



Team Leader, in vivo Biology Candidate Information

July 2022

[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 are consistently in the top performing universities in the league table of university research quality compiled from the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014 & 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.

The Division of Cancer Therapeutics and the Cancer Therapeutics Unit

The Cancer Therapeutics Unit (CTU) is a major component of the Division of Cancer Therapeutics at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) and is a multidisciplinary 'bench to bedside' centre, comprising 160 staff dedicated to the discovery and development of novel therapeutics for the treatment of cancer. We are one of the largest academic cancer drug discovery groups in the world and, with our collaborators, have discovered 21 preclinical development candidates, 12 of which have been progressed to clinical evaluation, most with our partners in the ICR / Royal Marsden Drug Development Unit. Our drug abiraterone (Zytiga) has been approved in the US, Canada and Europe for late-stage prostate cancer.

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The Cancer Therapeutics Unit's mission is to develop personalised medicines by translating information from the cancer genome and cancer biology into drugs for patient benefit. We implement innovative drug discovery technologies, discover novel mechanism-based drugs, and develop these as rapidly as possible from the laboratory through to hypothesis-testing early clinical trials. All necessary science disciplines and technologies are in place to make this possible. Our biologists work alongside medicinal chemists focusing on new molecular targets emerging from human genome and cell biology research. In addition, we collaborate closely with colleagues throughout the ICR and beyond. Drug discovery is carried out in highly focused multi-disciplinary project teams analogous to those in a biotechnology company, with patient benefit as the primary driver. We also publish our work extensively and have a large network of collaborations with academia, biotechnology companies, and the pharmaceutical industry. The Division of Cancer Therapeutics is based in state-of-the-art laboratories in the new £75m Centre for Cancer Drug Discovery building, opened in 2021 on the ICR Sutton campus.

About the position

The primary role of this position is to lead *in vivo* biology to support the drug discovery activities of the CTU; as such, the successful applicant will have the necessary scientific background and experience to hold the appropriate Home Office Project Licences. In addition, as a Faculty member in the Division of Cancer Therapeutics, they will lead an independent cancer biology research group that will contribute to the overall strategy and goals of the CTU. As appropriate, the successful individual will also assume a leadership role for one or more drug discovery projects within the CTU portfolio.

Candidate profile

Extensive experience with a range of *in vivo* models (e.g. syngeneic, xenograft, orthotopic and metastatic tumours, patient-derived xenografts, genetically engineered animals), together with a vision for the future evolution of *in vivo* models, are essential. Commitment to translational and drug discovery research in the preclinical setting is also fundamental to this position. The successful applicant will be a Team Leader pursuing their own cancer drug discovery research programme aligned with the overall research strategy of the CTU. Therefore, intellectual leadership and the ability to personally lead a laboratory research team will be an important part of the role. Experience of drug discovery in a pharma or biotechnology company is desirable.

Our mission
is to make the
discoveries that
defeat cancer.

Conferment of an academic title of the University of London will be considered for appropriately qualified candidates.

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Candidate Information

Job description

Department / division:	Division of Cancer Therapeutics
Pay grade / staff group:	Career Faculty
Hours / duration:	Full time (35 hours per week), Monday to Friday. Non-Time Limited contract.
Reports to:	Dr Olivia Rossanese, Head of the Division of Cancer Therapeutics
Main purpose of the job:	Lead <i>in vivo</i> biology to support the drug discovery activities of the Cancer Therapeutics Unit

Duties and responsibilities:

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Lead the *in vivo* biology activity for the CTU to support target validation, proof-of-concept studies, and preclinical development of novel anticancer therapies. This includes use of cell line-derived and patient-derived xenograft models and genetically engineered mouse models to assess tumour development, response to treatment, and biomarker changes.

Work within project teams and with colleagues to support preclinical pharmacology and pharmacodynamic / predictive biomarker discovery, in the preclinical setting and for eventual use in Phase I clinical trials

Evaluate and adopt, as appropriate, new *in vitro* and *in vivo* models that accurately reflect target action and disease biology of different cancer types, especially as relates to evaluation of small molecule compounds. Integrate multimodality imaging into drug discovery programmes as appropriate. Remain aware of current technologies and trends in *in vivo* models for preclinical oncology drug discovery

Lead an independent cancer biology research group that contributes to the overall strategy and goals of the CTU

Supervise, train, inform and motivate members of the Team, including postdoctoral scientists, scientific officers, and PhD students

Prepare results for presentation and publication in learned journals and at national and international conferences, with suitable protection of the ICR's intellectual property. Contribute to patent filings and Due Diligence documents

Organisational

Be the Home Office licence holder for all animal studies carried out in the CTU

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Interact and collaborate with the ICR's Business and Innovation Office and commercial partners in relation to any potentially exploitable discoveries. Membership of relevant steering committees with commercial partners may be required

Work with the Unit Director and senior staff in attracting substantial investment into CTU drug discovery science. Seek funding for appropriate research areas through writing proposals for project grants, PhD studentships, or through engagement of external commercial partners

In collaboration with CTU and partner scientists, participate in the selection and validation of appropriate new biological targets to enter the Unit portfolio

Fully participate in project team decision-making and portfolio management decisions

Manage budgets for the Team

Ensure compliance with ICR and national regulations on safety and ethics as relevant to the research programme

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Person specification

Education and Knowledge

PhD in biochemistry, biology, pharmacology or a related field	Essential
Extensive knowledge of <i>in vivo</i> animal models, especially their use in drug discovery settings	Essential
Holds or can hold a personal licence and Home Office Project licences	Essential
Excellent general knowledge of basic / translational cancer biology and pharmacology	Essential

Skills

Ability to co-ordinate, plan and execute <i>in vivo</i> studies to the highest scientific and ethical standards	Essential
Ability to co-ordinate, plan and execute novel biology research studies of high impact and scientific excellence	Essential
Ability to build and run <i>in vivo</i> biological assays / experiments to support decision-making in drug discovery programmes	Essential
Ability to effectively lead a scientific team to generate high impact research and publications in a relevant area of oncology biology	Essential
Ability to assimilate relevant information and initiate new areas of research	Essential
Ability to supervise and mentor staff and support their development	Essential
Demonstrable ability to relate to and collaborate with colleagues in other scientific disciplines and to facilitate exchange of ideas across disciplines	Essential
Proven successful project leadership skills	Essential

Experience

Extensive track record in the development and use of tumour models as demonstrated by recent publications and/or patent applications	Essential
Significant experience of biology/pharmacology at team / group leader level	Essential
Experience of oncology drug discovery within or in collaboration with the pharmaceutical / biotechnology industry	Essential
Evidence of intellectual leadership	Essential
Experience of leading multidisciplinary project team / groups	Desirable
Experience of cancer drug target selection and validation	Desirable

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Candidate Information

General

Enthusiasm for work in an interdisciplinary environment towards the goal of developing a better understanding of the causes, molecular mechanisms, and treatment of cancer	Essential
Willingness to supervise postgraduate students for higher degrees	Essential
Highly motivated with a strong desire for excellence	Essential
Enthusiasm for effective collaboration	Essential
Good interpersonal and communication skills and a team player	Essential

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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 Dr Olivia Rossanese for further information by emailing olivia.rossanese@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.