



## INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

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### Group Leader of Avian Viral Immunology

#### POST REF: 2009 SENIOR RECRUITMENT POST 09P/0018

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 currently based on two sites: Compton (near Newbury) and Pirbright (near Woking) and employs over 400 staff and, at any one time, hosts to up to 50 students and visiting scientists.

In July 2009 Government announced an award of £100m+ to IAH to build a new laboratory at Pirbright (to be completed by 2013) that, together with new high-containment facilities for livestock, will provide a unique campus and one of the highest-quality environments for livestock disease research anywhere in the world. In September 2009 the Institute announced its intention to close the Compton campus in 2013 and to focus only on viral diseases of livestock at the new state-of-the-art Pirbright campus.

During this exciting time for IAH and an assured nationally recognised role for science delivered from the Pirbright campus, several new scientific appointments will be made during the next two years both to reinforce current areas of work and to open up new areas of virology in line with national priorities of food security, dealing with the impacts of climate change on the emergence of new pathogens and their vectors and the increasingly important "One medicine" agenda that will see greater engagement between the veterinary and human health research sectors.

#### **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

To help drive our new future at Pirbright and to reinforce the establishment of a world-class centre for avian disease research at the new campus, we now wish to recruit a leading avian immunologist of the highest calibre with proven track record in the field of avian immunology to lead an independent group to investigate the fundamental aspects of virus-host immune interactions and innate/adaptive immune responses to infection/vaccination to work complementarily with groups focussed on specific viral diseases such as Avian influenza, Marek's disease and Infectious bronchitis.

IAH currently has a strong programme on avian virus research at the Compton Laboratory with top level objectives that include efforts to advance understanding of how poultry resist and recover from infections; the mapping of markers and genes that contribute to host genetic resistance in chickens; to identify, characterise and understand interactions and functions of molecules that contribute to pathogenesis, virulence and host range restriction in avian species; to develop integrative and predictive models of the major pathogen-host interactions that contribute to the outcome of infection; to develop approaches for new or

improved vaccines against the most important poultry pathogens with the aim of inducing longer-lasting and more complete protection. Work at Compton will transfer to Pirbright by around 2013 and our programme on avian diseases will be augmented to reflect the increasing importance of poultry disease research in the context of good security, etc. IAH is well resourced for work on avian endemic, exotic and zoonotic viruses with many uniquely inbred lines of poultry kept in-house and IAH scientists has immediate access to immunological toolboxes developed over many years.

The post holder will establish an internationally competitively group at Pirbright and collaborate with different partners nationally and globally to ensure that IAH Pirbright is recognised as a major centre for the immunology of poultry diseases with an increasingly significant contribution to the “One medicine” research agenda for avian influenza and other viral zoonoses of poultry.

### **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 Group Leader post belongs to the Avian Infectious Diseases (AID) programme and will initially be based at Compton but will transfer to Pirbright by 2013. Travel will be required between the two sites until that time.

The successful candidate will report directly to the head of the AID programme.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The post holder research responsibilities include:

- developing and leading a world-class research portfolio on the fundamental immunology of avian hosts in response to challenge with viral pathogens
- deliver against targets agreed with BBSRC and Defra as part of IAH Science Strategy and in accordance with IAE requirements
- interacting with other members of the AID programme and other scientists at IAH to establish collaborative internal and external research links
- winning additional external grant funding to support their research within the programme
- 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
- play a full role in the research life of the Institute and represent the IAH externally as required. Within the IAH, at the request of senior management, full participation and membership of various internal committees will be necessary.
- 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)**

<b>SELECTION CRITERIA</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE</b>	<b>TESTED AT</b>
<b>Qualifications and Experience:</b>		
A PhD or equivalent in a relevant branch of biosciences	E	SIFT
Significant and relevant post-qualifying bench experience in a recognised R&D environment	E	SIFT
An excellent record of research productivity	E	SIFT
A high-quality research reputation (based on citation indices, invited lectures, honorary positions, awards)	E	SIFT
<b>Specific skills:</b>		
Evidence of experience and vision in the management of science and the ability to think and operate strategically	E	INTERVIEW
Evidence of the ability to manage and direct a diverse R&D operation which has significant interface with user communities	E	INTERVIEW
Evidence of leadership qualities in a multi-disciplinary environment	D	INTERVIEW
Evidence of experience of change-management, including and understanding of the key steps involved, influencing, strategic vision and change communication	E	INTERVIEW
Evidence of excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively and persuasively with funding bodies, peer-review groups, government agencies, etc	E	INTERVIEW
Evidence of networking and influencing skills and the ability to build effective collaborative links	D	INTERVIEW
Evidence of entrepreneurial skills and expertise	D	INTERVIEW
Evidence of ability to reconcile significant conflicting priorities and, where necessary, to make and stand by difficult or unpopular decisions	E	INTERVIEW
Evidence of awareness of key human resource management issues and capacity to apply "best practice" principles in HR management	D	INTERVIEW
Evidence of basic financial acumen and the ability to set	D	INTERVIEW

business goals and priorities and manage within prudent financial policies		
Evidence of an understanding of issues such as IP, Public Understanding of Science and of BBSRC's role in research careers and training	D	INTERVIEW
<b>Personal Skills:</b>		
Time management skills	E	INTERVIEW
Reliability under pressure	E	INTERVIEW
Decision making and problem solving skills	E	INTERVIEW
Ability to delegate	E	INTERVIEW
Highly developed negotiation and conciliation skills	E	INTERVIEW
Business planning skills	E	INTERVIEW
<b>Special requirements:</b>		
Capacity to travel extensively within UK, with long hours and occasional overnight stays	E	INTERVIEW

### **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, the candidate will be eligible to join the Research Council's Pension Scheme with a 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 subsidised child care scheme, staff restaurants and free parking. Staff work a 37 hour week, Monday to Friday.

### **Closing date:**

22<sup>nd</sup> 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 578411) or email [iah.vacancies@bbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:iah.vacancies@bbsrc.ac.uk).