excellent public speaking and oral presentation skills, including experience making and giving technical and public presentations.
- Clean driver's license.
- Additional peer-reviewed publications

**Activities**

The selected candidate will report directly to the Principal Investigator (PI), leader of the GV2050 project. Throughout the duration of this position, the selected candidate will also work directly with the PI and the other members and volunteers of the GV2050 team. Other work may be required as
directed by institutional or project objectives. The following are the primary activities for which the selected candidate will be responsible.

1. Responsibility for the handling and care of our seedling nurseries. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring care for seedlings at the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) as well as coordinating with project staff and the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) for other seedling nurseries.
2. Organize and conduct plant propagation and germination trials to develop novel methods of efficient propagation of endangered, threatened, or keystone species of the Galapagos while reducing costs and building an inventory for restoration plantings.
3. Write protocol methods for propagation and seedling care of each species to be used by others, as well as training team members and volunteers in these protocols when necessary.
4. Coordinate and execute logistics related to field trips. This may include management of permits, organizing transportation, biosecurity protocols, budget accounting, coordinating with park officials, packing supplies, as well as working with volunteers and interns to ensure they are prepared for fieldwork.
5. Conduct field-work and lab-work including, but not limited to, implementing experiments for adaptive management, restoring ecosystems through active planting and monitoring, preparing field sites, and conducting germination/propagation/horticulture trials.
6. Write and proof-read professional reports and manuscripts in English and/or Spanish. This includes, but is not limited to, drafting grant applications, scientific publications, technical reports that summarize field trips, and reports for the various institutions that provide project support.
7. Present our project and research station to potential donors and Galapagos visitors through regular presentation on local cruise ships.
8. Complete any other project activities assigned by the GV2050 PI, depending on institutional priorities.

**Employment conditions:**

The Research Assistant will be a full time staff of CDF, working under a “consultant” format. They will directly report to the Galapagos Verde 2050 Principal Investigator. The selected candidate will be based at the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) on Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. A consultant contracted by the Charles Darwin Foundation does not imply a continuous relationship with CDF, for a duration longer than stated on the contract.

The consultant is expected to work 40 hours a week from 07:45-12:30 and 14:00 - 17:15. Due to certain project activities, however, such as field trips, this schedule may be changed.

The consultant will work according to the regulations and Manual of Procedures of the CDF, and will complete their field work strictly following the rules and regulations of the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD)

**How to apply:**

Applicants should submit the following documents via e-mail to: (asistenteinvestigacion@fcdarwin.org.ec, patricia.jaramillo@fcdarwin.org.ec)
• Updated resume/CV.
• Letter of interest, describing your competencies according to the minimum requirements for the announced position.
• Three professional letters of reference, including the names and email addresses of referees.
• Name and email addresses of two other references that can be contacted for further inquiry.