



Molecular Cell Biology group Higher Scientific Officer Candidate Information

May 2026

The Institute of Cancer Research, London

About the role

We are seeking an enthusiastic, experienced Higher Scientific Officer (HSO) to join the Isacke 'Molecular Cell Biology' laboratory. The main responsibility of the position is to conduct lab based and *in-vivo* experiments as part of a team developing CAR-T cells to support our work on developing new therapeutic strategies for a broad range of sarcoma subtypes both in primary and metastatic disease. Applicants must have an appropriate degree and relevant experience in a research laboratory. Good organisational skills, and the ability to prioritise workloads to meet project requirements will be essential.

The successful applicant will closely interact with other researchers within the [Breast Cancer Now Toby Robins Research Centre](#) at the ICR, within The [ICR/Royal Marsden Joint Sarcoma Research Centre](#) and with our academic and commercial partners.

We offer a supportive team environment, and the opportunity to be part of an enthusiastic group engaged in cutting edge research.

This position is funded by the Worldwide Cancer Research and offered on a fixed term contract for 2 years in the first instance. Starting salary is in the range of £39,805 to £41,900 per annum, depending on seniority and previous experience.

In addition to annual performance related pay awards, the salary scales are reviewed annually to consider cost of living increases.

Annual leave entitlement is 28 days per annum. There is an additional entitlement to 8 bank/public holidays and 3 ICR-set privilege days.

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About the Molecular Cell Biology group

The Molecular Cell Biology group led by Professor Clare Isacke is a multidisciplinary team of cell and molecular biologists and *in-vivo* specialists. A main interest (and focus of this HSO position) is in developing new antibody-based therapeutics (specifically CAR-T cells and ADCs) targeting the breast tumour microenvironment and a broad range of sarcoma subtypes. Our secondary interest is in the biology of the breast cancer metastatic microenvironment, particularly invasive lobular breast cancer metastasis.

Key recent publications from our group include

- Van Baelen K, *et al.* (2025) Clinical challenges and proposed solutions for patients with invasive lobular breast cancer *Annals in Oncology* **36**:1285-1298. PMID: 40701440
- Alexander J, *et al.* (2024) Pathway-based signatures predict patient outcome, chemotherapy benefit and synthetic lethal dependencies in invasive lobular breast cancer. *British J Cancer* **130**: 1828-1840. PMID: 38600325
- Ash SL, *et al.* (2024) Targeting the activated microenvironment with endosialin (CD248)-directed CAR-T cells ablates perivascular cells to impair tumor growth and metastasis. *J Immunotherapy Cancer* **12**:e008608. PMID: 38413223
- Perkins DW *et al.* (2024) Therapy-induced normal tissue damage promotes breast cancer metastasis. *iScience*. **27**:108503. PMID: 38161426
- Soosainathan A, *et al.* (2024) Targeting Transcriptional Regulation with a CDK9 Inhibitor Suppresses Growth of Endocrine- and Palbociclib-Resistant ER+ Breast Cancers. *Cancer Research*. **84**:17-25. PMID: 37801608
- Evans RJ *et al.* (2023) Endo180 (*MRC2*) antibody-drug conjugate for the treatment of sarcoma. *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics* **22**, 240-253. PMID:36399638
- Fitzpatrick A, *et al.* (2023) Genomic profiling and pre-clinical modelling of breast cancer leptomeningeal metastasis reveals acquisition of a lobular-like phenotype. *Nature Communications* **14**:7408. PMID: 37973922
- Turrell FK, *et al.* (2023) Age-associated microenvironmental changes highlight the role of PDGF-C in ER+ breast cancer metastatic relapse *Nature Cancer* **4**:468-484 PMID:36914817
- Jenkins L, *et al.* (2022) Cancer-associated fibroblasts suppress CD8+ T-cell infiltration and confer resistance to immune-checkpoint blockade *Cancer Research* **82**, 2904-2917. PMID:35749591
- Fitzpatrick A, *et al.* (2022) Assessing CSF ctDNA to improve diagnostic accuracy and therapeutic monitoring in breast cancer leptomeningeal metastasis. *Clinical Cancer Research* **28**:1180-1191. PMID:34921020
- Jungwirth U, *et al.* (2021) Impairment of a distinct cancer-associated fibroblast population limits tumour growth and metastasis. *Nature*

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Communications 12:3516. PMID:34112782

This HSO position will be located in [The Breast Cancer Now Toby Robins Research Centre](#) at the ICR at our Chelsea site. The Breast Cancer Now Toby Robins Research Centre, within the Division of Breast Cancer Research at The Institute of Cancer Research is the first centre in the UK entirely devoted to breast cancer research. Its mission is to advance understanding of the causes, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. The Centre is housed in state-of-the-art laboratory space, with excellent core facilities and is funded through a long-term renewable programme grant from Breast Cancer Now. It is directed by Clinician Scientist Professor Andrew Tutt, with Professor Chris Lord as Deputy Director. The Centre has received major international recognition, including the 2022 AACR Team Science Award, shared with its breast cancer clinical research partners in the ICR's Clinical Trials and Statistics Unit and The Royal Marsden Hospital. Its work also contributed to the ICR receiving the 2023 Queen's Anniversary Prize for transforming lives through world-leading breast cancer research.

The HSO will also interact closely with scientists and clinicians in the [Joint Sarcoma Research Centre](#) predominantly based on our Sutton campus. The goal of the Joint Sarcoma Research Centre is driving pioneering research for innovative treatments for sarcomas.

About our organization

The Institute of Cancer Research, London, is one of the world's most influential cancer research institutions with an outstanding track record of achievement dating back more than 100 years.

Our mission is to make the discoveries that defeat cancer. As well as being one of the UK's leading higher education institutions in research quality and impact, the ICR is consistently ranked as one of the world's most successful for industry collaboration.

As a member institution of the University of London, we also provide postgraduate higher education of international distinction. We are also a charity and rely on the support of partner organisations, funders, donors and the general public.

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Candidate Information:

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

Higher Scientific Officer

Candidate Information:

Job description

Department / division: Breast Cancer Research

Pay grade / staff group: Higher Scientific Officer

Hours / duration: Full time (35 hours per week), Monday to Friday. Fixed term contract until July 2028 in the first instance.

Reports to: Marjan Iravani

Main purpose of the job: Developing CAR-T cell therapies for the treatment of sarcomas.

Duties and responsibilities:

To contribute to the design and planning of experiments and conduct original research within the context of the group.

To take responsibility for executing experiments in an effective and timely manner and producing work suitable for high quality publications.

To maintain accurate records of experiments and reagent descriptions in electronic laboratory notebooks.

To prepare reports of experimental data for oral and written presentations.

To keep up to date with the relevant scientific literature.

To meet objectives within pre-determined timescales.

To participate in and contribute to regular group meetings, and meetings with collaborators.

Any other duties, which may be required, which are consistent with the nature and grade of the post

Provide excellent data management, data storage and record keeping in notebooks, files and computers, in line with ICR laboratory policy.

To familiarise yourself with the ICR's approach towards risk management including its policies and procedures, which require all staff to play an active part in identifying and managing risk.

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Candidate Information:

Person specification

Education and Knowledge

Person Specification	HSO
A BSc or equivalent in Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Cell Biology or Immunology	Essential

Requirements

Person Specification	HSO
Highly motivated to work in a cancer research laboratory	Essential
Proven degree of technical experience with a minimum of 3 years working in a research laboratory	Essential
Demonstrable experience in laboratory-based cell and molecular biology techniques	Essential
Demonstrable experience in immunological assays (e.g. T cell functional assay, CAR-T cell design and optimisation, FACS, ELISA)	Essential
Demonstrable experience in working with mouse models of cancer	Essential
Demonstrable ability to analyse experimental data and write up & present findings	Essential
Problem-solver with ability to implement new ideas and technologies	Essential
Attention to detail	Essential
Ability to organise and prioritise own work, including the ability to work towards tight deadlines	Essential
A strong commitment to learn new research techniques and methodologies	Essential
Ability to work as part of a team and to interact productively with others in the Institute	Essential
Holding a UK Home Office Personal Licence (PIL) to work with animals	Desirable

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Candidate Information:

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 site in Sutton.

Further information

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