NDORMS
NUFFIELD DEPARTMENT OF ORTHOPAEDICS, RHEUMATOLOGY AND MUSCULOSKELETAL SCIENCES

Job Description

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Summary

Job title	Research Assistant
Division	Medical Sciences Division
Department	Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences
Location	Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology, Roosevelt Drive, Headington, Oxford OX3 7FY
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £34,982 - £40,855 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term (3 years)
Reporting to	Professor Tal Arnon
Vacancy reference	178431

Research topic	Spatiotemporal regulation of adaptive immunity during homeostasis and in response to infectious diseases
Principal Investigator / supervisor	Professor Tal Arnon
Project team	
Project web site	https://www.kennedy.ox.ac.uk/team/tal-arnon
Funding partner	The funds supporting this research project are provided by the WT
Recent publications	Maclean AJ, Bonifacio Lopes JPP, Oram SL, Mohsen MO, Bachmann MF And **Arnon TI**. Regulation of pulmonary plasma cell responses during secondary infection with influenza. (2023) *Journal of Experimental Medicine* Jul 1;221(7):e20232014. PMID: 38661717 Thornton EE and **Arnon TI.** It takes a village to skew a lymph node (2022) *Immunity* Oct 11;55(10):1751-1753. doi: 10.1016/j.immuni.2022.09.008.PMID: 36223721(Preview).

Athena SWAN Silver Award
ECU GENDER CHARTER
Race Equality Charter Bronze Award
ECU RACE CHARTER
Stonewall SILVER EMPLOYER 2022
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	MacLean AJ, Richmond N, Koneva L, Attar M, Medina CAP, Thornton E, Cruz-Gomes A, El-Turabi A, Bachmann MF, Rijal P, Tan TK, Townsend A, Sansom SN, Bannard O, and **Arnon TI**. Secondary influenza challenge triggers resident memory B cell migration and rapid relocation to boost antibody secretion at infected sites (2022) *Immunity* Apr 12;55(4):718-733.e8. doi: 10.1016/j.immuni.2022.03.003. Xie B, Khoyratty TE, Abu-Shah E, Cespedes P, MacLean AJ, Pirgova G, Zhiyuan Hu, Ahmed AA, Dustin ML, Udalova IA and **Arnon TI**. The zinc finger protein Zbtb18 inhibits differentiation of plasma cells by transcriptionally repressing class I PI3K subunits *Journal of Immunology* 2021 Apr 1;206(7):1515-1527. doi: 10.4049/jimmunol.2000367. Chauveau A, Pirgova G, Cheng HW, De Martin A, Zhou FY, Wideman S, Rittscher J, Ludewig B, and **Arnon TI**. Visualisation of T cell migration in the spleen reveals a network of perivascular pathways that guide entry into T zones. (2020) *Immunity* 19;52(5):794-807. PMCID: 32298648 Pirgova G, Chauveau A, MacLean AJ, Cyster JG and **Arnon TI**. Marginal zone SIGN-R1+ macrophages are essential for the maturation of germinal centre B cells in the spleen. (2020) *PNAS* 18:201921673. PMCID: 32424104

The role

We are looking for an energetic and experienced full-time Research Assistant (RA) to join the research group of Professor Tal Arnon at the Kennedy Institute in Oxford. The laboratory focuses on the cellular and molecular mechanisms regulating lymphocyte activation and differentiation *in vivo*. These studies aim to advance our basic understanding of humoral immunity and may have important implications for the development of novel vaccines and therapeutic agents designed to treat a variety of immunological disorders (e.g., allergy, asthma, cancer).

The position is suited for an experienced individual that enjoys working in an academic environment and who is keen to support competitive research. For a suitable candidate, who already has a strong scientific background, and who wishes to continue to develop these skills, there will also be an opportunity for academic training, including helping to develop projects addressing novel scientific questions, learning cutting-edge techniques, contributing to publications and enhancing academic skills.

Candidates are encouraged to carefully read and highlight their suitability to as many selection criteria as possible in their personal statement, ideally in a point-by-point format. Candidates are encouraged to contact Professor Tal Arnon directly at if needed (tal.arnon@kennedy.ox.ac.uk).

Responsibilities

- To help maintaining a mouse colony and to support a range of experiments using mouse models, whilst tightly adhering to home office regulations. This includes setting up breeders, managing cages, keeping accurate and organized records of genotyping and breeding as well as assessment of mice health etc.
- To support the research team in a wide variety of molecular and cellular approaches such as flow cytometry analysis, sorting, construct generations, histological analysis, tissue collection, in vivo work etc.
- To routinely liaise with direct supervisor, and other members of group, regarding experiments and general laboratory procedures

- To attend lab meetings, departmental journal clubs and seminars
- To maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all findings, and to make these available to other members of the team and the funders on a regular basis
- To contribute to general laboratory maintenance, general laboratory management and administration
- To comply with local, departmental and university-wide safety regulations
- To undertake other duties as may be required from time to time that are commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post
- A candidate with a strong academic background will also contribute to developing new projects, to publications and to similar academic activities

The job description is not intended to be rigid or inflexible and may include other duties and responsibilities as may be determined. The post-holder is expected to work flexibly and respond positively to changing needs.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Holds or is close to graduating with a BSc (First class or Upper second class, 2.1) or higher degree in Biological Sciences, Immunology or a related subject (not including pharmacology)
- Home Office personal licence
- Extensive experience in handling mice and working with complex mouse models
- Previous experience in basic research, preferentially in the field of adaptive immunity, including experience in troubleshooting, adapting protocols and recording results in a clear, timely and organised fashion
- Excellent interpersonal skills and professional positive attitude to solving problems
- Committed and flexible approach to work towards the priorities of the team's research goals
- Attention to details and excellent organisational skills
- Good oral and written communication skills, with the ability to address key points, conceptualize ideas and provide a clear and concise answer
- Demonstrate an ability to follow departmental guidance in handling sensitive and personal information, including complying with current data protection legislation

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience with freezing and sectioning tissue samples, ideally using Cryostat
- Experience using confocal microscopy
- Previous contribution to managing a project licence and other forms of communications with the home office regarding in vivo work
- Previous contribution to scientific work that has or is likely to contribute to peer-reviewed publications in immunology focused journals

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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. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit

where you worked. 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 Ionising Radiation
- 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:

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 the nature of the work at the Kennedy Institute
- University security screening (eg 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.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences

The Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences (NDORMS) is part of the Medical Sciences Division and is the largest European academic department in its field, running a globally competitive programme of research and teaching.

Our mission is to discover the causes of musculoskeletal and inflammatory conditions to deliver excellent and innovative care that improves people's quality of life. Our highly skilled teams have expertise in a broad range of areas, including orthopaedic surgery, inflammation, immunology, rheumatology, medical statistics, epidemiology, and clinical trials.

We currently have 480 staff, approximately 120 post-graduate students and have a grant portfolio worth over £180 million.

The Kennedy Institute is a biomedical research centre uniquely bringing together discovery science and early-stage clinical research, to develop transformative new therapies for chronic inflammatory and musculoskeletal conditions.

Broadly focused on the thematic areas of immunity and microbiome, inflammation biology and tissue remodelling and repair, the Institute's research is relevant for a range of common diseases such as arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, fibrosis and cancer.

The Institute has capacity for up to 260 staff and students who work collaboratively across 25 research groups. This enables a multidisciplinary approach of molecular and cellular biology, combined with analysis of disease models, patient tissue samples and longitudinal clinical data. Collectively, these studies seek to uncover the biological processes that maintain tissue health and how these pathways break down in disease.

Research at the Institute is supported by a suite of core technology platforms, as well as through strategic partnerships with other basic and clinical research centres in Oxford, across the UK and internationally. These state-of-the-art technologies include the Oxford-Zeiss Centre for Excellence and other advanced microscopy and imaging facilities, mass and flow cytometry, as well as capabilities for microbial genomics and functional microbiome studies made available through the Oxford Centre for Microbiome Studies.

Complementing a strong programme of lab-based research, the Institute has established a core of expertise and technologies in data science including single cell genomics, statistical genetics, computational biology, and research informatics. A recent extension to the Institute building with a new third floor creates additional space purposely designed for computationally intensive research.

A true trendsetter in innovative and transformational research, the Kennedy also boasts a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, revolving around its bright and airy atrium that provides a space for colleagues to meet over coffee and tea to talk about their research and beyond throughout the day.

For more information please visit: http://www.kennedy.ox.ac.uk

The **Botnar Research Centre** enables and encourages research and education into the causes of musculoskeletal disease and their treatment.

The Centre provides world-class facilities for scientists in the field of musculoskeletal research. It takes a multidisciplinary approach, encompassing orthopaedic, rehabilitation and rheumatology clinical scientists, bone oncologists, laboratory scientists, epidemiologists, engineers and statisticians. The Botnar also hosts the Oxford Clinical Trials Research Unit (OCTRU) and the Centre of Statistics in Medicine (CSM), providing excellent statistical support to all aspects of clinical research.

The Botnar opened in 2002, with a large annex completed in 2013. The Botnar is now home to around 300 staff and postgraduate students enjoying the international and friendly atmosphere of this workplace and benefits from the vast knowledge of leading experts in the field of musculoskeletal research.

To accommodate its rapid growth, the Centre has opened another wing in early 2022. The new space provides additional 1000m^2 of office and 1000m^2 of laboratory space. The laboratory space includes a GMP clean room facility suitable for the manufacturing of biomaterials for human implantation.

Sharing the site of the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, the largest specialist academic musculoskeletal hospital in the UK, puts the Botnar in a unique position to foster the collaboration between basic scientists and clinicians, which is essential to success in medical research.

Athena Swan

The Athena SWAN Awards specifically recognise success in developing employment practices to further and support the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) departments in academia. In May 2015 the charter was expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL), and in professional and support roles.

Within NDORMS, we feel that we have an established culture of equality but are using the process to spur on-going improvement that benefits everyone involved in the Department. Our on-going progress was rewarded in May 2014 with an Athena Swan Bronze Award and in October 2015 with a Silver Award.

Our development in this area has resulted in a number of commitments to our staff, central to which are:

- establishing an open, supportive and family-friendly research environment
- supporting career progression through teaching programmes, personal development reviews and mentoring
- proactive communication of support policies such as flexible working, provision of leave, promotion and career support schemes

NDORMS aims to actively promote the implementation of the University's family-friendly policies to help foster a family friendly working environment, including provision of family leave (such as policies for maternity, paternity, parental, carers and adoption leave), flexible/part-time working and scheduling inclusive meetings.

The University's childcare services support staff with a Childcare Voucher Scheme to help staff save tax and national insurance on childcare costs, offer information on nursery providers and a nursery fee Salary Sacrifice Scheme, work in partnership with playscheme providers to help support families during school holidays and signpost staff to parenting, local authority and other organisations that help support families and parents.

The Department is also committed to ensuring that staff undertaking part-time or flexible working receive the same access to benefits and entitlements as full-time staff, including the same opportunities for training and promotion, a pro-rata entitlement to leave including bank holidays and careful consideration of requests to work part-time (particularly for those by staff returning from maternity leave).

For more information please visit: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/family/ and http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/flexible/

We are also actively working to uphold the University's aim of providing an inclusive environment and equal career opportunities by promoting equality, valuing diversity and maintaining a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all staff are respected. Separate University policies are also in place to ensure race, disability and gender equality.

For more information, please visit: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/

Medical Sciences Division

The Medical Sciences Division is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for biomedical and clinical research and teaching. We are 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: www.medsci.ox.ac.uk

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available 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.

If you currently work for the University please note that:

- as part of the referencing process, we will contact your current department to confirm basic employment details including reason for leaving
- although employees may hold multiple part-time posts, they may not hold more than the equivalent of a full time post. If you are offered this post, and accepting it would take you over the equivalent of full-time hours, you will be expected to resign from, or reduce hours in, your other posts(s) before starting work in the new post.

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@ndorms.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** of 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, flexible working options, travel discounts including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It 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 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 dependants. See https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme

Family-friendly benefits

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector (see https://hr.web.ox.ac.uk/family-leave). Our Childcare Services team provides guidance and support on childcare provision, and offers a range of high-quality childcare options at affordable prices for staff. In addition to 5 University nurseries, we partner with a number of local providers to offer in excess of 450 full time nursery places to our staff. Eligible parents are able to pay for childcare through salary sacrifice, further reducing costs. See https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/.

Supporting disability and health-related issues (inc menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support. For information about how we support those going through menopause see https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBT+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is 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.

Research staff

The Researcher Hub supports all researchers on fixed-term contracts. They aim to help you settle in comfortably, make connections, grow as a person, extend your research expertise and approach your next career step with confidence. Find out more https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researcher-hub

Oxford's Research Staff Society is a collective voice for our researchers. They also organise social and professional networking activities for researchers. Find out more https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society