Department of Neuroscience
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health

Postdoctoral Research Associate

Pursue the extraordinary
The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health is one of the major UK centres for education and research in health and related subjects. With origins dating back to 1828, the Faculty has a long-standing tradition of excellence in clinical education and research.

Over 2,500 students study in the faculty each year on over 40 different courses. In addition, over 200 students are registered on research degrees, supporting a faculty research portfolio in excess of £30M.

Independent assessments of our teaching and research quality rate us as among the best in the UK.

With over 250 academic and clinical staff, and 250 research associates, the Faculty has the training and development of staff at the centre of its strategic priorities. A tailored training programme – Think Ahead – in line with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is available to all researchers in the Faculty. This includes a departmental induction process; workshops linked to working-based learning opportunities; employer lead career days; and tailored support in preparation for the end of a contract. A newly developed career mentoring scheme with academic, industrial and alternative careers’ strands gives practical support for career development in your chosen destination. The portfolio of transferable skills and career development courses is continuously updated and tailored to the researcher and the employer needs and to fit with the strategic aims of the Faculty. For more information on current opportunities see http://www.shef.ac.uk/faculty/medicine-dentistry-health/training-for-researchers or email Kay Guccione (k.guccione@shef.ac.uk).

Neurosciences research within the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Sheffield is a major area of research strength within the Faculty. There have been recent strategic investments in Neurology, Molecular and Translational Neuroscience, Neuropathology and Biological Psychiatry. This development is based on common research interests in neurodegenerative diseases (diseases of the motor system, basal ganglia and dementia) and neuropsychiatric disorders. We are strategically placed to combine interdisciplinary methodologies from animal and cell models, access to populations across South Yorkshire in human genetic, structural and functional neuroimaging studies, and to develop and investigate novel pharmacological, surgical and psychological interventions. There are 3 main research groupings: Neurology/Neuropathology; Biological Psychiatry; and Neuroimaging.
The proposed project will be undertaken within the newly established Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SiTraN). The vision of SiTraN is to develop a world class environment for the translational research needed to significantly accelerate therapy development in neurodegenerative diseases. For further details about SiTraN and our research please visit the following link: http://sitran.dept.shef.ac.uk

Applications are invited for the post of Postdoctoral Research Associate within the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SiTraN). We are seeking a highly motivated scientist to join an exciting new project at the translational medicine interface in neurodegenerative diseases.

You contribute to a project investigating gene therapy approaches using viral vectors. You will have excellent research skills in molecular biology with competent cell culture experience relevant to the field of gene therapy. You will also possess up to date in-vivo skills and experience.

You will be able to demonstrate a good publication track record in the field and experience of working on projects to set milestones/deadlines and you will join an internationally recognised research group in a vibrant and stimulating environment within SiTraN.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities**

- Plan, organise and undertake original scientific research in the pre-clinical of gene therapy for neurodegenerative diseases.
- Take responsibility for molecular biology and cell culture work.
- Plan own research schedule and workload within the project schedule to ensure that the overall project milestones and objectives are met.
- Carry out vector design for gene therapy projects and undertake experiments to test efficacy of viral vectors in primary cell culture.
- Undertake in vivo gene therapy efficacy studies.
- Analyse results and write monthly reports describing the work.
- Communicate progress of work to the lead supervisors and project management group.
- Prepare papers for journals/presentations either in-house, at consortia meetings or at national/international conferences or seminars to disseminate research findings.
• Write supporting documents to contribute to and support the work of the research group, e.g. reports, interim reports and grant applications. Read academic papers, journals and textbooks and attend conferences to keep abreast of developments.
• Assist PhD and MSc students within the team.
• Plan for specific aspects of the research programme as discussed with the supervisors of the project.
• Contribute to research group planning.
• For each particular project aim, plan for own contribution up to three months ahead, incorporating issues such as the availability of resources, deadlines, project milestones and overall research aims. Design individual experiments weekly.
• Coordinate and liaise with other members of the research group over work progress.
• Continuously monitor and check results. The unpredictability of research means that daily planning needs to accommodate new developments.
• Plan several months in advance to meet deadlines for journal publications and to prepare presentations and papers for conferences.
• Any other duties, commensurate with the grade of the post.

**Person Specification**

Applicants should provide evidence in their applications that they meet the following criteria. We will use a range of selection methods to measure candidates’ abilities in these areas including reviewing your on-line application, seeking references, inviting shortlisted candidates to interview and other forms of assessment action relevant to the post.

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<td><strong>Qualifications and experience</strong></td>
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<td>1. PhD (or equivalent experience) in Neuroscience or Biological Sciences.</td>
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<td>2. No previous postdoctoral experience</td>
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<td>3. Proven ability to work under milestone driven projects.</td>
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<td>4. Proven expertise in molecular and cell biology.</td>
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<td>5. <em>In vivo</em> experience</td>
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<td>6. Experience in gene therapy and viral vectors.</td>
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<td>7. Possess a valid home office license to work with rodents.</td>
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<td><strong>Communication skills</strong></td>
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<td>8. Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, report writing skills, experience of delivering presentations.</td>
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# Further Information

**This post is fixed-term** for 24 months with a possibility of extension for a third year. The position is available immediately.

This role has been identified as a full-time post, but we are committed to exploring flexible working opportunities with our staff which benefit both the individual and the University. Therefore, we would consider flexible delivery of the role subject to meeting the business needs of the post. See [www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/info/wlb.html](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/info/wlb.html) for more information.

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## Reward and Recognition – The Deal

**Terms and conditions of employment:** Will be those for Grade 7.1 staff.

**Salary for this grade:** £30,175 to £38,183 per annum pro-rata.

The Deal is the pay, rewards and many benefits you earn for being a valued member of our University and by being ambitious and performing at your best.

If you join the University you will have access to The Deal and your own personalised pay, reward and benefits portal where you can access a comprehensive selection of benefits and offers to suit your changing lifestyle needs, for example childcare vouchers, Cycle to Work initiative, shopping discounts along with access to extensive development and training options – over a third of staff work in Investors in People (iIP)

To find our more visit [www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/thedeal/benefits](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/thedeal/benefits)

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<th>Team working</th>
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<td>9. Ability to work independently as well as part of a team to meet deadlines.</td>
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<th>Personal effectiveness</th>
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<td>10. Ability to plan and progress work activities.</td>
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<td>11. Ability to motivate PhD and MSc students.</td>
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<td>12. Experience of adapting own skills to new circumstances.</td>
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<td>13. Awareness of laboratory safety and general laboratory competence.</td>
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<td>14. Ability to develop and maintain a network of contacts throughout own work area.</td>
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Through The Deal we are committed to making the University a remarkable place to work and we support this through a number of sector leading initiatives such as Juice and Sheffield Leader.

Our innovative Health and Wellbeing programme, Juice, promotes happiness and wellbeing through a broad range of inclusive activities (www.shef.ac.uk/juice)

Our leadership development has been designed to ensure that our leaders have the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed by the University (www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/sld/sheffieldleader).

We are also proud of our award-winning equality and diversity action which enhances working life for all. 91% of staff tell us they are treated with fairness and respect (staff survey 2014) www.shef.ac.uk/hr/equality

In our staff survey (2014) 94% of staff said they were proud to work for the University and 87 % of our staff would recommend Sheffield University as an excellent place to work. To find out more about what it’s like to work here have a look at our webpages, www.sheffield.ac.uk/staff/survey and www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/staffbenefits.

Health assessment: All new employees will undertake a Health Assessment Questionnaire. The questionnaire is to assess the individual’s fitness for the job role which they have been offered and ensures appropriate health advice and guidance can be provided. The assessment will be carried out on behalf of the University by Health Management Limited (HML).

Closing date: For details of the closing date please view this post on our web pages at http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/

Informal enquiries: For informal enquiries about this job and the recruiting department, contact: Professor Mimoun Azzouz on m.azzouz@sheffield.ac.uk or on 0114 222 2238.

For all online application system queries and support, visit: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/jobs/applying

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Following the closing date, we will contact you by email to let you know whether or not you have been shortlisted to participate in the next stage of the selection process. Please note that due to the large number of applications that we receive, it may take up to two working weeks following the closing date before the recruiting department will be able to contact you.

It is anticipated that interviews and other selection action will be held after closing date. Full details will be provided to invited candidates.

The University of Sheffield is committed to achieving excellence through inclusion.

The University of Sheffield is proud to be a Two Ticks employer

www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/equality/support/twoticks

The University has achieved the Athena SWAN award for Women in Science, Engineering and Medicine

The Department has achieved the Athena SWAN Silver award for Women in Science, Engineering and Medicine

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