



**THE JENNER
INSTITUTE**
DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE VACCINES



Job title	Research Assistant
Division	Medical Sciences
Department	Nuffield Department of Medicine
Location	Jenner Institute, Old Road Campus Research Building, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7DQ
Grade and salary	Grade 6: salary in range £32,332 - £38,205 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term contract until 31 December 2024 Funding is provided by the CARB-X
Reporting to	Iason Vichos, Senior Project Manager
Vacancy reference	170522

About us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Oxford - www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation Nuffield Department of Medicine (NDM) - https://www.ndm.ox.ac.uk Unit - https://www.jenner.ac.uk/
What we offer	<p>https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excellent contributory pension scheme 38 days annual leave A comprehensive range of childcare services Family leave schemes Cycle loan scheme Discounted bus travel and Season Ticket travel loans Membership to a variety of social and sports clubs A welcoming and diverse community

Research topic	Development of a Gonococcal Outer Membrane Vesicle Vaccine from Lead Optimization to Phase 1 Clinical Trial
Principal Investigator / supervisor	Professors Adrian Hill & Calman MacLennan
Project team	Gonococcal Vaccine Group
Project web site	https://www.jenner.ac.uk/
Funding partner	The funds supporting this research project are provided by the CARB-X



**Athena
SWAN**
Silver Award



The role

We seek to appoint a highly motivated Research Assistant to join the Gonococcal Vaccine Project. You will support the ongoing programme of vaccine development, production and characterization. The primary focus will be to perform assays to produce, scale-up and control the vaccine preparations. This includes a range of techniques in microbiology and immunology, including bacterial culture, cloning, and vaccine characterisation assays. The work will support a comprehensive pre-clinical vaccine research and development package towards the full clinical development of our vaccine. The group's work on vaccine production and investigation of humoral and cellular immunity following immunisation and after natural exposure will directly inform gonococcal vaccine development. You will manage your own research and administrative activities within guidelines provided by senior colleagues, produce and maintain clear experimental plans and contribute to wider project planning. You will be a highly organised and motivated individual with relevant training and experience in either microbiology or immunology.

The Gonococcal Vaccine Project is based at the Jenner Institute, University of Oxford, and utilizes a novel outer membrane vesicle (OMV) technology to develop a vaccine against gonorrhoea. Similar technological approaches have been applied to the development of licensed vaccines against *Neisseria meningitidis* and OMV vaccines are in development against other Gram-negative bacteria. Our vaccine has successfully passed the lead optimisation stage and the project has been awarded substantive funding from CARB-X ('Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria') to move into the 'IND-enabling' stage. The project will develop an OMV-based vaccine through to GMP production and Phase 1 trial and stage gates have been set within the CARB-X grant to access subsequent funding for transition into the Phase 1 clinical trial. Gonorrhoea is a major cause of sexual and reproductive disease globally and a major driver of antimicrobial resistance worldwide. It disproportionately affects low- and middle-income countries. There is a pressing unmet need for a vaccine against gonorrhoea. With increasing levels of anti-microbial resistance, the emergence of untreatable gonorrhoea is a real threat. The project could lead to significant impact in this important area of global health.

Responsibilities

You will:

- Design, optimize and perform ELISAs, ELISpot, and other humoral and cell-based assays to characterise immune responses to gonococcal OMV in a systematic and consistent manner.
- Perform bacterial culture, OMV purification and characterisation at laboratory scale.
- Follow and adapt experimental protocols and provide input for laboratory SOPs.
- Participate in research programmes of preclinical and vaccine development.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues in the group and externally when required.
- Gather, analyse, and present scientific data from the work undertaken.
- Perform any other comparable duties as may be required to ensure the efficient running of the project and the laboratory.
- Be responsible for personal biological safety within the laboratory.

Communication

- Participate in, and contribute directly to, scientific discussions with other members of the research group and collaborators on the project.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding research data when interacting with non-collaborating researchers.

- Communicate results to your supervisors, and other members of the Gonococcal Vaccine Project, including at lab meetings.

Education and Training

- Attend appropriate scientific seminars, training opportunities and meetings in the Institute and University.
- Participate in the education and training of other staff as necessary and appropriate.
- Once trained, your performance will continue to be monitored to ensure that the required standard of accuracy and efficiency is maintained.

Further Responsibilities

- Act at all times in the interests of the Institute to ensure good laboratory practice.
- Be accountable for personal professional conduct within the project.
- Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time that are commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of this post.
- Ensure that work in the laboratory is conducted safely and, in particular, that work is undertaken using appropriate safety procedures and in the dedicated areas.
- Accord due regard to the University Equal Opportunities and Data Protection policies.
- Participate in and support the public engagement and widening access activities of the Department and the University. This is anticipated to be not more than 2 days per year.
- Undertake mandatory training as required by the University, Division and Department. The specific list of training courses may change from time-to-time, in response to both legal and internal University requirements.

Selection criteria

Essential

- A BSc in a relevant biological sciences subject.
- A keen interest in immunology of infectious diseases.
- Practical experience of following SOPs and running assays in a laboratory environment.
- Self-motivated, technically competent and capable of working independently in a laboratory.
- Ability to interpret scientific data, analyse data and write factual reports.
- A responsible nature with a methodical and careful approach to working in the laboratory.
- Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills including the ability to work closely with others as part of a team, while taking personal responsibility for assigned tasks.
- Good communication skills, including the ability to present data at meetings.

Desirable

- Experience in human immunology/vaccine development.
- An advanced degree in a relevant subject (i.e. MSc).
- Experience of ELISA assays and standardisation of assays.
- Possession of a PIL licence and experience with mouse experiments.



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:

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



- Travel outside of Europe or North America on University Business

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
- University security screening (eg identity checks)

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>.

If you would like to apply, **click on the Apply Now button** on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously.

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

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename. Please note using a long file name may prevent you from uploading your documents.

- http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/research/

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 recruitment@ndm.ox.ac.uk

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 online recruitment portal 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.