Tenure-track Assistant Professor Position in Astrobiology

The Institute for Planetary Materials (IPM), Okayama University, Misasa, Japan, invites applications for an Assistant Professor (tenure track) position in the area of Astrobiology.

IPM is a world-class institute with the aim of advancing research and education on the origin, evolution and dynamics of the Earth and planets. As a designated Joint-Use/Research Center in Earth and planetary materials science, IPM is supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) in Japan. Joint-use and collaborative research on Earth and planetary materials is promoted by providing access to the analytical and experimental facilities, and associated expertise, for researchers and students both in Japan and worldwide. Graduate education is also offered in an international environment via an independent five-year doctoral program in Earth and planetary materials science within the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology, Okayama University.

IPM consists of three divisions, the Division for Astrobiology, the Division for Planetary System Science, and the Division for Basic Planetary Materials Science. Further information about the faculty, research and facilities of the Institute can be found at the IPM website (http://www.misasa.okayama-u.ac.jp).

Application is invited for a tenure-track assistant professor position in the Division for Astrobiology. We seek a candidate who will be able to develop a novel and independent research program in one of the research areas in astrobiology, such as analytical or experimental studies of prebiotic chemistry, mineral-water-organic interactions related to the origin of life, the search for signatures of primitive life on the early Earth or in the solar system, and also work within a collaborative environment with other staff to pursue joint researches on Earth and planetary materials.

The candidate is expected to demonstrate excellent ability and research achievement in analytical or experimental studies within the areas described above. Candidates with strong research ability in organic chemistry is especially desired. The Institute is actively promoting participation in JAXA’s sample return mission “Hayabusa 2” to the asteroid “Ryugu” and other international missions. Application from those who are motivated or active in related research areas are welcome.

1) Affiliation: Division for Astrobiology
2) Job title: Tenure-track Assistant Professor, 1 post
3) Tenure-track term: Five years
   Tenure review will be conducted six months or more before the end of the five-year tenure-track period, and a candidate receiving satisfactory evaluation will be promoted to tenured faculty member at the completion of the tenure-track period.
   Information for the criteria for tenure evaluation is attached.
4) Appointment date: As soon as possible
5) Qualifications:
   The candidates must have a doctoral degree. Ability to teach and guide research in English is required. Any nationality is welcome.
6) Teaching duties
   The successful candidate is expected to teach courses for graduate students. He/she may also
co-supervise graduate students in the five-year doctoral program in Earth and planetary materials science within the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology, Okayama University.

7) Documents required with application (the documents should be prepared in English, and will not be returned):
   - Curriculum vitae (Use the attached form 1)
   - List of publications (original article (refereed and non-refereed separately), review, book and others, indicate your own contribution for co-authored papers) and list of external funding obtained
   - Reprints (or pdf) of up to five representative publications
   - Summary of past research
   - Statement for research and teaching at IPM
   - Name and contact information for two references

8) Closing Date: Review of Applications will begin on September 9, 2019, and will continue until the position is filled.

9) For further information, please contact:
   Professor Xianyu Xue
   Chair of the Selection Committee for the Faculty in the Division for Astrobiology,
   Institute for Planetary Materials,
   Okayama University
   827 Yamada, Misasa, Tottori, 682-0193,
   Japan
   Phone: +81-858-43-1215
   E-mail: xianyu@okayama-u.ac.jp

10) Application documents should be sent by post or e-mail to:
    The Selection Committee for the Faculty in the Division for Astrobiology,
    Institute for Planetary Materials,
    Okayama University
    827 Yamada, Misasa, Tottori, 682-0193,
    Japan
    Phone: +81-858-43-1215
    E-mail: wakusei-jinji@adm.okayama-u.ac.jp

    Please indicate “Application for tenure-track assistant professor in astrobiology” in the subject title of the e-mail or on the envelop of the post.

11) Selection:
The candidates will be examined by a Selection Committee for the Faculty in the Division for Astrobiology. Those who pass the document screening will be asked for an interview (including a seminar given in English). The final candidate will be evaluated at the faculty meeting of the Institute for Planetary Materials before the final decision is made by the Okayama University President.

12) Salary:
The successful candidate will be employed under the annual salary system and the salary will be determined according to the candidate’s educational history, job history, etc. in accordance with the established guideline at Okayama University. The details are as follows (only in
*Okayama University is committed to gender equality and provides support for female faculty members. Applications from female candidates are encouraged.
Criteria of Tenure Evaluation
At the Institute for Planetary Materials (IPM), Okayama University, Misasa, Japan

The tenure evaluation is regulated as below.
In principle, it is necessary to satisfy all the requirements on research, education, and
management and social activity described below, and to have outstanding achievement on
research. Nevertheless, considerations may be given even if the criteria for some of the items
are not met, in case special achievement is recognized.

1. Research activity
It is evaluated according to published books, papers, conference presentations, joint use/joint
research activity, award and record for obtaining external funding.
* A successful candidate should have demonstrated ability to advance research in Earth and
planetary materials science and related fields as an IPM faculty member.
* A successful candidate should have published at least one refereed publication (including co-
authored papers) per year on average during the tenure-track term, and have published at
least three refereed, first-authored original publications (on research mostly performed
during the tenure-track term) by the time of the final evaluation (those already accepted, but
not in print could be included).
* A successful candidate should have given at least one presentation per year on his/her research
at academic meetings, and have been actively presenting his/her research at international
conferences during the tenure-track term.
* A successful candidate should have successfully obtained external funding (e.g., Grants-in-
Aid for Scientific Research from JSPS and MEXT, grants from private foundations, etc.) as
the principal investigator at least once, and has been applying Grants-in-Aid for Scientific
Research every year except when he/she is already receiving a grant on a continued project
during the tenure-track term.
* A successful candidate should have been actively participating in the management of joint-use
facilities and helping host joint-use/joint-research during the tenure-track term.

2. Educational activity
It is evaluated according to teaching, laboratory guidance (including lab assistance), student
supervision, and qualification as a faculty member.
* A successful candidate should have been offering course(s) for the five-year Ph.D. program,
and providing guidance on research and advice on the writing of academic publications and
dissertations to students of the affiliated department during the tenure-track term.
* A successful candidate should qualify to supervise students of the five-year Ph.D. program by
the time of the tenure evaluation.

3. Management and Social activity
It is evaluated according to the contribution to management (to the university, the graduate
school, the Institute and the affiliate department/division) and social contribution
(international contribution, open lecture, etc.)
* A successful candidate should have been contributing to the development of the Institute by
actively participating in activities of the Institute, such as management, committees,
international cooperation, public relations, outreach activities.