

# Planning and Projects Manager

## Summary of the position

The Planning and Projects Manager will oversee day-to-day financial management, implement administration systems, and lead hiring and human resources. They will manage a team of nine people and report directly to the FAHR Director. The ideal candidate must have a growth mindset, resilience to overcome challenges, and be prepared for the hard work of a fast-growing start-up organization.

## Summary of the Organization

Semilla Nueva has a team of 58 employees with a budget of \$5.4M. The organization is based in Guatemala, with a US legal presence, activities in Honduras and El Salvador, and support from some of the world's most prestigious donors, including USAID, Cartier Philanthropy, the Mulago Foundation and many others. Semilla Nueva develops high-yielding, climate-resilient maize seeds that have been conventionally bred (non-GMO) to have higher levels of the most important missing nutrients: zinc, iron, and quality protein. Our approach to large-scale adoption of these seeds relies on three strategies:

1. Breeding commercially competitive biofortified seeds, which can increase incomes and prevent crop losses for farmers who currently use older hybrid seeds or recycled Open-Pollinated Varieties (OPVs);
2. Piloting subsidies to seed companies to profitably sell new, higher-yielding, climate-resilient, biofortified seeds at prices the poorest of the poor can afford.
3. Working with governments to institutionalize these subsidies.

Our goal is for a minimal amount of subsidy to support hundreds of thousands of farming families to use biofortified seeds, consume biofortified maize, and sell biofortified maize into the market, while improving their incomes. The biofortified maize sold in the market will be purchased and eaten by millions of poor consumers, improving the nutrition of these populations. In 2023, three seed companies in Guatemala produced and sold our seed, reaching over 24,000 farmers and feeding 800,000 people. Our seed is being used by the governments of Guatemala and El Salvador, with testing in process for El Salvador and Eastern Africa and a plan to reach 3 million farmers, feeding 100 million people within the next ten years.

## Specific Tasks

- **Departmental planning and management**
  - Ensure team members are prepared for weekly meetings, prepare agendas with the FAHR Director, and ensure meeting minutes and follow-up
  - Supervise of weekly departmental KPIs and support the team in overcoming challenges or setbacks
  - When problems or needs for new solutions arise, research possible solutions, review and brainstorm with the team, and implement where possible or present to FAHR Director for decisions

- Improve systems and practices related to how other organizational departments request support from the FAHR team and make it easier and more efficient for these departments to meet FAHR requirements
- For new projects, ensure team understanding and alignment with the FAHR director and supervise implementation while identifying problems and proposing solutions
- **Financial and administrative management**
  - Support the Finance and Administration Associate Manager in developing annual draft budgets for each department in the organization, reviewing expenditures monthly, and creating scenarios for budgetary changes as needed
  - When financial reporting systems change, supervise the rollout of new systems
  - Supervise annual report filings, payroll processing, and payments for contracted services (US and Guatemala office)
  - Improve systems to track grant agreements/contracts and ensure compliance, including financial reporting
  - Understand donor preferences to guide financial execution and reporting
- **Human Resources and culture**
  - Lead efforts with the HR coordinator to refine quarterly and annual performance reviews, 360 reviews, and team culture surveys
  - Update job descriptions, annual review of salary and benefit benchmarks, and propose any adjustments
  - Understand personnel needs within the organization, availability of talent in the market, and support department leads on the design of new positions and hiring activities
  - Support the FAHR Director in systematizing and standardizing the hiring and onboarding process, developing indicators for outcomes, and presenting them to the leadership team.
  - Create a framework for personal growth and training plans, support department leads in implementation, and monitor progress

## **Qualifications**

### **Soft skills**

- Problem-solver and self-starter who can be up and running quickly after thorough organizational onboarding
- Ability to anticipate risks (proactively rather than reactively)
- A passion for contributing to and creating a highly effective and collegial organizational and team culture
- A successful track record in setting priorities; keen analytic, organization, and problem-solving skills that support and enable sound decision-making

- Ability to track tasks through completion
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills with an ability to prioritize, negotiate, and work with a variety of internal and external stakeholders
- Takes initiative and is self-motivated, resourceful, detail-oriented, dependable, with strong attention to detail
- Values alignment: You embody our 4 team's values: Conviction for real development, Find the way, Transparency that empowers, and Congruence

### Hard skills

- Bachelor's degree in business administration, accounting, finance, project management, industrial engineering or related field
- At least 5 years of overall professional experience; ideally, 3+ years of broad project and/or operations management experience
- Must be proficient in spoken, written, and reading business English and Spanish.

### Desired

- Experience working with bi-laterals and/or government-funded projects
- Familiarity with USAID financial and reporting requirements

### RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. 30-45 minute introductory conversation
2. A technical activity to measure analytic, organizational, problem-solving, and presentation skills
3. A two-hour interview
4. Interviews with the Leadership Team and FAHR department leads
5. Psychometric tests, background checks, and references
6. Offer and final negotiation

### COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

- Compensation of 40,000-45,000 USD per year, depending on profile
- International health insurance fully covered by Semilla Nueva
- Location: Guatemala City
- Start date: as soon as we identify the right person
- Position type: Full-time

Before applying, please review our website, blog, and Annual Report which are found at [www.semillanueva.org](http://www.semillanueva.org)

To apply please email your CV to [trabajo@semillanueva.org](mailto:trabajo@semillanueva.org) with the subject line "Planning and Projects Manager – your name"

*Semilla Nueva is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to sustaining a diverse community with a work environment that is welcoming, respectful, and encouraging to all. We foster a culture of inclusion that celebrates and cultivates diversity along multiple dimensions, including race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, out-of-home care, age, national origin, socioeconomic status, religion, ability, culture, and experience.*