RESPONSE – Open PhD Position

Open PhD Position in

RESPONSE (GA No. 847585)
«RESPONSE - to society and policy needs through plant, food and energy sciences»
H2020-MSCA-COFUND-2018

ESR 11

Developing climate ready apple production systems in Switzerland

Within the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 847585, ETH Zurich is offering a 36-month PhD position for an early-stage researchers (ESR) in in the area of sustainable food systems.

Job Description

We are looking for a unique student with some level of interdisciplinary training or experience in biology and social science or strong training in either field with a strong interest to gain additional training in the other field. The aim of the ESR will be to assess and compare management and biological approaches to promote climate resilient apple production in Switzerland.

A planned secondment of 4 months at the Swiss Fruit Association in Zug is part of this project. During this secondment, the ESR will gain training on understanding of fruit producer and other stakeholder needs, fruit production challenges, and marketing aspects in fruit supply chains.

The anticipated results/outcomes of this project are the identification of apple varieties and traits that provide added resilience to climate extremes, the initiation of breeding projects incorporating such traits, communication of these results with value chain actors to increase acceptance of climate resilient varieties, and increased adoption of varieties and management practices that increase farmers’ resilience. The research will fill scientific knowledge gaps in how extreme climate events affect perennial crops and producers, understanding of producer motivations and capacities to adopt adaptation strategies, and the identification of plant traits that convey stress resilience in tree crops. The research project will begin with small meetings with the research partners, including the Schweizer Obstverband (Swiss Fruit Association) and other key stakeholders, to discuss the apple industry’s needs and perspectives on the issue of climate resilience. Results of the research will be integrated and summarized in a non-technical pamphlet for farmers and longer non-technical summaries for policy makers and value chain actors.
Interested / Your profile

To perform the research successfully, potential candidates should have competency with quantitative analysis, strong interpersonal communication abilities, and excellent writing skills. Geo-spatial and statistical expertise, some programming abilities (e.g., R and/or Python) and prior experience doing independent research are especially welcomed.

Eligibility: Early stage researcher in the first 4 years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers, including the period of research training, starting at the date of obtaining the degree which would formally entitle them to embark on a doctorate either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the initial training activities are provided.

At the time of recruitment (for call 2 = July 1, 2020) by the host organisation, researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the reference date. Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

Language requirement: The ideal applicant will be fluent in German, French, and English. German and French spoken competencies are needed to conduct the interviews, while English writing is essential for the science communication.

Main Research Field: Environmental science

Sub Research Field: Plant biology; economics

RESPONSE is open to applicants of any nationality.

For submitting your online application: https://join.lszgs.uzh.ch/ (select PhD Program Science and Policy). The online application should contain all information as indicated by the application portal. Moreover, the following documents have to be uploaded under “further documents”: 1) a letter of motivation to join a) the RESPONSE doctoral programme and b) to apply for this specific positon (ESR xx), 2) a comprehensive tabular CV, and 3) transcripts of records. If you apply for more than one RESPONSE position, please refer to them in your letter of motivation. Please note that we exclusively accept applications submitted through our online application portal. Applications via email or postal services will not be considered.

Benefit

We are offering an interesting position at the interface of science and policy. While working in an international, interdisciplinary and innovative research environment at ETH Zurich, the ESR will be jointly co-supervised by the Environmental Policy Lab and the Molecular Plant Breeding group at ETH Zurich and Schweizer Obstverband (Swiss Fruit Association), Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), and Agroscope.

The complete 36 months will be under 100% working contracts.
The PhD salary follows the regulations of ETH Zurich and will be according to EU regulations for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Early Stage Researchers. The monthly gross salary will not be lower than CHF 3920.

The successful candidate will be matriculated and will have a working contract at ETH Zurich. He/she will work in Zurich, Switzerland. The secondment will take place in Zug, Switzerland.

Expected starting date of the working contract: **01.11.2020**

For questions and further information on the position, please contact (Prof. Dr. Rachael Garrett – rgarrett@ethz.ch or Dr. Graham Dow – graham.dow@usys.ethz.ch), no applications.

**Further information**

**RESPONSE Doctoral Programme (DP):** «RESPONSE - to society and policy needs through plant, food and energy sciences» is funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement No 847585. RESPONSE DP builds on the academic expertise of three world-leading institutions - ETH Zurich, University of Zurich and University of Basel. The successful candidate will be integrated in the research network and infrastructure of the internationally renowned competence center **Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center**.

All RESPONSE ESRs will follow the [PSC PhD Program Science and Policy](https://www.plantsciences.uzh.ch/en/research/fellowships/response.html) that is unique in its kind. Through the curriculum of this program, ESR will be trained in the communication of scientific evidence to policy-makers and the public; the involvement of different stakeholder groups as well as in policy development and endorsement in Europe and at global scale.

**For project, programme and application details:**

**Working location:** SOL F, Sonnegstrasse 33, 8092 Switzerland
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