Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

Post-Doctoral Research Associate

OPPORTUNITY
Where change gets real.

Grade: 08

Salary: £38,249 - £40,497 per annum, depending on experience

Contact Type: Fixed Term (48 months)

Basis: Full Time

Job description

Job Purpose:

An exciting four-year opportunity is available for a post-doctoral research associate with expertise in the acquisition and analysis of human OPM-MEG and MEG data to study brain function and cognition in children and young people as part of a Wellcome-funded project. The post-holder will work with Dr Sukhvir Wright and colleagues at the Institute of Health and Neurodevelopment (IHN) in the MRC-funded Aston-BWC OPM-MEG lab. In particular, the role will combine taking OPM-MEG, MEG and MRI recordings in paediatric patients who have been affected by brain inflammation and other neurological conditions to elucidate research questions such as why do affected patients have persistent debilitating symptoms despite acute effective immunotherapy treatment?

We are looking for a talented, enthusiastic individual on an upward trajectory and will fully support applications for independent fellowships to follow this initial post.

Applicants should hold a PhD (or equivalent) involving neuroimaging, cognitive neuroscience or a related field. Experience of MEG/OPM-MEG acquisition and data analysis is essential. Experience with MATLAB or Python computer programming for neuroimaging data analysis is essential. Experience of MRI and/orEEG acquisition and analysis is desirable. Experience of working on research projects involving children and young adults is desirable.

Main Duties/Responsibilities:

Research

- ▶ To lead (under supervision of the PI) a Wellcome funded multimodal (OPM-MEG, MEG, MRI) neuroimaging research project including participant recruitment.
- ▶ To develop the application of OPM-MEG to study brain function in children, young people and young adults
- ▶ To analyse neuroimaging data, including OPM-MEG, MEG and MRI using combinations of available software and in-house code.
- ▶ To help develop and maintain neuroimaging data analysis pipelines and an internet-based resource to document the acquisition and analysis methods that have been developed so other users might benefit.
- ▶ To write up and publish the outcomes of research in good quality publications.
- ▶ To present papers, posters, reports at seminars, conferences etc.
- ▶ To develop research objectives, projects and proposals for personal/joint research projects in collaboration with IHN members.

Teaching

- ▶ To contribute to the supervision of student projects.
- ▶ To assist in the development of student research skills.

External engagement

- ▶ To represent the interests of the research project, team and IHN via activities to raise the regional, national and international profile, particularly with the professions, schools and businesses.
- ▶ To forge relationships with the professional bodies and other bodies representing relevant professional interests.

Citizenship

- ▶ To help support collaborative School and IHN research, advising on data acquisition or analysis.
- ▶ To demonstrate the University's leadership values through own actions and behaviour.
- ▶ To undertake such other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post.

Additional responsibilities

- ▶ Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities to develop themselves and support the development of others.
- ▶ Ensure and promote the personal health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- ▶ Carry out duties in a way which promotes fairness in all matters and which engenders trust.
- ▶ Promote equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion as well as working to support the University's environmental sustainability agenda and practices.

Person specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	▶ A first degree in a scientific discipline. ▶ A PhD in cognitive neuroscience or related field (or near to completion)	Application form.
Experience	▶ Experience of MEG/OPM-MEG acquisition and data analysis is essential. ▶ Experience of participant recruitment for research. ▶ Experience of initiating and conducting research up to doctoral level. ▶ Experience of writing up/contributing to the write up of research for high quality publications. ▶ Experience of producing papers, posters, reports presenting at seminars, conferences etc. ▶ Experience of positive collaboration within and outside of candidate's immediate research team. ▶ Supervising other personnel involved in the project	Application form, interview and presentation.
Aptitude and skills	▶ Experience with MATLAB or Python computer programming for neuroimaging data analysis is essential. ▶ Ability to use initiative to lead your own research projects as well as interest in supporting wider collaborations within the school.	Interview and presentation.

	Essential	Method of assessment
	▶ Ability to present data in both a clear and concise manner that is visually appealing. ▶ Ability to prepare written communications to a high standard. ▶ Ability to develop and maintain a research programme and to publish in high quality publications. ▶ Ability to harness IT as a research and teaching tool. ▶ A willingness to undertake further training as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required.	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Experience	▶ Experience of working on research projects involving children and young people. ▶ Experience of MRI and/or EEG acquisition and analysis. ▶ Experience of conducting neuropsychology assessments.	List any desirable aptitudes or skills the applicant must have

University values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the University. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them.

Values + Behaviours

Innovation
We strive for excellence within ourselves and others, providing solutions to new and existing challenges.

Collaboration
We work best when we are collaborative, working together to contribute to the Aston community.

Ambition
We strive together for improvement and innovation looking ahead to see the bigger picture.

Inclusion
We treat everyone in our community equally and how they would like to be treated.

Integrity
We are open, honest and fair. We take ownership of the way we work and how we treat each other.

How to apply

You can apply for this role online via our website https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs.

Applications should be submitted by 23.59pm on the advertised closing date.
All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent direct to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form, then please contact the Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk.

Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Dr Sukhvir Wright

Job Title: Welcome Clinical Research Career Development Fellow

Email: s.wright5@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:
Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr for full details of our salary scales and benefits Aston University staff enjoy.

Salary scales: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index

Benefits: Benefits and Rewards | Aston University

Working in Birmingham: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK: You should ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements, including meeting the English language standards. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful. Please see UKVI guidance for further information on eligibility, knowledge of English requirements and approved test centres https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general

With the end of free movement for EU/EEA/Swiss nationals from 1 January 2021, the UK's new immigration system applies to all non-UK/Irish nationals who require a visa.

Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control, they will require a visa to work in the UK.

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

The main routes available for those who need a visa to work in the UK are **Skilled Worker**, **Global Talent** and the **Graduate Route**.

You can find further information about each of these visa routes on our candidate immigration page.

If you will conduct research in your role, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application. Please see below for further details.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS):
If you will conduct research in your role and you apply for a Skilled Worker or Temporary

Worker GAE visa, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application.

This process can take at least 6 weeks to process, and Aston will consider this when confirming your expected start date. Processing times will increase between April and September and can longer to complete.

There is no fast-track option available. ATAS certificates will be processed in order of receipt.

You can find more information about ATAS on our candidate immigration page.

Before you start and Right to Work

90-day entry vignette
If you have applied for your visa outside of the UK, you will receive a vignette in your passport which is usually valid for 90 days. Please make sure to travel to the UK within the 'valid from' and 'valid to' dates on this visa. If you entered the UK before or after these dates, you would not 'activate' the visa and you would need to leave and re-enter the country.

You will also receive a decision letter confirming details about your immigration permission and where to collect your Biometric Residence Permit.

Cost of Living - Estate and Letting Agents
There are numerous Estate and Letting Agents in and around Birmingham that can help you find suitable accommodation. The Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme provides a list of professional agencies and landlords who have applied with them for accreditation. Whilst accreditation is not a guarantee of quality, it provides some reassurance about the standard of the service they provide.

You can also use property search websites such as Rightmove or Zoopla.

Equal Opportunities
Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its

Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection

Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.

Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies

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