

Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Laboratory Research Assistant
Division	Medical Sciences
Department	Paediatrics
Location	Oxford Vaccine group, Centre for Clinical Vaccinology and Tropical Medicine (CCVTM), Churchill Hospital, Oxford OX3 7LA
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £32,332 - £38,205 per annum (with a discretionary range to £41,732 per annum)
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed term for 12 months
Reporting to	Professor Sir Andrew Pollard / Dr Young Chan Kim
Vacancy reference	168701
Additional information	Funding provided by the SBRI Innovate UK and the Medical and Life Sciences Translational Fund (MLSTF), University of Oxford. <i>This role is eligible for a Skilled Worker visa</i>

Principal Investigator / supervisor	Professor Andrew Pollard / Dr Young Chan Kim
Project team	Oxford Vaccine Group
Project web site	www.ovg.ox.ac.uk and www.paediatrics.ox.ac.uk/ovg

The role

You will work on an exciting research project on viral immunology and vaccine development against alphaviruses and Chagas disease. The project is based at the Oxford Vaccine Group, and you will work under Professor Sir Andrew Pollard and Dr Young Chan Kim at the Oxford Vaccine Group.

You will work on the development of a novel vaccines against alphaviruses and Chagas disease using adenovirus vectors and mRNA, to assess it in pre-clinical models. You will be required to support the Principal Investigator and other senior researchers in the day-to-day work of this project. You will supply information to the team and project manager to support tracking progress against objectives and compiling project reports in a timely manner for efficient running of the projects. You will work closely with Dr Young Chan Kim and his team of postdoctoral scientists and research assistants and should be highly motivated, efficient, well-organised, pro-active, and able to take initiative and to work autonomously in a fast-paced, scientific environment. You will be highly organized, with proven experience in a laboratory environment.

You will have good interpersonal skills and be able to interact productively and accurately with other team members. Previous laboratory experience, good communication skills and the ability to work as part of a team are essential. The research involves humoral and cellular immunology techniques carried out with blood samples from animals including virus neutralisation assay (PRNT), ELISA and ELISPOT. Previous experience of viral neutralisation assay and pre-clinical mouse work or animal Personal Licence Training (PIL) would be an advantage.

At the end of this appointment, there may be an opportunity for the suitable post-holder to be enrolled into a funded DPhil (PhD) programme from 2024-2025 academic year. If you are interested in this position and have the skills and experience, we are looking for, please apply online. You will be required to upload a CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement should describe how you fit the criteria for the role, including your motivation and curiosity about the research project. Informal inquiries about the position can be sent to Dr Young Chan Kim (young.kim@wolfson.ox.ac.uk).

Responsibilities

- Apply expertise to conduct research according to Good Laboratory Practice and OVG quality management guidelines. Performing research work to a high standard in cell and tissue culture
- Contribute to wider project planning by liaising with OVG clinical trial team, and Project Managers with regards sample collection and maintaining study related laboratory documentation.
- Use specialist scientific equipment in a laboratory environment
- Be responsible for overseeing the daily housekeeping of the laboratory area and performing tasks including reagent preparation, stock control of laboratory consumables, collecting goods from stores and general laboratory management.

- Receipt, tracking, processing, testing and storage/archiving of clinical trial samples, and performance of immunoassays according to SOPs
- Determine the most appropriate methodologies to test hypotheses, and identify suitable alternatives if technical problems arise
- Gather, analyse, and present scientific data from a variety of sources
- Organising sample shipment within the UK and internationally for clinical trials.
- Contribute to scientific reports and journal articles and the presentation of data/papers at conferences
- Select, follow and adapt experimental protocols
- Represent the research group at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone
- Contribute to discussions and share research findings with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups
- Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time that are commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of this post including weekend work when needed.
- Flexibility in working hours, with a requirement to work later hours on weekdays or on weekends when clinical trial delivery requires this.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Hold a BSc or MSc in a biological science and have a relevant practical experience in the lab.
- A keen interest in viral pathogens and immunology of infectious diseases.
- The ability to interpret scientific data.
- Self-motivated, technically competent and capable of working independently in a laboratory.
- Keen attention to detail and able to process samples to a consistently high standard.
- Excellent organisational skills.
- Good interpersonal skills
- Good documentation and computer skills (Excel and Word).

Desirable

- Experience of pre-clinical animal work and Personal Licence Training (PIL).
- Experience of aseptic technique particularly mammalian cell culture.
- Experience of immunology assays e.g. ELISA/ELISpot.
- Experience of virological techniques and working with containment level 3 pathogens

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) we will contact the referees you have nominated. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at: <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks>

Hazard-specific / Safety-critical duties

This job includes hazards or safety-critical activities. If you are offered the post, you will be asked to complete a health questionnaire which will be assessed by our Occupational Health Service, and the offer of employment will be subject a successful outcome of this assessment.

The hazards or safety-critical duties involved are as follows:

- Working with infectious pathogens (hazard group 2/3) - Hazard Group 3 pathogens
- Working with blood, human products and human tissues
- Work with allergens, e.g. laboratory animals, pollen, dust, fish or insects etc.
- Work with any substance which has any of the following pictograms on their MSDS:



Additional security pre-employment checks

This job includes duties that will require additional security pre-employment checks:

- A satisfactory basic Disclosure and Barring Service check due to working with sensitive personal data.
- This role requires a research passport. The department will support the successful candidate in obtaining this where required and appropriate.
- A satisfactory Enhanced Level Screen (ELS) check due to laboratory access.
- University screening (e.g. identity checks)

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

Oxford Vaccine Group

The Oxford Vaccine Group (OVG) is led by Andrew J Pollard, Professor of Paediatric Infection and Immunity. Staff are based within a purpose built centre on the Churchill Hospital site and form part of the Centre for Clinical Vaccinology and Tropical Medicine (CCVTM). The aim of OVG is to co-ordinate expertise in the study of microbial diseases and the immune response to microbes, in order to facilitate research on the development and implementation of vaccines. This may include new, improved or combined vaccines for the adult and paediatric population. There is currently a large focus on delivering the COVID-19 vaccine trials.

Core group members include two Consultants in Vaccinology, a Director of Clinical Trials, a Senior Clinical Trials Manager, adult and paediatric clinical research fellows, adult and paediatric research nurses, project managers, QA manager, IT manager, and an administration team. The Infection and Immunity Laboratory includes post doctorate scientists, research assistants and DPhil students. Wider group members include professionals from a range of specialities including immunologists, microbiologists, statisticians, a community paediatrician, the local Health Protection team and a bioethicist.

Recent studies carried out by the group include:

- COVID vaccine trials (Phase 1, 2 and 3), Heterologous regimens and booster studies
- Vaccines against RSV
- Pneumococcal nasopharyngeal carriage epidemiology
- Meningococcal B vaccine development and evaluation
- Development of a typhoid challenge model

More information about OVG may be found at the website: <http://www.ovg.ox.ac.uk>

Department of Paediatrics

The Department of Paediatrics is a world leader in child health research and hosts internationally renowned research programmes in drug development, gastroenterology, haematology, HIV, immunology, neuroimaging, neuromuscular diseases and vaccinology. Our work spans from early proof-of concept fundamental science, all the way up to its application in clinical settings.

We continue to shape the landscape of medical science through positively impacting the lives of millions of children from our global research programmes, academic resources, and commitment to success. Our broad research base positions the department in a pivotal role and subsequently a world leader in child health. With research facilities in the UK and abroad, we work on a global scale, building a paediatric network in the medical science community.

In 2021, we successfully administered a grant value of £130,895,28 obtained through 168 projects. Our strong relationship with funding bodies have also been a contributor to the successes and milestones in children's health research. With strong support from the Wellcome Trust, NIH, Cancer Research UK, UKRI, MRC, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Academy of Medical Sciences and the NIHR, we have employed 360+ staff, researchers, and students. These figures continue to grow as we expand our activities to overcome the multitude of challenges within children's research health.

For more information please visit: <http://www.paediatrics.ox.ac.uk/>

The Department of Paediatrics holds a silver Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

Medical Sciences Division

We are an internationally recognized centre of excellence for biomedical and clinical research and teaching, and the largest academic division in the University of Oxford.

World-leading programmes, housed in state-of-the-art facilities, cover the full range of scientific endeavour from the molecule to the population. With our NHS partners we also foster the highest possible standards in patient care.

For more information please visit: <http://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/>

How to apply

Applications are made through our e-recruitment system and you will find all the information you need about how to apply on our Jobs website <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply>.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants)

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **midday** UK time on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing department(s).

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments).

If you need help

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at: <https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly at recruitment@paediatrics.ox.ac.uk or using the contact details in the online advertisement.

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our e-recruitment system to confirm receipt of your application. **Please check your spam/junk mail** if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy>. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy>.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82**, which with effect from 1 October 2023 will be 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>.

For **existing** employees on these grades, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>.

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at other grades have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for all University staff. The University Club offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk and <https://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/>.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service website includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/>

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependents. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities. The service offers a free telephone advice line, and the ability to book emergency back-up care for children, adult dependents and elderly relatives. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care> Childcare

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including the Oxford Research Staff Society, BME staff network, LGBT+ staff network and a disabled staff network. You can find more information at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is an organisation run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.