



**EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN
PLANT PROTECTION
ORGANIZATION**

**Appointment of a temporary member of
staff to assist on the Valitest Project**



Job description for a Scientific Officer based in the EPPO Headquarters for the EPPO Diagnostics team to contribute to work on the project VALITEST

EPPO is recruiting a two-year full time P1/1 Scientific Officer. The position is based in the EPPO headquarters in Paris.

Introduction to EPPO

The European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) is an intergovernmental organization responsible for cooperation in plant health. Founded in 1951 by 15 European countries, EPPO now has 52 members, covering almost all countries of the European and Mediterranean region and Central Asia. Its objectives are to protect plants, to develop international strategies against the introduction and spread of dangerous pests and to promote safe and effective control methods.

EPPO's activities on Diagnostics

Since 1998, EPPO has had a work programme in the area of diagnostics to harmonize procedures across the EPPO region. This involves the preparation of pest-specific diagnostic protocols, as well as horizontal standards providing guidance on validation of tests or on the performance of inter-laboratory comparisons.

Validation in the EPPO region

Performing validation in the region still mainly relies on initiatives from individual laboratories, although recently several inter-laboratories comparisons have been performed in the framework of Euphresco projects, which are highly valuable for setting standards for analysis at European and international levels (EPPO and IPPC protocols for diagnostics). Consequently, to improve the situation the EU has decided to fund a project on validation which is presented below.

EU project Valitest

The project was launched in May 2018 and its objectives are

1. To provide more complete and precise descriptions of the performance of diagnostic tests
2. To stimulate, optimize and strengthen the interactions between stakeholders in Plant Health for better diagnostics
3. To lay the foundations for structuring the quality and the commercial offers for plant health diagnostics tools

More information on the project is available at <https://www.valitest.eu>

EPPO's participation in the VALITEST project

EPPO is leading the Work Package on dissemination, communication and training (WP6) and also participating in all the other Work Packages. WP6 will target the different identified stakeholder groups (including researchers, policy makers, inspectors, advisory services, diagnostic laboratories, industries) in order to facilitate the take-up and successful exploitation of the project results.

EPPO will use its network of plant pest diagnostic laboratories to organize surveys on the needs for improvement of its diagnostics database, in particular regarding, the section on validation data. EPPO will also organize workshops for the dissemination of the outcomes of the project as well as for training of staff in plant pest diagnostic laboratories. Several members of the EPPO Staff will work on this project but one additional person will be recruited for the duration of the project who will also participate in other activities to support the EPPO Work programme on Diagnostics.

Open data and open access policy for plant health research activities

Since 2014, EPPO is hosting the Euphresco network for phytosanitary research coordination and funding. In order to increase the visibility of plant health research outcomes, to ensure the availability, use and re-use of data and to foster trans-disciplinary collaboration and innovation, an open data/open access policy has been adopted. In the framework of the EU-funded project XF-ACTORS a pilot portal is built to reference digital objects on *Xylella fastidiosa*.

Main tasks

- Assist in the Valitest project:
 - Support for the preparation and analysis of surveys,
 - Maintenance of the Valitest social media accounts,
 - Maintenance the technical content of the Valitest website,
 - Gathering and entering in the database on diagnostic expertise validation data provided by different laboratories from the region,
 - Ensuring that dissemination activities conducted by project partners are registered and adequately publicized.
 - Support the organization of Workshops organized in the project.
- Support the EPPO work on diagnostics
 - Support the EPPO Work programme on diagnostic (organization of Panel meetings, international Workshops and Conferences, and EPPO Databases on Diagnostics)
 - Support and coordination of drafting teams for selected diagnostic Standards
 - Participation in EPPO Panels, Workshops and Conferences as necessary.
- Support the Euphresco work on open research
 - Maintain database and curate data and metadata

The Scientific Officer will work under the supervision of the Assistant Director of EPPO.

Essential skills and qualifications:

- Excellent oral and written scientific English
- High level of attention to detail;
- A general biology/agronomy background, to at least degree level;
- Prior participation in diagnostics research projects (preferably including test development or validation)
- Organizational skills, in particular the ability to work well under pressure, prioritize tasks and meet deadlines;
- Scientific rigour;
- Excellent interpersonal and facilitation skills, for example ability to work with, and collect information from diagnostic experts from across the EPPO region, with varying levels of English;

Desirable skills and qualifications:

- Background/understanding of the diagnostic activities of National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in plant health;
- Experience of data management and curation.
- Experience of work in an NPPO.
- Knowledge of French or Russian, or other EPPO region languages would be an advantage

Referees

Please provide names and contact details of two referees who may be asked to provide information for short-listed candidates.

Contact for further information: Françoise Petter (petter@eppo.int)

Conditions

Monthly Net Salary full time: approximately 3 200 EUR (plus allowances for dependents if applicable).

If you are interested please register to the EPPO specific webpage (<https://jobs.eppo.int/valitest>) and provide a covering letter, a Curriculum Vitae and referee names. Applications should be submitted by **2018-11-25**. All documents should be written in English and provided as separate files.

Short listed candidates will be invited to an interview which will include a written exercise. Interviews will be organized in December and the selected candidate would be asked to start as soon as possible.