

Job Description

Summary	
Job title	Research Assistant / Sample Biobanker in Blood Cancer Research (2 posts)
Division	Medical Sciences
Department	Radcliffe Department of Medicine
Location	MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, MRC Molecular Haematology Unit, John Radcliffe Hospital, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9DS.
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £34,982 - £40,855 per annum
Hours	Full time (37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed-term until 31 December 2027, supported by funding from Ludwig Cancer Research (post 1), Cancer Research UK, National Institute of Health Research (BRC Oxford) and Incyte Corporation (post 2)
Reporting to	Cristina Tormo Garcia, Laboratory and Clinical Studies Manager
Vacancy reference	178808

The role

The <u>Haematopoietic Stem Cell Biology Group</u> in the MRC Molecular Haematology Unit, MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, comprises two labs run by <u>Professors Adam Mead</u> and <u>Beth Psaila</u>, whose overarching ambitions are to understand why blood cancers develop and to identify new treatments that improve outcomes for patients.

You will be responsible for supporting research within the Group, and your time will be roughly equally divided between a specific role in the biobanking of human peripheral blood and bone marrow samples from patients, and assisting with researchers' experiments and general lab maintenance, which may include cell culture, ELISA assays, flow cytometry, RNA and DNA extraction, digital droplet PCR and next generation sequencing library preparation depending on your laboratory skills and interest.

Banking of patient samples is the cornerstone of much of the research done in the group, and the postholder will therefore play a critical role that underpins the work of all members of the team. Research involving human samples is governed by a number of regulations, therefore we are looking for an individual who wants to contribute meaningfully to scientific research and also works with a high degree of precision and attention to detail

The postholder will also interact with clinical teams in the John Radcliffe and Churchill Hospitals, and with laboratory staff in the <u>MRC Molecular Haematology Unit</u> and more broadly with other laboratories in Oxford undertaking haematology and cancer research.



Responsibilities

The postholder will be expected to carry out the following duties according to the appropriate Standard Operating Procedures and ensuring Health and Safety guidance is followed:

Sample handling /Laboratory research assistance

- Check and record the identity and quality of tissue samples from receipting samples to long term storage.
- Enter sample identification and clinical details onto the tissue bank database, completing and maintaining records (electronic and printed) according to agreed protocols.
- Process and store viable fresh human bone marrow and blood samples by cryo-preservation: this will include mononuclear cell preparations, cell enrichment (e.g. using antibody microbeads) and preparing cells for long term storage.
- Introduce and evaluate new tissue banking techniques as appropriate, maintaining comprehensive records.
- Genotype samples using digital droplet PCR and next generation sequencing panels.
- Participate in research techniques as required, such as phenotypic, molecular and functional analysis of the samples including flow cytometry and ELISA assays. The postholder may be involved in data interpretation and optimisation of protocols.
- Maintain adequate stock levels, storage and recording protocols.
- Prepare reagents required for sample preparation.
- Ensure efficient use and maintenance of resources.
- There will be the opportunity to test and optimise new laboratory procedures for sample processing, with the opportunity to be involved in drafting new standard operating procedures.

Administrative

- Record samples in lab databases as well as online clinical platforms like SiteLine and CPMS.
- Participate in and contribute to monthly biobanking working group meetings with other laboratory members, by presenting recorded data on number or samples processed and feeding back on current protocols and workload.
- Ensure the tissue bank is fit for inspection and licence by the Human Tissue Authority, and in compliance with the Human Tissue Act 2004. This will include adhering to codes of practice for: consent; tissue identification and traceability; and ethical aspects of the tissue use.
- Keep up to date with emerging legislation and practice to ensure regulatory compliance and quality of management and tissue viability.
- Communicate with healthcare professionals from other external organisations to facilitate shipment of samples as well as collection of clinical data, which will be entered into the tissue bank database.
- Participate in routine information gathering such as audits (internal and external) in accordance with policy and procedure.
- Demonstrate an awareness of and compliance with health and safety regulations, the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, and Standard Operating Procedures, which incorporate local quality improvements.

Others duties

- Assist the Laboratory and Clinical Studies Manager with ordering duties.
- Assist the Laboratory and Clinical Studies Manager with daily deliveries and restocking of common lab consumables.
- Assist Clinical Research Fellows working on projects relating to genotyping patient samples as well as functional analysis of samples.

This job description is by no means limiting and the postholder may be required to carry out other duties commensurate with their position.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a degree in a relevant biomedical or scientific discipline, with a demonstrable understanding of cell biology.
- Experience of or clear aptitude for blood/bone marrow and or other tissue banking and the use of SOPs within a laboratory.
- Previous experience of working in a laboratory environment and as part of a team.
- Ability to problem-solve, plan and manage work schedules to deliver agreed targets.
- Excellent communication and team working skills
- Good IT skills and attention to detail to accurately maintain and interrogate electronic databases and spreadsheets.
- Understanding of research ethics including the requirement to protect identity of the participants and the responsibilities of custodianship of donated samples.
- Willingness to learn with a flexible approach to adapt to changing requirements.

Desirable selection criteria

- Knowledge of Health and Safety procedures, legislation, and compliance issues, particularly the Human Tissue Act 2004 and the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Basic understanding of ultra-low temperature storage facilities.
- Previous experience with LIMS systems.
- Experience of performing molecular biology techniques.

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: <u>https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks</u>

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 blood, human products and human tissues
- 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 check

• A satisfactory basic Disclosure and Barring Service check due to working in a research environment where the postholder may have knowledge or information concerning animal research and/or other knowledge of pathogens and toxins; participation in handling patient samples and data in accordance with the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

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 <u>www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation</u>.

Radcliffe Department of Medicine (RDM)

The Radcliffe Department of Medicine (RDM) within the Medical Sciences Division is one of the largest departments in the University of Oxford. Headed by Professor Keith Channon, RDM is a multi-disciplinary department which aims to tackle some of the world's biggest health challenges by integrating innovative basic biology with cutting edge clinical research. The Department was formed in 2012 and comprises:

- The Division of Cardiovascular Medicine (CVM)
- The Investigative Medicine Division (IMD)
- The Nuffield Division of Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NDCLS)
- The Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism (OCDEM)
- The majority of research groups from the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine (WIMM)

The Department has internationally renowned programmes in a range of areas, including cardiovascular sciences, diabetes and endocrinology, immunology, haematology and pathology. Our work is underpinned by excellence in molecular medicine, stem cell biology, genomics and clinical laboratory science.

The Department employs in the region of 535 staff, has around 140 postgraduate research students and has an annual turnover of around £63m of which £42m is externally funded grants and contracts.

RDM supports a culture that is inclusive and supportive of all members, including those with caring responsibilities and those who work flexibly for other reasons. We are proud to be a family friendly department, and are committed to creating a working environment that offers opportunities for working parents/carers to achieve their professional goals and develop their careers without having a detrimental effect on family life. To support this, we have a range of family friendly policies and practices including maternity, paternity and adoption leave, shared parental leave and unpaid parental leave, flexible/part-time working and scheduling meetings within core hours (9.30am - 2.30pm). Many of our staff work flexibly, with arrangements managed informally or formally.

The University of Oxford is a member of the Athena Swan Charter and holds an institutional Silver Athena Swan award. The Department of RDM holds a silver Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

For more information on the Department please visit: <u>www.rdm.ox.ac.uk</u>

Nuffield Division of Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NDCLS)

Led by Professor Deborah Gill, the Nuffield Division of Clinical Laboratory Sciences brings together all of the clinical laboratory-based disciplines within the Oxford Medical School (Microbiology, Genetics, Cellular Pathology, Haematology and Clinical Biochemistry). The original Nuffield Departments date from Lord Nuffield's original benefaction to the Oxford Medical School in 1938.

As well as the teaching of Undergraduate and Clinical Medical Student courses, NDCLS has an active research programme, holding more than £5.3m per annum (£25m in total) of research grants from Research Councils and charities.

For more information please visit <u>www.ndcls.ox.ac.uk</u>

MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine

The MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine (MRC WIMM) at the University of Oxford was founded in 1989 by Sir David Weatherall to foster research in molecular and cell biology, with the aim of improving human health. Through our excellent basic and applied research, we have become leaders in translational medicine. Our research has resulted in improved understanding, diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of human diseases.

The Institute hosts staff and students from seven different departments within the Medical Sciences Division. We bring together over 500 researchers, staff and students with a passion for translational science and who share an interest in our five core research areas: rare diseases, haematology, immunology and infection, stem cells and developmental biology and cancer biology.

Our interaction with clinical departments at the Oxford University Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust, is a vital aspect of our work. A third of our faculty are clinically qualified and many are practicing clinicians. Half our groups have productive collaborations with biotech and pharma and we collaborate extensively with researchers and clinicians across the UK and further afield. Our international collaborations in the US, China, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka, East and West Africa form a major aspect of our clinical programmes directed towards progress in global health.

We also centrally provide excellent, state-of-the-art core Facilities to support our researchers and work with them to develop and apply new technologies to current scientific and clinical problems.

MRC Molecular Haematology Unit

At the MRC MHU we aim to understand how stem cells produce mature blood cells in a healthy context, and how this process is perturbed in common blood disorders. Our ultimate goal is to improve the prognosis of patients with inherited and acquired blood diseases.

The MRC Molecular Haematology Unit (MRC MHU) was founded in 1980 and is located in the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, University of Oxford, at the John Radcliffe Hospital. The Unit includes 14 research teams with over 100 scientists who share a common interest in understanding the process by which multipotential haemopoietic stem cells become committed and differentiate into the highly specialised cells found in the peripheral blood (red cells, granulocytes, lymphocytes and platelets). We also study how these processes are perturbed in acquired and inherited blood diseases such as thalassaemia, myelodysplasia and leukaemia.

Our work is closely integrated with the provision of NHS service to patients with blood diseases via the clinical Department of Haematology. Several permanent members of the MRC MHU are practicing clinicians working in the University's Department of Haematology and Paediatrics, providing the Unit with access to clinical material and ensuring that our scientific developments are rapidly translated into improved clinical care.

For more information please visit: <u>http://www.imm.ox.ac.uk/mrc-molecular-haematology-unit</u>

Medical Sciences Division

The Medical Sciences Division is an internationally recognized 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: <u>http://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk</u>

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available on our Jobs website <u>https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply</u>.

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 three 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 – please email <u>recruitment@imm.ox.ac.uk</u>

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

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: <u>https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy</u>. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: <u>https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy</u>.

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: <u>https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra.</u>

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

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 <u>https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap</u>

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 <u>https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/</u>

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 <a href="https://https/https/https:/https://https://https://https://https://https://https://https:/

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 <u>https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks</u>

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 <u>https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researcher-hub</u>

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 <u>https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-</u>researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society