



INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

GROUP LEADER OF ARTHROPOD GENETICS/GENOMICS

POST REF: 2009 SENIOR RECRUITMENT POST 09P/0013

The Institute for Animal Health (IAH) is one of six research institutes of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and is at the forefront of research into infectious diseases of animals.

IAH is based on two sites: Compton (near Newbury) and Pirbright (near Woking) and employs over 400 staff and, at any one time, hosts up to 50 students and visiting scientists. The post will be based at Pirbright and in July 2009 the Government announced an award of £100m+ to IAH to build a new laboratory at Pirbright that will be completed by 2013.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The vector-borne diseases (VBD) programme at the IAH has established a world-wide reputation for research into arthropod-transmitted pathogens of veterinary species, focused mainly on viruses transmitted by *Culicoides* biting midges, most importantly bluetongue virus, African horse sickness virus and epizootic haemorrhagic disease virus. The VBD programme integrates many different aspects of virus, vector and host interactions and is particularly renowned for its skills and expertise in entomology, molecular epidemiology and phylogenetics, mathematical modeling and structural biology.

We now wish to recruit an experienced geneticist to join the VBD programme as a new Group Leader. The purpose of the post will be to develop, lead and manage a scientific group to work on the genetics/genomics of the *Culicoides* midge, the arthropod vector of bluetongue and other internationally important viruses.

ORGANISATION POSITION

IAH research is organized and delivered through four multidisciplinary Institute Strategic Programmes, each of which spans basic, strategic and applied research with strong integration across the major scientific disciplines and with the explicit purpose of producing high quality research that increases understanding of pathogen-host interactions and contributes to improved control and/or reduction of impact of infectious diseases. This post is based at Pirbright and the successful candidate will report directly to the head of the VBD programme.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful candidate will develop a strong research portfolio on the genetics and genomics of *Culicoides* species that is of the highest international scientific quality and which will contribute significantly to understanding the interaction of the insect host with viruses that it transmits, most importantly bluetongue virus. The research will complement

ongoing work in the VBD programme and in other IAH research programmes that have strong genetics components.

The successful candidate will interact with other members of the VBD programme at IAH, and will be encouraged to establish collaborative research links with other external scientists.

This post is fully funded from the Institute Strategic Programme Grant that supports the VBD programme. It is however expected that the successful candidate will apply for and win additional external grant funding to support their research within the programme.

The successful candidate will be responsible for all aspects of the management of a research group including all issues pertaining to health and safety, biosecurity and biosafety, home office license requirements, quality assurance, staff training, staff career development and supervision of PhD students.

As a Group Leader at the IAH, the successful candidate will be expected to play a full role in the research life of the Institute and will also be required to represent the IAH externally. Within the IAH, at the request of senior management, full participation and membership of various internal committees will be required.

All employees shall actively participate in the IAH-wide quality assurance system in conjunction with the Institute Quality Manager. Employees are also expected to safeguard their own health and safety and security by following IAH policies and all employees are responsible for the Health and Safety and security of staff under their management.

As the Institute is engaged in Research work on a number of virus diseases of live stock, several of which, in particular foot-and-mouth disease, are highly infectious to livestock, compliance with the Disease Security Regulations is an essential requirement of employment.

The Employee must not live on any premises where any cloven hoofed animals are kept, such as cattle, sheep, pigs, goats or deer, and must not visit any premises where such animals are kept within three days of entering the restricted area of the laboratory, or within five days of entering the restricted animal accommodation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION (QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE)

Qualifications

Essential

- PhD or equivalent in genetics

Experience

Essential

- International reputation for research in genetics

- Research experience in functional genetics
- Experience of modern molecular genetics
- Commitment to working in infectious disease research
- Proven ability to win competitive grant income
- Very strong publication record

Desirable

- Background in insect genetics
- Experience of QTL analysis
- Experience of working in high containment laboratory/animal facilities
- Experience in genomics research

Knowledge

Essential

- Broad knowledge across the whole of genetics
- Working knowledge of vector-borne disease biology, genetics and epidemiology
- Interest and knowledge of insect genomics/transgenics

Skills/abilities

Essential

- Proven research and science management skills evidenced by strong portfolio of peer-reviewed publications.
- Able to demonstrate innovative ideas and proven ability to win competitive grant income
- Proven record of PhD student supervision and experience of managing a scientific research group
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills
- Effective written and oral communication skills
- Strong time management skills and ability to delegate effectively
- Must be totally reliable under pressure and be a strong team player
- Research skills in bioinformatics (genome analysis)

Other

Essential

- Willingness to travel internationally at relative short notice

BENEFITS OF THE POST

The post is graded at Band F and is an indefinite contract. Starting salary is £42,769 to £47,521 depending on qualifications and experience. On appointment, you are eligible to join the Research Council's Pension Scheme. You have the choice of either:

- an attractive, index-linked defined benefit pension scheme that currently has a 3.5% member contribution rate. The bulk of the cost of this scheme is met by the employer: or
- a stakeholder pension with a contribution from the employer. Our basic contribution is based on your age, and we pay this regardless of whether you choose to contribute anything. You do not have to contribute if you do not wish to but, if you do, we will also match your contributions up to an additional 3% of pay.

Annual leave is 27 days on appointment plus 10.5 days public and privilege holidays. The Institute has a subsidized child care scheme, staff restaurants and free parking. Staff work a 37 hour week, Monday to Friday.

Closing date: 22nd January 2010

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information or an informal discussion of how the Institute operates and the opportunities for the successful candidate please telephone or write to the Institute for Animal Health, Compton, Berkshire, RG20 7NN (tel. 01635 578444) or email iah.vacancies@bbsrc.ac.uk.