

KTP Research Associate in Skin Immunology and 3D Tissue Models



Reference: 0203-26

Salary: £38,000 to £40,000 per annum, depending on experience and qualifications, with an additional £4,333 for the duration of the project for professional and personal development.

Contract Type: Fixed term (26 months)

Basis: Full Time

Job description

This 26-month project takes the form of a [Knowledge Transfer Partnership](#) (KTP), which provides practical and formal training and the availability of support from experienced mentors from [Labskin](#), [Aston University](#) and [Innovate UK Business Connect](#).

Job Purpose:

This KTP project will bring together the collective expertise of Labskin Ltd and Aston University to develop the first immune-competent 3D model of human skin (i.e. skin incorporating immune cells), replacing imperfect animal models and driving exploitation of this innovation for the development of novel therapies, toxicology assays and compound screening.

The key objective of this KTP is to further develop Labskin's existing human skin model by introducing an important immune cell called the macrophage, a crucial cell type that can drive skin repair and avoidance of scarring, but which can also drive disease if inappropriately controlled. Thus, the main area of focus is to develop this novel immune-competent model to allow for the first time an in vitro analysis of human skin and the factors that may control health and disease.

This KTP will address BBSRC goals in the development of Transformative Technologies that can revolutionise research and lead to Advancing Bioscience Discovery to develop new treatments that improve health and wellbeing.

Candidate Profile: MSc or above in cell biology, immunology or microbiology. PhD graduates are preferred for their direct experience with immunology and specialised equipment, however MSc or MRes graduates with extensive practical elements to their qualification will also be considered.

Essential skills/experience required include:

- Proficiency in cell culture, ideally using long-term cultures.
- Skills in immune assays (e.g. ELISA).
- Excellent aseptic technique.
- Experience of working in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Independence and strong problem-solving skills.
- Strong IT and data analysis abilities.
- Ability to quickly adopt new laboratory techniques (supported with training from the academic team).

Desirable:

- Experience in industry, intersectoral projects, or working within developing businesses.
- Experience of 3D cell culture models.
- Microscopy techniques and an understanding of histology and pathology.
- Able to work independently and manage tasks effectively with appropriate guidance.
- Effective time management.
- The ability to meet deadlines.
- Demonstrate initiative in progressing workstreams and meeting agreed milestones.

Main Duties/Responsibilities

- To define an immune cell culture that integrates with other skin cells to faithfully model human skin in health and disease.
- To explore skin immunity, as the model will benefit translational skin research.
- To effectively integrate the technically challenging existing cell biology of the current models with the characterised immune cell possibilities that can be incorporated.
- To manage your time and budget for the project and ensure high-quality record keeping enabling timely IP protection.

Additional responsibilities

- ▶ Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities.
- ▶ 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 | MSc or above in cell biology, immunology or biomedical science. | Application form |
| Experience | <p>Independence and strong problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Strong IT and data analysis abilities.</p> <p>Experience of working in multi-disciplinary teams.</p> | Application form and interview |
| Aptitude and skills | <p>Proficiency in cell culture, ideally using long-term cultures.</p> <p>Skills in immune assays (e.g. ELISA, antibody staining of cells).</p> <p>Excellent aseptic technique.</p> <p>Ability to quickly adopt new laboratory techniques (supported with training from the academic team).</p> | Application form and interview |

| | Desirable | Method of assessment |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Education and qualifications | PhD graduates are preferred for their direct experience with immunology and specialised equipment, however MSc or MRes graduates with extensive practical elements to their qualification will also be considered. | Application form |
| Experience | <p>Experience of 3D cell culture models and microscopy.</p> <p>An understanding of histology and pathology.</p> <p>Experience in industry, intersectoral projects, or working within developing businesses.</p> | Application form and interview |

| | Desirable | Method of assessment |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Aptitude and Skills | <p>Demonstrates initiative in progressing workstreams and meeting agreed milestones.</p> <p>Effective time management.</p> <p>The ability to meet deadlines.</p> <p>A proactive attitude.</p> | Application form and interview |

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: Professor Andrew Devitt

Job Title: Professor and Executive Dean Of School Medicine, Pharmacy & Biosciences.

Email: a.devitt1@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 are applying for is listed as 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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