



## MERILÄ LAB

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



# SENIOR RESEARCH ASSISTANT POSITION (MARCH 2023)

## POPULATION GENOMICS OF INCENSE TREE IN HONG KONG

**Position:** A Senior Research Assistant position is available in botanical genomics under the supervision of **Prof. Juha Merilä & Dr Billy Hau**. We welcome both local and international applicants to apply. The position is for 1 year and the desired starting date is Feb. or Mar. 2023. The position is fully funded both from an employment and research perspective and comes with a highly competitive salary (HK\$ 27,000.00 - 35,500.00 p.m.).

**Project:** *Aquilaria sinensis*, known as the “Chinese Incense Tree”, is a tree with fragrant wood (Agarwood) that produces a resin when injured that is used in perfumery. Demand for Agarwood has meant it is highly valuable and thus poaching of *A. sinensis* is pushing wild populations to extinction. The aim is to investigate the population genomics of Incense Trees using next generation sequencing data and population genomic approaches to assist government by:

- 1) Helping to create a literature review summarising knowledge from genetic studies.
- 2) Enriching the existing genetic database of Incense Trees with further data.
- 3) Developing genomic methods that can help identify the origin of *A. sinensis* harvested in Hong Kong for legal and court evidence.

### Responsibilities

- DNA extractions, qubiting/ nanodropping, etc.
- Population-genetic analyses of the genomic data.
- Writing and publishing research articles and reports.
- Presenting at local conferences.

### Requirements

- A postgraduate degree (MSc or PhD).
- Proof of good writing skills (preference for those with publications).
- Experience with DNA extractions.
- Experience with cluster computing (preference for those with scripting experience in genomic analyses/ pipelines).

**TO APPLY: Send a motivational letter + CV to [merila@hku.hk](mailto:merila@hku.hk)**

Applications will be considered until a suitable candidate is selected. For more information on the position/ project please feel free to email Prof. Merilä ([merila@hku.hk](mailto:merila@hku.hk)).