
Postdoctoral Training Fellow

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July 2026

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 top in the league table of university research quality compiled from the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014).

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.

The Stromal Radiobiology Group

The Stromal Radiobiology Group, led by Anna Wilkins, aims to understand how the tumour microenvironment of urological cancers drives radiotherapy resistance. The group focuses on prostate and bladder cancers with an emphasis on integrating findings from preclinical models and patient samples.

The immunostimulatory effect of radiation is often restrained by suppressive cells in the tumour microenvironment. These include certain populations of cancer-associated fibroblasts, macrophages, myeloid-derived suppressor cells and tumour-associated neutrophils. PSMA lutetium is a radionuclide with therapeutic activity in prostate cancer. Mechanisms by which the tumour microenvironment drives resistance to PSMA lutetium in patients are poorly understood. The role of PSMA lutetium in the treatment of patients with hormone sensitive metastatic prostate cancer is being studied in the STAMPEDE 2 trial led by Prof Nick James and Prof Gert Attard.

This project will examine how the tumour microenvironment contributes to resistance to PSMA lutetium, and additionally establish how PSMA

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lutetium drives changes in the tumour microenvironment. The post holder will be involved in the careful retrieval of samples collected longitudinally from patients receiving PSMA lutetium. They will use cutting edge methodologies, including highly multiplexed immunofluorescence and spatial transcriptomics, to profile these tumours. With data scientist support, they will perform analyses to establish differences in the TME at baseline and longitudinally, according to therapy response, to inform novel combination therapies for prostate cancer. This project complements a wider programme of urological research that is ongoing in the Stromal Radiobiology Group and the role will include other preclinical research.

We are seeking a highly motivated, proactive and well-organised individual to work between the Institute of Cancer Research and the Royal Marsden Hospital. They will also work with colleagues across London, including at University College London and the Francis Crick Institute. The postholder will collect, manage and process human samples. They will have extensive hands-on experience in profiling of the tumour microenvironment with working knowledge of different techniques to do this. The postholder will work in close collaboration with colleagues in the Centres for Cancer Imaging and Translational Immunotherapy at the ICR.

Division of Radiotherapy and Imaging

The Division of Radiotherapy and Imaging brings together research groups that work on how to use radiation therapy, guided by state-of-the-art imaging techniques, in the most effective way to cure cancer. Our work is based on the central idea that the best outcomes will be achieved by delivering curative radiation doses to tumours, while limiting radiation damage of neighbouring normal tissues. Our therapy often includes adding drug treatments alongside radiation therapy as a means of killing cancer cells more effectively and, at the same time, activating anti-tumour immune responses. Preclinical work includes research that combines radiation therapy with radiation sensitisers and biological response modifiers (for example innate immune activators, immune checkpoint inhibitors and other drugs that modify the tumour microenvironment) to maximise anti-tumour efficacy and give protection against tumour recurrence. Multiple translational clinical studies seek to address these themes through our collaborators in the Royal Marsden Hospital. Overall, our mission is to cure more patients with fewer immediate and long-term side effects of treatment.

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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

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Job description

Department / division:	Radiotherapy and Imaging
Pay grade / staff group:	Postdoctoral Training Fellow
Hours / duration:	Full-time (35 hours per week). It may be necessary for the post-holder to work outside hours to meet specific deadlines. Monday to Friday. Fixed-term contract for 2 years (potentially renewable)
Reports to:	Dr Anna Wilkins
Main purpose of the job:	To collect tissue samples and perform biological profiling focussed on the prostate tumour microenvironment in patients receiving PSMA lutetium in STAMPEDE 2. Additional human translational and preclinical work will be required.

Duties and responsibilities:

Main duties and responsibilities

Assist in the collection of longitudinal tumour samples, and their careful preservation
To manage samples, including receipt of samples and accurate maintenance of databases and safe sample storage according to local guidelines
Perform biological profiling and analysis of the tumour microenvironment, including multiplex immunofluorescence and spatial transcriptomics (training can be provided), on clinical and preclinical samples
To extract and quantify DNA and RNA from fresh and FFPE tissue samples (training can be provided)
To perform centrifugation and separation of blood, as well as extraction of DNA and RNA (training can be provided)
To develop and deliver other translational laboratory research projects related to the tumour microenvironment
To develop and deliver other preclinical experiments related to the tumour microenvironment
Work in a flexible but organised manner to meet objectives/deadlines.
Work and communicate effectively with other members of the team.
Work across animal facilities and human translational laboratories at both ICR sites (Fulham and Sutton), prior animal experience is not essential.

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Work effectively with colleagues at the Royal Marsden Hospital, University College London and the Francis Crick Institute

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

Ensure study protocols and other instructions for studies are followed to ensure outstanding science is delivered.

Other responsibilities

Liaising with collaborators from other teams at ICR and external commercial partners as required.

Ensuring adequate record keeping and documentation of all experiments and developed source code.

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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Person specification

Education and Knowledge

Extensive knowledge of tumour microenvironment (TME) and approaches to investigate this.	Essential
PhD. (or equivalent) in a biological science	Essential
Experience of working with clinical samples	Desirable

Skills

The post-holder will be highly skilled with a wide range of procedures related to handling of cancer tissues so as to optimise downstream biological profiling. They will have skills in a diverse range of procedures to profile and analyse the TME.	Essential
The successful candidate will be expected to maintain accurate records on project management databases including LabTracks to ensure compliant recording under the various guidance and legal frameworks.	Essential
Ability to coordinate, plan and execute research to a high standard	Essential
Good communication skills and the ability to foster collaborative projects	Essential
Ability to prioritise a busy workload and work effectively	Essential
Good organisational skills and attention to detail	Essential
Experience of working under pressure and adhering to established deadlines	Essential
Willingness to train other team members	Essential
Willingness to collaborate and contribute to ongoing scientific projects	Essential

Experience

Experience in different biological approaches to profile the TME	Essential
Experience in RNA/DNA extraction from tissue/cells/liquid samples	Desirable
Experience in immunology and histology assays including FACS/immunofluorescence	Desirable
Experience in human sample collection, processing and analysis	Desirable
Experience in preclinical models including co-culture systems and murine models	Desirable

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Benefits

We offer a fantastic working environment, great opportunities for career development and the chance to make a real difference to defeat cancer. We aim to recruit and develop the best – the most outstanding scientists and clinicians, and the most talented professional and administrative staff.

The annual leave entitlement for full time employees is 28 days per annum on joining. This will increase by a further day after 2 years' and 5 years' service.

Staff membership to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) is available. The USS is a defined benefit scheme and provides a highly competitive pension scheme with robust benefits. The rate of contributions is determined by USS and details of the costs and benefits of this scheme can be found on their website. If staff are transferring from the NHS, they can opt to remain members of the NHS Pension Scheme.

We offer a range of family friendly benefits such as flexible working, a parents' group, and a maternity mentoring scheme. Other great benefits include 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 which offers a range of 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 Anna Wilkins for further information by emailing anna.wilkins@icr.ac.uk. This job description is a reflection of the current position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.