



About us

Our mission
is to make the
discoveries that
defeat cancer.

Executive Assistant Candidate Information

March 2025

The Institute of Cancer Research

About our organisation

We are one of the world's most influential cancer research institutes with an outstanding record of achievement dating back more than 100 years. We are world leaders in identifying cancer genes, discovering cancer drugs and developing precision radiotherapy. Together with our hospital partner The Royal Marsden, we are rated in the top four centres for cancer research and treatment worldwide. As well as being a world-class institute, we are a college of the University of London.

We came second in the league table of university research quality compiled from the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021). We have charitable status and rely on support from partner organisations, charities, donors and the general public. We have more than 1000 staff and postgraduate students across three sites – in Chelsea and Sutton.

Division of Cancer Therapeutics

The Division of Cancer Therapeutics (DCT) is based in state-of-the-art laboratories in the new £75m Centre for Cancer Drug Discovery building, opened in 2020 on the ICR Sutton campus. Laboratory and office spaces in the CCDD are exceptionally high quality, and the CCDD is home to a concentration of researchers with biology, chemistry and computational expertise.

In the DCT, we rapidly develop innovative drug discovery technologies and novel mechanism-based drugs from the lab to early clinical trials. We publish extensively and collaborate widely with academia, biotech, and the pharmaceutical industry.

The DCT is supported by a skilled and experienced administrative team that handles scheduling, correspondence, office management, and event coordination, ensuring smooth daily operations. Additionally, a newly established scientific project management team oversees research projects, managing timelines, resources, and communication to drive our initiatives forward and achieve project objectives. The EA to the Head of Chemistry will work closely with the administrative team and collaborate with the scientific project management team.

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Our values

The ICR has a highly skilled and committed workforce, with a wide variety of roles, each requiring different skills. But whether you work as a researcher, or work as part of our corporate team, your work and behaviour is underpinned by these six values. They are what bring us together as one team - as 'One ICR'.



Pursuing excellence

We aspire to excellence in everything we do, and aim to be leaders in our field.



Acting with Integrity

We promote an open and honest environment that gives credit and acknowledges mistakes, so that our actions stand up to scrutiny.



Valuing all our people

We value the contribution of all our people, help them reach their full potential, and treat everyone with kindness and respect.



Working together

We collaborate with colleagues and partners to bring together different skills, resources and perspectives.



Leading innovation

We do things differently in ways that no one else has done before, and share the expertise and learning we gain.



Making a difference

We all play our part, doing a little bit more, a little bit better, to help improve the lives of people with cancer.



Our values set out how each of us at the ICR, works together to meet our mission – to make the discoveries that defeat cancer. They summarise our desired behaviours, attitudes and culture – how we value one another and how we take pride in the work we do, to deliver impact for people with cancer and their loved ones.”

Professor Kristian Helin
Chief Executive

Executive Assistant

Candidate Information

Job description

Department / division:	Division of Cancer Therapeutics, The Institute of Cancer Research, Sutton
Pay grade / staff group:	Professional Services Level 4
Hours / duration:	Position Type: Full-time (35 hours per week) Monday to Friday. Work Arrangement: Hybrid (mix of remote and onsite) Location: ICR Sutton (Parking & shuttle services available on-site) Contract: Fixed-term (2 years)
Reports to:	Prof. Swen Hoelder, Head of Chemsitry

Main purpose of the job

This role offers a unique opportunity to deliver high-level, proactive, and results-driven executive support to the Head of Chemistry (HoC) and, once appointed, the Head of Biology (HoB), enabling them to achieve their strategic and operational goals. The Executive Assistant will expertly manage competing priorities, ensuring seamless coordination across both departments. Central to the role is the development and maintenance of effective administrative systems that enhance the day-to-day functioning of the Chemistry Department. At present, the position primarily supports the HoC due to the current vacancy in Biology; however, upon the appointment of the HoB, responsibilities will be re-evaluated to provide balanced, efficient support to both leaders, ensuring optimal workflow and departmental success.

Please only apply: If you have a solid track record as a Personal Assistant/Executive Assistant.

Duties and responsibilities

Diary and Inbox Management

Proactive management of the HoC's (and HoB's schedules).
Full and effective management of the HoC's and HoB's inboxes.
Assist with organising the HoC's and HoB's workloads, ensuring they are aware of upcoming deadlines.
Act as the first point of contact and representative for the HoC and HoB.
Respond to correspondence within delegated areas of responsibility.

Administrative Support

Fully manage and arrange complex international and domestic travel arrangements.
Proactively plan and prepare for HoC and HoB meetings, including travel, paperwork, briefings, room bookings, videoconferencing, and catering.
Issue or draft a range of accurate and high-quality formal correspondence on behalf of the HoC and HoB.

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Person specification

Support the recruitment of staff within the HoC and HoB teams, and of Group Leaders within the Division working closely with the EA to the Head of Division. In particular, collaborate closely with the ICR recruitment team to draft high-quality, gender-neutral job descriptions, manage vacancies using the internal recruitment software, schedule interviews, and oversee the process through to the final job offer.

Assist with the induction of new Senior Scientists and Group Leaders as needed, including ordering IT equipment, handling paperwork, and helping them become familiar with ICR systems and administrative procedures.

Lead responsibility for team administration, including annual leave and sickness absence monitoring, HR reports, maintaining filing systems, following up on actions, archiving documents, organising team meetings, catch-ups, appraisals and other admin duties as required.

Design, implement, maintain, and improve administrative systems & practices, working closely with the divisional admin team.

Monitor departmental stationery stock, organise and order supplies.

Take meeting notes and minutes when required, ensuring proactive follow-up on key actions.

Manage the departmental newsletter and Teams area for general communications.

Organise a series of monthly internal research talks, including finalising the calendar and sending out Outlook invites and email reminders.

Stakeholder and Project Management

Support communication with internal and external stakeholders.

Develop and maintain effective working relationships at all levels within the ICR.

Advance the Gender Equity and Research Culture workstream within the Chemistry department by applying project management skills including: participating and organising project meetings, preparing slides, managing communication, following up on actions, organising workshops, trainings, surveys and monitoring its progress and success.

General

All staff must ensure that they familiarise themselves with and adhere to any ICR policies that are relevant to their work and that all personal and sensitive personal data is treated with the utmost confidentiality and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Any other duties that are consistent with the nature and grade of the post that may be required.

To work in accordance with the ICR's Values.

To promote a safe, healthy and fair environment for people to work, where bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

This job description is a reflection of the present position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.

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Education and Knowledge

Educated to degree level or equivalent/relevant experience	Essential
Educational background in a science or science related subject	Desirable

Skills

Professional and non-judgemental manner and discreet approach to dealing with confidential matters.	Essential
Excellent organisational skills, advanced problem-solving abilities, and the ability to handle high workloads and multiple tasks with competing deadlines.	Essential
Advanced verbal and written communication skills, strong numeracy and analytical abilities, and excellent interpersonal skills for collaborative work across all backgrounds and levels.	Essential
Proficient in using a variety of essential software tools that enable seamless collaboration and productivity. Familiarity with Microsoft Teams for communication and collaboration, as well as Microsoft Planner for task management.	Essential
Strong attention to detail, ability to produce accurate work with minimal supervision, and proactive in prioritising tasks.	Essential
Ability to work under high pressure, remain calm with rapidly changing schedules, and possess excellent dispute resolution and influencing skills.	Essential

Experience

Experience of working in the Scientific and/or Higher Education and/or charity sector.	Desirable
Proven track record and experience of providing EA or PA support to senior level staff and working in complex organisations.	Essential
Experience of working under pressure with strict deadlines and dealing with complex issues with competing priorities.	Essential
Experience of developing, implementing and maintaining offices systems (electronic and manual).	Desirable
Project Management experience.	Desirable
Experience with Adobe Illustrator and other design software.	Desirable

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Benefits

Benefits of Joining Our Division in Sutton

- **World-Class Institution:** Be part of one of the world's most influential cancer research institutions, surrounded by some of the brightest minds in cancer research and drug discovery.
- **Collaborative Culture:** Engage in a collaborative culture where teamwork and mutual support are highly valued.
- **State-of-the-Art Facilities:** Work in modern, well-equipped offices that support efficiency and productivity.
- **International Community:** Join a vibrant, international community of colleagues, fostering a rich cultural and intellectual exchange.
- **Diverse Teams:** Each team comprises a mix of staff scientists, administrative professionals, and other support staff, promoting a dynamic and supportive work environment.
- **Convenient Location:** Our site is easily accessible by public transport, with a shuttle bus service from the train station to the site. Sutton is also close to the M25 and Surrey Hills, and just a 30-minute train ride from Central London.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Benefit from a location that offers both the tranquility of nearby countryside and the vibrancy of London, supporting a healthy work-life balance.
- **Professional Development:** Opportunities for continuing professional development to enhance your skills and career growth.
- **Annual Leave:** Full-time employees are entitled to 28 days of annual leave per annum on joining, increasing by a further day after 2 years and 5 years of service.
- **Pension Scheme:** Staff membership to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) is available. The USS is a defined benefit scheme with robust benefits. If staff are transferring from the NHS, they can opt to remain members of the NHS Pension Scheme.
- **Family-Friendly Benefits:** We offer flexible working, a parents' group, a maternity mentoring scheme, access to an on-site nursery, and proximity to two other nurseries near our Sutton site.
- **Additional Perks:** Interest-free loans for discounted season tickets for travel and bicycle purchases, access to the NHS discounts website, a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme offering well-being, financial, and legal advice services, two staff restaurants, and access to a gym and sporting facilities at our Sutton site.

Further information

You may contact selina.mote@icr.ac.uk for further information.

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