Candidate Information

Position: Research Assistant (Bacterial Evolution)
School/Department: School of Biological Sciences
Reference: 26/113239
Closing Date: Monday 20 April 2026
Salary: £35,136 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date: Friday 8 May 2026
Duration: 30 months

JOB PURPOSE:

We are seeking to appoint a Research Assistant 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: (1) conduct research into how microbial interactions impact antibiotic resistance in bacterial pathogens, and (2) assist in the general running of the research laboratory, with tasks such as lab ordering, autoclaving, and supporting team members with experiments.

The successful candidate will be involved in conducting experiments to investigate how antibiotic resistance mutations impact bacterial virulence in a Galleria mellonella model, and experiments to investigate how antibiotic resistance evolves in microbial communities. They will support running of the research laboratory via tasks such as consumable ordering, lab meeting schedules, and supporting team members with experiments.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Undertake basic research activities that may include laboratory experiments, critical evaluation and interpretation, computer-based data analysis and evaluation or library research in consultation with the research grant holder or supervisor.
2. Plan, execute and report on microbiology experiments related to project aims with principal investigator.
3. Carry out routine lab administrative tasks as required. These might include: arranging group meetings, ordering consumables for the lab, autoclaving, and organisation of project meetings and documentation.
4. Support team members with experiments.
5. Maintain high standards of record keeping (through lab notebooks and addition/organisation of project samples in lab databases).
6. Present regular progress reports on research to members of the research group or to external audiences to disseminate and publicise research findings.
7. Write up results of own work and contribute to the production of research reports, publications and proposals.
8. Support principal investigator with occasional lab inductions for research project students.
9. Carry out any other duties designated by a line manager and which fall within the general ambit of the post.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Hold a Degree in a relevant area (e.g. biological sciences, microbiology, molecular biology, biochemistry).
2. Specific, relevant and demonstratable research experience in experimental lab work.
3. Experience in working with microorganisms.
4. Experience of working in a team.
5. Experience of statistical analyses and appropriate software e.g. R and R Studio.
6. Ability to contribute to laboratory administrative processes.
7. Ability to assess and organise resources.
8. Methodical approach to project management and meticulousness in regard to analytical procedures and record keeping.

9. Sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within established research programmes.
10. Ability to communicate complex information clearly.
11. Demonstrable intellectual ability.
12. Irregular hours including evening, weekend and other out-of-hours work may be an occasional component of the research at times.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Experience in working with bacterial pathogens, antibiotic resistance, and/or virulence models (e.g. Galleria).
2. Experience of supporting team members with experiments and/or lab training.
3. Experience of presenting to the scientific community i.e., conference posters or talks
4. Experience of laboratory administrative processes, such as media prep, consumable ordering, autoclaving, etc.
5. Knowledge of the challenges and approaches in antibiotic resistance research.