

IRTA is a research institute owned by the Government of Catalonia ascribed to the Ministry of Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda. IRTA is one of the CERCA centres of excellence of the Catalan Research System. Our purpose is to contribute to the modernization, competitiveness and sustainable development of agriculture, food and aquaculture sectors, the supply of healthy and quality foods for consumers and, generally, improving the welfare and prosperity of the society. We are granted by the EU with the [HRS4R](#) distinction for "HR Excellence in Research" and thus we offer a rich environment for knowledge development and exchange where to develop a scientific career, and possibilities for professional promotion according to the attained achievements. Check our initiatives [here](#).

PhD candidate for Fruit Production Program

[ref. CPI21/24]

✦ IRTA is currently seeking an enthusiastic and motivated PhD candidate to join the Fruit Production Program. We invite applications from ambitious candidates with relevant research experience and passion to conduct research and innovation activities on the project: **'Genetic dissection of agronomical traits of breeding interest in almond'**. The scope of the PhD research project is to investigate key challenges linked to almond cultivation, from an agronomical and genetic perspective, which could be addressed through breeding approaches. The activities will focus on the phenotyping of breeding traits (chilling and heat requirements, flowering time, harvest time, tree architecture, bearing habits) in different almond segregating populations, the identification of molecular markers linked to these traits throughout QTL analyses, and the development and validation of DNA tests.

✦ Supervisors: Dr. Alejandro Calle (alejandro.calle@irta.cat), Dr. Xavier Miarnau (xavier.miarnau@irta.cat)

📍 Job location: Fruitcentre (Lleida) (<https://www.irta.cat/en/centre/irta-fruitcentre/>)

🕒 Full-time position (h/week): 37.5

📅 Terms of appointment: 4 years

💰 Salary: The financial remuneration for the PhD Candidate contract will be €1,336.3/gross per month (18,708.20/gross per annum) and for the first and second years. For this third year, it will be €1,431.83/gross per month (€20,045.62/gross per annum) and for the fourth year it will be €1,789.79/gross per month (€25,057.06/gross per annum) which will be subject to the corresponding withholdings, pursuant to prevailing regulations, and to the collective employment agreement of IRTA. IRTA will also pay the fees of the doctoral school when receiving the enrolment. ⁽¹⁾

🏠 Employee Benefits: 22 vacation days, 3 days of family & work conciliation, 45h of personal days, Friday afternoon off, Compressed Summer schedule from 15/06 to 15/09, Conciliation schedule.

📋 Tasks and Responsibilities:

- Field and lab phenotyping of different agronomic traits related to tree phenology (chilling and heat requirements, flowering time, harvest time...), tree architecture (branching type, bearing habits), and abiotic stress (drought response).
- Genetic and genomic analyses (DNA extraction, genotyping, linkage mapping, QTL analysis, candidate gene analysis).
- Data management and processing.

- Collaboration with the other members of the research group on the coordination and planification of experiments and data management.
- Manuscript and report writing.
- Participation in communication and dissemination activities (attending conferences, workshops, transfer activities...)

Required qualifications and experience:

- Candidates must hold one of the following degrees: Agronomy, Biology, or related.
- a) A master's in Plant Biotechnology, Plant Breeding, or similar.
- b) To be in a position to access a doctoral program according to the requirements of Catalan universities, *i.e.* accrediting between 60 and 120 ECTS credits at the official university master's degree level or equivalent.
- Not to have a previous PhD degree.
- Candidates who have been chosen for an interview with the Selection Committee, should bring or send –for the interview- a certified copy of the degree and/or master, as well as the academic record showing the marks of all subjects studied.

Desirable requirements:

- Interest in plant breeding and genetics (preferably in *Prunus* species).
- Good written and oral English skills.
- Willingness to conduct field, laboratory, and bioinformatic work.
- Knowledge of advanced statistics (JMP, R software)
- Experience in plant phenotyping.

Languages:

- Proficiency in English
- Spanish and Catalan are valued.

Application process

If you wish to be considered for this position, please, apply via our [Recruitment Platform](#) to the job post with reference CPI21/24 and upload your CV and motivation letter. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Deadline for application: 31/08

Timings in the Recruitment Process of ref. CPI2124

Genetic dissection of agronomical traits of breeding interest in almond

30 natural days	Publication and diffusion of the job advertisement on IRTA's website, EURAXESS Jobs, social media and other specific recruitment places.
5 following working days	Distribution of the pre-selected CVs which matching eligibility criteria to the Recruitment Committee. Communication via e-mail with the not pre-selected candidates who will not be further included in the process.
20 following working days	Recruitment Committee: - Communication via e-mail with the not-selected candidates by the Recruitment Committee. - Interview with selected candidates by the Recruitment Committee. - Accord of the Recruitment Committee stating the selected candidate and detailed reasoning for the decline of the rest of the candidates. - Communication via e-mail with the interviewed and not-selected candidates
10 following working days	Provision by the selected candidate of requested legal and official documentation to the HR department to coordinate the start of the candidate.
Fourth Trimester 2024	Start of employment

IRTA guarantees an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process (OTM-R) to all registered candidacies avoiding thus any bias on gender, origin, age, ideology, or other circumstances that could be discriminatory. Candidates in a situation of social exclusion will be considered in the first place.

Please know that if you are the chosen candidate and you are from a country which does not belong to the UE, IRTA's Human Resources Department will support you to get the residence and working permits.

⁽¹⁾ The financial remuneration of the PhD Candidate contract may not be less than 56% of the salary established for the category of Research Collaborator F of the Collective Agreement of the IRTA during the first two years, 60% in the third year and 75% in the fourth.