Candidate Information

Position:	Research Fellow (Bacterial Evolution)
School/Department:	School of Biological Sciences
Reference:	25/113043
Closing Date:	Monday 26 January 2026
Salary:	£41,519 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Wednesday 25 February 2026
Duration:	36 months

JOB PURPOSE:

We are seeking to appoint a Research Fellow in Bacterial Evolution to join the UKRI FLF-funded research group of Dr Rachel Wheatley, based in the School of Biological Sciences at Queen's University Belfast.

Species interactions are a fundamental component of bacterial infections. Yet, when, and how these interactions impact the response of a bacterial pathogen to antibiotics is currently not clear. The appointee for this position will study the ecological and evolutionary processes that drive the rise and fall of antibiotic resistance in bacterial communities. The appointee will be conducting experiments to investigate bacterial pathogen invasion and evolution within the upper respiratory tract microbiome, and the selection pressures on antibiotic resistance in this environment.

We are seeking a candidate with a strong background in experimental microbiology, where experience in conducting high-throughput experiments and/or working with multi-species communities would be beneficial. This position provides an excellent opportunity for ambitious researchers with interests across evolutionary biology and microbial ecology, and the postholder will be embedded within an exciting and interdisciplinary network of AMR researchers at Queen's.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. To lead research under supervision of the principal investigator.
2. Design experiments in line with the hypotheses asked and ensure timely delivery of data and publications.
3. Present data in lab meetings to members of the research group or to external audiences to disseminate and publicise research findings.
4. Prepare, often in consultation with supervisor, material for publication in national and international journals and presentations at international conferences.
5. Communicate effectively and professionally, both orally and through e-mail, to the principal investigator and other members of the research group.
6. Carry out routine administrative tasks associated with the research project. These might include organisation of project meetings and documentation, ordering for the lab, and health and safety assessment of research activities.
7. Carry out occasional undergraduate supervision, demonstrating or lecturing duties within the post holder's area of expertise and under the direct guidance of a member of academic staff.
8. Read academic papers, journals and textbooks to keep abreast of developments in own specialism and related disciplines.
9. Provide guidance as required to support staff and any students who may be assisting with research and assist with training and mentorship of early career group members.
10. Liaise on a regular basis with colleagues and students.
11. Maintain high standards of record keeping (through lab notebooks and addition/organisation of project samples in lab databases).
12. Any other reasonable duties which fall within the general ambit of the post.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Hold or be about to obtain* a PhD in a relevant area (e.g. microbiology, evolutionary biology, microbial ecology). * Must be obtained within 3 months of closing date of post.
2. Significant, relevant research experience in experimental microbiology.
3. Experience of presenting to the scientific community i.e. conference posters or talks.
4. Sufficient breadth and depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within the established research programme.
5. Ability to analyse data and conduct statistical tests using appropriate software (e.g. R).
6. Methodical approach to project management and meticulous with regard to experimental procedures and record keeping.
7. Ability to communicate complex information clearly.
8. Demonstrable intellectual ability.
9. Ability to work well within a team.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Experience of high-throughput experiments, experience of working with multi-species communities, experience working with bacterial pathogen and/or clinical samples.
2. Peer reviewed publications or pre-prints within a relevant field.
3. Experience of training and/or supporting more junior scientists.