It is an exceptional privilege for me to be able to conduct my PhD research, which concerns the regulation of T lymphocyte activation by self-recognition, as an International Program Associate (IPA) here at the RIKEN Research Center for Allergy and Immunology (RCAI). I am grateful not only for the arsenal of equipment and resources available here, but also for the unique opportunity to work within a stimulating scientific environment where I receive sincere and generous support from all those around me, enabling me to gain knowledge and experience. Every single day I spend here at RIKEN is a great addition to my scientific pursuit.

Mohamed El Sherif  
Gadelhaq Badr  
International Program Associate  
Laboratory for Cell Signaling  
Egypt

The FPR program provides post-doctoral researchers with a solid foundation for independent work. In conjunction with the many other resources of the RIKEN system, it gives young researchers the opportunity to undertake projects that may be impossible in other settings. In my current work I am trying to elucidate the effects of small molecules on genome organization and gene expression, combining my experience with small molecules from previous work with my interest in epigenetics.

Tilman Schneider-Poetsch, Ph.D.  
Foreign Postdoctoral Researcher  
Chemical Genetics Laboratory  
Germany

I was given the great opportunity to run my own laboratory, which was launched in February 2011. Our mission is to elucidate the fundamentals of electrochemical reactions in new energy-storage systems with the goal to develop high-performance devices. Young researchers from a variety of disciplines and nationalities have joined our team, and thanks to the support from the bilingual staff and on-campus housing at RIKEN, we have been able to focus our energy on our research project.

Hye Ryung Byon, Ph.D.  
Initiative Research Unit  
Byon Initiative Research Unit  
South Korea

RIKEN strives to provide the best and most exciting opportunities for young scientists, both Japanese and international, in the crucially important early stages of their careers. One manifestation of this support comes in the form of RIKEN-funded short and long-term programs for those wishing to join RIKEN in the fields of physics, chemistry, biology, medical science or engineering.

International Programs

RIKEN, initially established in Tokyo in 1917, is Japan’s flagship research organization where basic and applied research is being conducted in a wide range of science and technology fields including physics, chemistry, medical science, biology and engineering.

RIKEN Global Relations Office  
2-1 Hirosawa, Wako, Saitama, 351-0198, Japan  
http://www.riken.jp/  
http://lifeatriken.com/
RIKEN offers doctoral students an opportunity to carry out their doctoral studies as RIKEN International Program Associates (IPAs) under the supervision of senior RIKEN scientists. IPAs will be able to take full advantage of the RIKEN research environment, such as use of equipment and facilities, participation in seminars, and interaction with other RIKEN researchers. At the same time IPAs are expected to provide new ideas and perspectives in research in physics, chemistry, biology, medical science and engineering.

For Doctoral Candidates
International Program Associate

Qualifications
IPA applicants must be (or soon to be) holders of master’s degrees and be enrolled as doctoral candidates at universities that have signed (or are willing to sign) an agreement with RIKEN to participate in the Joint Graduate School Program. They should not have more than 6 years of research experience after earning their master's degree. The RIKEN researchers in charge of supervising successful applicants must also hold concurrent positions as visiting faculty members at the collaborating Japanese or overseas universities where the applicants are enrolled.

Duration
In principle, IPAs can participate in the program for a maximum of 3 years.

Support from RIKEN
A daily living allowance of 5,200 yen will be paid. Residence in RIKEN campus housing for the duration of the IPA’s stay at RIKEN is free of charge. When campus housing is unavailable, RIKEN will pay a housing allowance of up to 70,000 yen per month for off-campus housing. (The IPA must pay his or her own utility costs.) The roundtrip transportation between RIKEN and the IPA’s home country will be paid by RIKEN.

For more details please refer to the URL below or send an Email message to: ipa-info@riken.jp.

URL: http://www.riken.jp/ipa/

The Foreign Postdoctoral Researcher (FPR) program provides an opportunity for young postdoctoral researchers to contribute to RIKEN’s ongoing research projects. Successful applicants will have an opportunity to bring their creative and original ideas to fruition. The experience at RIKEN will serve as a foundation for young researchers to build a successful career in science. Successful applicants are expected to make full use of RIKEN’s research facilities and environment in applying their creative and innovative ideas to research at RIKEN.

For Postdoctoral Researchers
Foreign Postdoctoral Researcher Program

Qualifications
In principle, applicants should have no more than 5 years of post doctoral research experience.

Duration
In principle, the contract period is for a maximum of 3 years.

Remuneration
The base salary is 487,000 yen per month before taxes and the social insurance premium deduction. Commuting, housing, and relocation allowances will also be provided based on individual circumstances. An annual research budget of approximately 1 million yen is allocated to the laboratories hosting the FPRs.

Application and selection process
Applications are publicly solicited each year and reviewed by a screening committee of scientists in and outside RIKEN working in fields relevant to applications.

For more details please refer to the URL below or send an Email message to: fpr@riken.jp.

URL: http://www.riken.jp/fpr/

The Initiative Research Unit (IRU) program offers ambitious emerging young scientists a chance to fully realize their potential by granting them a high degree of independence and flexibility. The program provides funding opportunities for promising young scientists who, as unit leaders, will contribute to advancing RIKEN-designated research fields in an environment that fosters world-class researchers. IRU leaders will independently draw up and carry out detailed research proposals, making full use of the RIKEN research environment, including assistance in applying for funding, establishing collaborative relationships, and using RIKEN equipment and facilities.

For Potential Leaders in Their Fields
Initiative Research Unit Program

Qualifications
Applicants must have a doctorate in a field of natural science, an outstanding record of achievement, well-documented mentored research experience, and must be able, with the advice and support of the senior RIKEN advisors assigned to them, to design and execute an ambitious research plan to set up and manage their own laboratories.

Duration
In principle, the contract period is for a maximum of 5 years.

Remuneration
Each unit leader is awarded an annual grant of approximately 50 million yen, approximately 10 million yen being the unit leader’s salary and the remainder for laboratory personnel and research expenses. Each unit also receives seed money in the first year of up to 10 million yen to start his/her laboratory.

Evaluation
The research achievement of each IRU leader is reviewed periodically, and if the midterm evaluation is exceptionally good, the individual will be recommended, upon completion of the initial five-year term, either for a limited term PI position, or a permanent PI position, to make possible the continuation of his/her research.

For more details please refer to the URL below or send an Email message to: iru@riken.jp.

URL: http://www.riken.jp/iru/