Program Overview

As the COVID-19 response progresses, APHL recognizes the increased demand for SARS-CoV-2 sequence data both locally and nationally. To help alleviate some of the challenges public health laboratories are facing, APHL is building a pool of COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialists. These specialists will be master's and doctoral-level students and professionals who can assist laboratories on a part-time basis with SARS-CoV-2 genome assembly and uploading sequence data to public access repositories.

The primary purpose of this position will be to conduct repetitive, standardized bioinformatics tasks; they are not intended to be full-fledged bioinformaticians who can develop pipelines but time permitting can assist with other duties assigned. Understand that most of these specialists do not have a background in public health and keep the scope of their work within these routine tasks that can be well supervised. Specifically, they may be asked to:

- Process raw sequencing data to consensus genomes and review.
- Track, review and submit SARS-CoV-2 sequence data to national and international data repositories, such as GISAID and the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) GenBank.
- Perform quality analysis and review SARS-CoV-2 variants identified in the sequences.
- Follow guidance from federal partners to ensure compliance with best practices for quality analysis, documentation, annotation and variant identification.
- Infer SARS-CoV-2 phylogenetic trees and local Nextstrain builds.

APHL will Provide

Specialists will be part-time, independent contractors paid by APHL through June 30, 2021; funding permitting, there is a possibility for extension beyond that date.

- These are **remote placements** and working hours will be flexible based on the specialist's schedule. Specialists are required to adhere to reasonable deadlines set by the host laboratory and APHL and respond to some email inquiries during standard business hours.
- They are asked to specify how many hours they can commit to each week in their application, ranging from a minimum of 8 hours to maximum of 20 hours.
- Specialist will provide their own computers to conduct the work remotely.
- APHL will organize an introductory orientation on goals of program, access to protocols and connecting specialist to appropriate resources for both the specialist and assigned laboratory supervisor.

Instructions and Requirements to Host a COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist

State and local public health laboratories may apply to host one or more COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialists. There is no guarantee that an eligible laboratory will receive a specialist. Prior to application submission, please review the following program requirements and responsibilities. The host laboratory must meet the following requirements:

- Have leadership and expertise accessible either in-house or through established partnerships to supervise and train the specialist on sequence data submission workflow.
- Assign primary and secondary staff who will be accessible for answering questions, troubleshooting and reviewing work as necessary.
- Have a mechanism (e.g., cloud storage, sFTP) for sharing deidentified data with the specialist for processing.
- Have clear instructions and in-house protocols for data reporting including detailed metadata restrictions for national/international database submissions.
- Provide periodic written reports to APHL on the specialist's progress.
- Address any other internal administrative requirements for providing access to genomic data to an external consultant.
- Be an APHL member laboratory.

Host laboratory applications will be considered on a rolling basis. Genomic data specialist applications are already rolling and remember current funding is only through June 30 so get your application in soon!

If you have any questions about this program, please contact eoc@aphl.org.

APPLY TODAY!