# JOB DESCRIPTION

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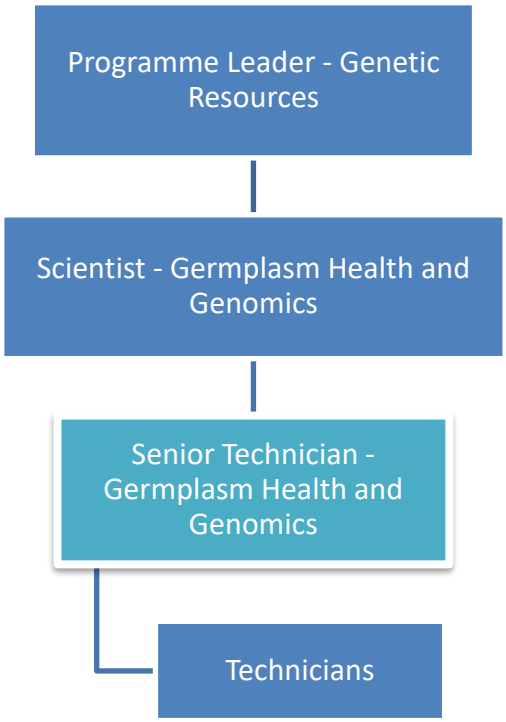
| **Job Title:** | Senior Technician – Germplasm Health and Genomics |
| **Division/Programme and Section/Project (if any):** | Land Resources Department/Genetic Resources Pillar/CePaCT |
| **Location**: | Suva |
| **Reporting to:** | Scientist - Germplasm Health and Genomics |
| **Number of Direct Reports:** | 2 - 4 |
| **Purpose of Role**: | Perform a range of laboratory testing and research within the Germplasm Health and Genomics unit in the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT). Ensure proper maintenance of lab equipment, maintaining records and documentation of results in accordance with standard operating procedures. The role will also be responsible for supervising and facilitating work activities within the team and provide first level advice and guidance to other Lab Technicians and Lab Assistants. |
| **Date:** | August 2023 |

## Organizational Context and Organization Chart

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organization in the Pacific region, supporting sustainable development since 1947. It is an international development organization owned and governed by our 27 country and territory members. We work for the well-being of Pacific peoples through the effective and innovative applications of science and knowledge, guided by a deep understanding of Pacific Island context and cultures. (www.spc.int)

This position is in the **Land Resources Division (LRD)** which provides effective expert scientific advice, capacity building and services on conservation, development and utilization of plant genetic resources, forest and landscape management, resilient agricultural systems, diversification of livelihood strategies and access to markets to maintain ecosystem services and improve land productivity and the food, nutrition security and resilience of Pacific communities.

LRD has expertise in genetic resource conservation, resilient agriculture, biosecurity, pest and disease management, agricultural extension, plant pathology, entomology, and animal health. It collaborates with governments, regional organisations, civil society and other SPC divisions to pinpoint the needs and priorities of Pacific countries and communities and provide technical expertise to address them. This mission is realized through four main thematic work areas, or pillars, and a progressively integrated approach to programming that works towards achieving SPC's development goals.




## Key Result Areas (KRAs):

The key results areas of the position are categorized into the following key accountabilities:

- Effective and efficient pathogen testing and cleaning of CePaCT accessions
- Lead research implementation and contribute to research design development.
- Provide scientific and technical advice and capacity building support.
- Supervise lab staff activities & other duties.

***The performance requirements of the Key Result Areas are broadly described below.***

| Jobholder is accountable for | Jobholder is successful when |
|---|---|
| **KRA 1: Effective and efficient pathogen testing and cleaning of CePaCT accessions. (40%)**<br><br>• Carry out all routine activities for pathogen testing (e.g., virus testing, bacteria culture and identification, PCR, grafting) and ensure records kept at highest standards of quality and safety.<br>• Perform pathogen cleaning activities to prescribed international standards.<br>• Monitor and provide guidance to Technicians and Assistants Technicians during lab activities. | • Ensure thorough understanding of and compliance with all relevant Standard Operating Procedures for genebank functions.<br>• Carry out all health testing on CePaCT crops ensuring that it meets the highest standards of quality.<br>• Complete appropriate sample testing within the given turnaround time.<br>• Review and monitor that all accessions received are kept well without losses and records maintained of every accession in tissue culture and screen house.<br>• Ensure accessions are free from contamination and are to proper laboratory conditions for safety maintenance.<br>• Interpret and analyze data from a variety of testing and provide reports, update, and records of all analysis.<br>• Accessions requiring cleaning proceed through appropriate therapies for cleaning.<br>• Provide appropriate guidance and support in data entry and record maintenance.<br>• Ensure all results are properly captured, in lab books and online, and regularly endorsed by line manager. |

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| | • Ensure all Standard Operating Procedures for all Germplasm Health and Genomics functions are always adhered to. |
| **KRA 2: Lead research implementation and contribute to research design development. (20%)**<br>• Support the development of high-quality research methodologies.<br>• Take the lead in carrying out research based on approved methodologies.<br>• Provide guidance and support to research activities of other staff. | • Support the development of high-quality research methodologies.<br>• Carry out research based on approved methodologies including all relevant data recording and entry for results obtained.<br>• Produce progress reports when required.<br>• Support the publication of research results including presenting results in various forums.<br>• Identify gap areas for research to improve operations and procedures.<br>• Guide and support research activities of junior staff. |
| **KRA 3: Provide scientific and technical advice and capacity building support. (20%)**<br>• Training of new staff on all Standard Operating Procedures including appropriate hands-on skills.<br>• Provide relevant technical/scientific training support to both internal and external partners.<br>• Assist manager with the development, update and proper documentation of appropriate training tools and procedures. | • Provide appropriate training for new staff including refresher trainings for old staff on a regular basis.<br>• Assist manager with the preparation of appropriate training tools and procedures for all relevant technical trainings.<br>• Develop tools for testing skills and capabilities and ensure regular performance tests are carried out for critical functions and operations.<br>• Proper and timely documentation of all training data<br>• Provide reports on training activities.<br>• Provide correct scientific and technical advice to external requestors.<br>• Identify training gaps for consideration of managers. |
| **KRA 4: Supervise lab staff activities & other duties. (20%)**<br>• Facilitate and coordinate responsibilities of technicians and assistants under the manager's guidance and advice.<br>• Ensure staff compliance with Standard Operating Procedures and Genebank policies and laboratory standards are maintained including no compromise to proper hygiene and safety of the facilities.<br>• Monitor and keep records for all key activities including staff performance and compliance. | • Assist in monitoring and managing technicians and assistants' performance and reviews.<br>• Coach and mentor new team members on relevant technical areas and operations.<br>• Assist in the on-boarding of new team members.<br>• Contribute and participate constructively in detailed quality system activities including audits and investigations and where possible provide or suggest improvements.<br>• Provide and or facilitate backup support in the absence of other team members in collaboration with direct manager to ensure smooth flow of work operations.<br>• Oversee and facilitate staff execution of routine checks in place for the safety of the laboratory and offices.<br>• Accurate and timely submission of activity and staff performance reports to the direct manager.<br>• Efficient documentation of all proper documentation on operation and staff performance and compliance.<br>• Maintain equipment and chemical records in accordance with approved procedures and processes.<br>• Participate in international fora activities as required and lead team activities in the absence of direct manager.<br>• Support the development of activity workplans for routine work as well as project implementation.<br>• Liaise with external partners as required. |

The above performance requirements are provided as a guide only. The precise performance measures for this job will need further discussion between the jobholder and supervisor as part of the performance development process.

## Most Challenging Duties Typically Undertaken (Complexity):

- Poor maintenance of samples/ contamination of samples may cause significant delays in supply to the region.
- For successful establishment of different samples, detailed and most up to date specialist knowledge and skills are required to get them established in sample cultures.
- To achieve success in clean sample culture process, it may require several attempts and hence, timelines may be affected.

## Functional Relationships & Relationship Skills:

| Key internal and/or external contacts | Nature of the contact most typical |
|---|---|
| **External**<br>• Member countries representatives and relevant stakeholders.<br>• Local authorities. | • Routine correspondence and attending to queries related to projects.<br>• Provide advice on sample requests procedures and requirements. |
| **Internal**<br>• Department colleagues, team members and associated consultants. | • Team meetings collaborating and knowledge sharing and updates.<br>• Work plans and activities.<br>• Planning and coordination of work within the team. |

## Level of Delegation:

Routine Expenditure Budget: None

Budget Sign off Authority without requiring approval from direct supervisor: None.

## Personal Specification:

### Qualifications

| *Essential:* | *Desirable:* |
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| A degree in Biological Science or Biochemistry and/or Industrial Laboratory Technology (relevant field of study). | A postgraduate degree in Biological Sciences (Plant Science, Microbiology, Molecular biology) will be an advantage. |

### Knowledge/Experience

| *Essential:* | *Desirable:* |
|---|---|
| • A minimum of 5 years of relevant experience<br>• Adept knowledge and skills on plant tissue culture technology, pathogen testing methods such as PCR, RT-PCR, ELISA, IC-PCR, RCA, symptomatology, and grafting.<br>• Adept knowledge and understanding of virus elimination methods such as meristem culture, chemotherapy, thermotherapy, calibration. | Knowledge and understanding on genetic diversity of relevant samples and species and their contribution to food and nutritional security. |

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| • Sound knowledge and experience working in a sterile laboratory environment.<br>• Adept knowledge in various experimental designs and laboratory data collection and analysis software.<br>• Self-motivated, disciplined, and able to work effectively (individually and within a team environment)<br>• Excellent time management, communication, and organizational skills<br>• Good attention to detail and excellent computer skills<br>• Be able to develop new ideas and provide a solution to problems.<br>• Willingness to work outside of normal working hours to meet deadlines with good ability to handle workloads when required | |

**Key Skills/Attributes/Job Specific Competencies**

The following levels would typically be expected for the 100% fully effective level:

| Core Capabilities | Level of Expertise Requirement | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| Technical Knowledge ('know how') | Adept | Analytical thinking, drive outcome/output, practical use of methodologies and frameworks, ability to report and contribute towards publication of research papers. |
| Engage | Adept | Ability to communicate effectively with team members, commit and deliver high level of customer satisfaction and collaborate effectively within teams. |
| Enable | Adept | Ability to contribute and participate in planning and prioritizing activities, some critical thinking and able to solve varied problems and demonstrate some level of accountability. |
| Personal Attributes | Adept | Display resilience and courage in teams, act with integrity, ability to manage self and supervise teams, and empower and encourage diversity. |
| Language and Culture | Adept | Assist in promoting and supporting language diversity and cultures in all its dealings – within SPC and outside SPC. |

**Key Behaviours**

*All employees are measured against the following **Key Behaviours** as part of Performance Development:*

- Commitment/ Accountability
- Professional/Technical Expertise
- Teamwork
- Customer Focus
- Effective Communications & Relationships
- Leadership

**Personal Attributes**

- High level of professional integrity and ethics

- Friendly demeanor
- Demonstrated high level commitment to customer service.

**Change to Job Description:**

From time to time, it may be necessary to consider changes in the job description in response to the changing nature of the work environment which may also include technological requirements or statutory changes. Such change may be initiated as necessary by SPC. This Job Description may also be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle.