



Singapore and IRRI



Though not a rice-growing nation, the cosmopolitan population of Singapore is still largely rice-eating.

IRRI's presence in Singapore was formalized with the establishment in 2010 of the IRRI Fund Office. The IRRI Fund supports IRRI's research programs through partnership development and fundraising.

Donations that come through the Singapore office are channeled to five different funds. These are the Discovery Fund (research), Delivery Fund (extension), People Fund (capacity building and training), Facilities Fund (infrastructure and equipment), and the IRRI Endowment (supports the International Rice Genebank and IRRI's day-to-day operations and programs).

Key impact

IRRI's Rice Scholarship Program (see flipside for details) is supported by a USD 3 million initial grant from the Singapore-based Lee Foundation, which has since added another 3 million for a second phase. The grant aims to "educate and train a new generation of rice scientists."

Since 2011, a number of research collaborations have been established with academic, private, and non-governmental organizations. Partners include the National University of Singapore.

The first rice-growing competition in Singapore was held in 2012 at the Science Centre, in conjunction with *World Food Day*. Students from 10 schools, guided by their teachers, competed with one another for yield,

from a crop of rice that they grew from seeds that IRRI supplied.

During the *Asian Masters*, a series of Asian food and lifestyle events all over Singapore in November 2012, the Masterchef Workshop featured Lam Soon's Naturel organic brown rice on center stage, whipped up by five top chefs into 10 dishes.

IRRI's mission and work—and rice in general—were the highlights of an exhibit, sponsored book launches, and an invited talk, "*Rice science, art, and magic*," during the *Asian Festival of Children's Content* held at the National Library of Singapore in May 2014.

Since 1998, 19 Singapore nationals have attended short courses, done an internship, or completed research for a PhD at IRRI.

The Lee Foundation Rice Scholarship Program

Building the next generation of rice scientists

The Lee Foundation Rice Scholarship Program is offering scholarship grants to students pursuing their PhDs in fields allied with the rice sciences.

The Scholarship Program aims “to educate and train a new generation of young rice scientists and researchers to help feed Asia in the future.” This exciting new program offers South and Southeast Asians in the early stages of their careers a unique opportunity to acquire excellent education from reputable academic institutions. Lee scholars are anticipated to become part of the region’s new science leadership and build key partnerships for food security over the next 20–25 years.

Fellowships will be awarded to PhD applicants willing to conduct research projects developed jointly with IRRI and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in specific areas of research (i.e., to improve rice production and enhance grain quality).

At UIUC, students will spend the first 5 semesters (not including summer sessions)—or whatever length of time is needed—to complete required coursework, craft and defend a research proposal, and pass preliminary

examinations prior to returning to IRRI or to various locations in South and Southeast Asia.

At IRRI, students are expected to conduct dissertation research typically for a period of 18 months to two years, involving projects associated with the improvement and sustainability of rice production. After doing on-site research, students will return to UIUC for a final semester, on fellowship support, to craft and defend the dissertation and complete all requirements for the PhD degree. The schedule and length of time spent by a fellow at UIUC or at various research locations in Southeast Asia may vary depending on the student and on the particular research project. Students will conduct laboratory research while completing course work at UIUC.

Research areas

- Gene discovery and bioinformatics
- Modern rice breeding
- Rice systems of the future
- Economics and policy

Details of scholarship

- The grant supports a 4–5-year PhD program that will be pursued jointly at IRRI and at UIUC’s Department of Crop Sciences (<http://cropsi.illinois.edu/>)

and Illinois Plant Breeding Center (<http://plantbreeding.illinois.edu/>).

Scholarship benefits

- Round-trip airfare and related travel expenses
- Monthly stipend, with local medical and accident insurance
- Research support
- Leadership and professional development
- University fees

Requirements for eligibility

Applicant must:

- Be a citizen of a country in South or Southeast Asia
- Be involved in rice science and related systems research
- Be willing to work on any of a specified list of research areas for his or her PhD
- Have great potential for scientific achievement
- Be about to enroll in a PhD program or have gained admission to an approved course at the UIUC
- Have an adequate level of English proficiency
- Not be more than 35 years old at the time of application

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is the world’s premier research organization dedicated to reducing poverty and hunger through rice science; improving the health and welfare of rice farmers and consumers; and protecting the rice-growing environment for future generations. IRRI is an independent, nonprofit research and educational institute founded in 1960 by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, with support from the Philippine government. The institute, headquartered in Los Baños, Philippines, has offices in 15 rice-growing countries in Asia and Africa, and about 1,180 staff members of some 40 nationalities.

Working with in-country partners, IRRI develops advanced rice varieties that yield more grain and better withstand pests and disease as well as flooding, drought, and other destructive effects of climate change. More than half of the rice area in Asia is planted to IRRI-bred varieties or their progenies. The institute develops new and improved methods and technologies that enable farmers to manage their farms profitably and sustainably, and recommends rice varieties and agricultural practices suitable to particular farm conditions as well as consumer preferences. IRRI assists national agricultural research and extension systems in formulating and implementing country rice sector strategies.

Contact

Corinta Guerta
Director for External Relations
International Rice Research Institute
c.guerta@irri.org

August 2016

Rice science for a better world

www.irri.org