

## IPK scientist Samira El Hanafi awarded as “Women in Triticum Early Career Winner”

Gatersleben, 30.06.2022 This week the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative (BGRI) announced the 2022 Jeanie Borlaug Laube Women in Triticum (WIT) Early Career and Mentor awardees in honor of seven wheat scientists working to protect food security around the world. The award is named after Jeanie Borlaug Laube, daughter of Nobel Laureate Dr. Norman E. Borlaug. This year’s winners are innovative wheat researchers from China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Pakistan and Morocco, including Dr. Samira El Hanafi from IPK Leibniz Institute.

“Serving as Chair of the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative has allowed me to cultivate and encourage the next generation of wheat researchers, and nothing embodies that more than the Women in Triticum awards”, emphasised Jeanie Borlaug Laube. “These seven women are strong advocates for achieving my father’s goal of global food security.”

Dr. Samira El Hanafi focuses on the development and implementation of genome-wide predictions and association mapping for plant genetic resources, defining trait-customized core collections to maximize the diversity present within IPK genebank accessions, and researching rare alleles by applying genomic tools.

“Receiving this prestigious award and standing among the amazing women working in wheat is a great honor and it’s a recognition of the effort, commitment and culmination of many years of hard work. I’m more focused than ever and determined to keep the hard work up for meaningful impact in the future”, said Dr. Samira El Hanafi. “This award has given me a chance to challenge and prove myself that I can do things I never thought I could”, said the scientist who joined IPK in February 2022 and who is working in the research group “Quantitative Genetics”.

“We are very happy with Samira about the award and look forward to an intensive scientific collaboration during her PostDoc time at IPK Leibniz Institute. With her expertise and passion for wheat genetics, she enriches both our research group and the IPK”, said Prof. Dr. Jochen Reif, head of the department of Breeding Research at the IPK.

“Dr. Samira El Hanafi received her Ph.D. from Mohammed V University in Morocco, with research activities funded by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA). Her advisors were Wuletaw Tadesse and Souad Cherkaoui. Dr. Samira El Hanafi earned her B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in biology, management and conservation of biodiversity from Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University in Morocco.

### Press Release

#### Scientific Contact

Dr. Samira El Hanafi  
phone: +49 39482 5846  
[hanafi@ipk-gatersleben.de](mailto:hanafi@ipk-gatersleben.de)

#### Media Contact

Christian Schafmeister  
phone: +49 39482 5461  
[schafmeister@ipk-gatersleben.de](mailto:schafmeister@ipk-gatersleben.de)

“This cohort of WIT award winners is from a broad geographic range, which speaks both to the worldwide importance of wheat and the global reach of the BGRI”, said Maricelis Acevedo, director for science for the BGRI and research professor in the Department of Global Development at Cornwell University. “The threats to wheat - such as climate change, biotic stresses, and human conflict - are global and require a global response. Answering these challenges will require collaboration of a global community of scientists and the 2022 WIT awardees cohort takes their place among our previous winners.”

The WIT Early Career Award provides early career women working in wheat with the opportunity for additional training, mentorship, and leadership opportunities. The WIT Mentor Award recognizes the efforts of men and women who have played a significant role in shaping the careers of women working in wheat and demonstrated a commitment to increasing gender parity in agriculture. Since founding the WIT awards in 2010, the BGRI has recognized 66 early career award winners and 12 mentors from 27 different countries.

Recipients of the Jeanie Borlaug Laube WIT Early Career award will be supported to participate in the International Wheat Congress in 2022 in China.

Figure (for free use):

<https://ipk-cloud.ipk-gatersleben.de/s/tDY8sLNKeRNqgrB>



Samira El Hanafi joined IPK in February 2022 and has now been awarded as WIT Early Career Winner. Photo: IPK Leibniz Institute / J. Schneider

