Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute

Staff Scientist Research Position in
Forest Microbial Ecology & Evolution

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI; www.stri.si.edu) seeks to hire a staff scientist to pursue an independent, internationally recognized research program in forest microbial ecology and evolution. The position is funded by generous support from the Simons Foundation. The successful candidate will have a demonstrated commitment to world-class science that includes publication in international peer-reviewed literature and will enhance and complement existing strengths in our research institute. Research interests in forest microbial ecology may include plant-soil-microbial interactions, the role of microbes in biogeochemical and/or carbon cycling, plant pathogen dynamics, and microbial responses to global change, among others. Familiarity with both traditional culturing and next-generation sequencing methods and other tools for studying microbial communities is highly desirable. Previous tropical experience is not required.

The position is full-time research. A fully equipped microbial laboratory is available and funds are provided for additional laboratory setup costs and on-going research, including postdoctoral and technical support staff, supplies, and travel expenses. Staff scientists may also compete for additional intramural and external research funds. Opportunities are available to mentor postdoctoral fellows, students, and interns who are drawn from an international community, to teach in graduate training programs with affiliated universities, and to conduct outreach to local and international audiences.

STRI is headquartered in the Republic of Panama, with modern research and laboratory facilities, a library with extensive holdings in the natural and anthropological sciences, and terrestrial and marine field stations throughout the country. Panama and adjacent regions of tropical America present abundant opportunities to study microbial communities across experimental and natural gradients of climate and soil fertility. The Center for Tropical Forest Science maintains a series of long-term forest dynamics plots across multiple environmental gradients, and STRI’s Agua Salud site supports a secondary forest dynamics monitoring network and experimental plantations. STRI has a vibrant and collaborative scientific community of 37 staff scientists and hosts over 1200 scientific visitors per year, including fellows and interns supported through an intramural program. Staff scientists maintain diverse research programs in the ecology, evolution, physiology, development, and behavior of marine and terrestrial organisms and ecosystems, both ancient and modern, and the role of human interactions in shaping tropical environments. Strong interdisciplinary links between our scientists and the
broader Smithsonian community provide excellent opportunities for addressing large-scale long-
term research questions that are not possible elsewhere.

Applicants must have a Ph.D. and post-doctoral research experience in a relevant field. Early- to 
mid-career candidates are especially encouraged; applicants at all postdoctoral stages will be 
considered. Annual salary is commensurate with experience. Compensation packages include 
allowances to support foreign living expenses, including educational expenses for dependent 
children. The position is based in Panama and relocation expenses are provided. For more 
information on the position, including answers to frequently asked questions, please see 
http://stri-sites.si.edu/recruiter/users/jobs.php

**To Apply:** Interested candidates should submit the following as a single PDF file: cover letter, 
curriculum vitae, statement of research accomplishments and interests, three to five significant 
publications, and the names and contact information of three references to strisearch@si.edu. 
The position is open until filled; review of applications will begin on 15 November 2020. 
Address inquiries to the search committee chair, Dr. Kristin Saltonstall, at SaltonstallK@si.edu.

*STRI does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including 
pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital 
status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, 
parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor. We are an Equal Opportunity 
employer, committed to diversity in its work-force.*