



INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

Head of Influenza Research

POST REF: 2009 SENIOR RECRUITMENT POST 09P/0020

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 future at Pirbright, we now wish to recruit a virologist or immunologist of the highest calibre to lead the IAH programme of work on influenza in both avian and mammalian species.

The Head of Influenza Research will establish at the Pirbright campus a new UK centre for research into influenza in livestock, with a significant focus on avian influenzas and their study that makes use of the unique lines of poultry maintained within IAH.

The post holder will collaborate with different partners in the UK and internationally to make greatest use of complementary expertise and facilities and ensure that IAH Pirbright serves as an effective node in the delivery of the "One medicine" research agenda for avian influenza.

IAH currently has a programme on avian influenza at the Compton Laboratory and this will both transfer to Pirbright by around 2013 and be expanded during the next few years when facilities for working with highly pathogenic strains come on stream at the new campus. The top level objectives of the current Programme are primarily to identify interactions of the virus with the avian immune system, particularly in respect to understanding mechanisms of immune protection; aligned with studies on virus evolution to identify and characterise virus molecular determinants that contribute to virulence, transmissibility and pathogenesis. Ultimately, this dual approach is designed to contribute to the development of sustainable vaccination strategies to control and prevent AI virus infection in 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 ultimately be based at Pirbright although travel between the Compton and Pirbright site will be needed until 2013.

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

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The head of influenza research responsibilities include:

- developing and leading a world-class research portfolio on the biology of avian influenza and, in collaboration with others, establish a programme on other livestock influenza that both complements work being done elsewhere and makes use of the unique resources of the Pirbright laboratory.
- establish collaborations with national/International research groups working on influenza as well as organizations such as OIE/FAO/EU/USDA to lead in the global effort on controlling influenza.
- 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 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.
- 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)

SELECTION CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE	TESTED AT
Qualifications and Experience:		
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
Specific skills:		
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 business goals and priorities and manage within prudent financial policies	D	INTERVIEW
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
Personal Skills:		
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
Special requirements:		
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/G (dependent on experience) and is an indefinite contract. Starting salary is £42,769 to £60,627 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:

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 578411) or email iah.vacancies@bbsrc.ac.uk.