1. Advertisement

Post Title: Research Fellow in Sensory Neuroscience x 2
School/department: School of Life Sciences
Hours: Full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).
Contract: fixed term until at least 31 August 2021
Reference: 2473
Salary: Starting at £33,797 and rising to £38,017 per annum
Closing date: 15 November 2019.   Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.
Expected Interview date: 01 December 2019
Expected start date: 02 January 2020

Two post-doctoral positions funded by the Wellcome Trust are available in the laboratory of Leon Lagnado to study information processing in the visual system of zebrafish. Fluorescent reporters of neural activity will be used in conjunction with advanced imaging methods to investigate how the retinal output is generated and the subsequent processing of this output in visual centres of the brain. A number of projects are available but one aim will be to investigate how neuromodulators act on visual circuits to reconfigure signal flow.

We are a very active research group (https://lagnadolab.com) embedded in a strong research culture in which a number of other groups use imaging and electrophysiology to study neural circuits involved in sensory processing (http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sussexneuroscience/). We are located in the vibrant city of Brighton and London is 1 hour away.

Applicants must have a Ph.D and research experience in experimental neuroscience. One post would suit a person with a background in the analysis of neural circuits. The second post would suit a person with skills in molecular biology. Informal enquiries are encouraged and should be made to Leon Lagnado (l.lagnado@sussex.ac.uk).

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds

The School is committed to equality and valuing diversity, and currently holds an Athena SWAN Silver Award. Applications are particularly welcomed from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics (STEMM) at Sussex. The School of Life Sciences welcomes applications to academic posts from candidates who wish to work part-time or as job-sharers.

The University offers various schemes to provide real benefits to parents, these can be found at Family Friendly Policies

For full details and how to apply see our vacancies page

2. The School/Division

The School of Life Sciences is the largest School in the University in terms of research activity with an annual research income of over £13m, and one of the largest in terms of student and staff population. The School has a teaching and research faculty of nearly 80, over 150 research fellows and technicians, and a small professional services team. Life Sciences have played a major role in the research and teaching of the University of Sussex since 1961. The original School of Biological Sciences (BIOLS), founded by John Maynard Smith FRS, trained some of the world's leading biologists and biomedical scientists, and was a beacon of innovation and creativity in its integrated approach to research and teaching.

The current School of Life Sciences was formed in 2009 when Professor Laurence Pearl FRS was appointed as founding Head of the new School. Under his leadership the School adopted a unified structure with no formal departments. Instead there are six research Subject Groups – Neuroscience; Evolution, Behaviour and Environment; Genome Damage and Stability; Biochemistry and Biomedicine; Chemistry and the Sussex Drug Discovery Centre. Each research subject group is chaired by a prominent scientist, who is responsible for research leadership in their subject. The School currently has six Fellows of the Royal Society (FRS) and seven Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences (FMedSci) on its Faculty.

We have a large and vigorous post graduate research community with over 170 PhD students undertaking cutting-edge research across all our areas of interest. As well as standard PhD programmes in all the Subject Groups, we also offer a highly interdisciplinary 4-year Neurosciences PhD incorporating a first year with laboratory rotations, run in partnership with the Schools of Psychology and Engineering and Informatics, and the Brighton and Sussex Medical School.

In the REF2014 more than 96% of the School's research was rated as 'world leading', 'internationally excellent', or 'internationally recognised'. Our Biological Sciences research in particular was ranked 10th in the UK overall, and 8th on quality of our research outputs – putting us comfortably above the majority of Russell Group institutions.

The University of Sussex is a medium sized research intensive University based on a single campus in Falmer, just outside Brighton in East Sussex. The University has ambitious plans to develop its teaching and research; for example, to move from a taught student population of c13,000 to one of c18,000 by 2018.

3. Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title: Research Fellow

Grade: 7

School: Life Sciences

Location: CRPC 5.08

Responsible to: Professor Leon Lagnado

Role description: Research Fellow I is an early career-grade research position. Post-holders will be expected to contribute to the work of the research team, and also to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1.   To engage in individual and/or collaborative research activity resulting in high-quality publications; and to develop research funding and knowledge exchange income individually or in collaboration with others, as appropriate, depending on the size and scope of the bid.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1.   Research, Scholarship & Enterprise

1.2   Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.

1.3   Conduct research projects individually and in collaboration with others.

1.4   Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.

1.5   Produce high-quality research outputs for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate.

1.6   Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.

1.7   Individually or with colleagues, explore opportunities for enterprise activity, knowledge exchange income and/or consultancy, where permissible.

1.8   Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.

1.9   Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.

2. Teaching & Student Support

2.1 Undertake teaching duties, if required.

2.2 Assist in the assessment of student knowledge and supervision of student projects if required.

2.3 Assist in the development of student research skills, for example as part of a postgraduate supervision team.

3. Contribution to School & University

3.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.

3.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School.

4. Role-specific duties

4.1 To undertake research aimed at understanding sensory processing in zebrafish.
4.2 To identify, develop and apply techniques to pursue the research objectives.
4.3 To present scientific work at seminars within the Laboratory and at external meetings
4.4 To contribute to lab-wide discussions on developments within the field.
4.5 To draft scientific papers, and contribute to the overall preparation of research for publication
4.6 To assist in the training of PhD students and other members of the laboratory where necessary.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- A PhD or equivalent scholarly or relevant professional activity

- Pursuing a line of independent research within a research group.

- Publishing research (either from a recently completed PhD or new original research).

- Other forms of externally recognised professional practice of creative output of a standing equivalent to regular publication of original research.

- Initiating, developing or participating in links between the University and external bodies such as business and industry, the professions, community organisations and policy-makers.

- Evidence of successful engagement in teaching or supervision.

December 2018

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Normally educated to doctoral level, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).

2. Evidence of engagement in high-quality research activity.

3. Excellent presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.

4. Ability to work individually on own initiative and without close supervision, and as part of a team.

5. Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.

6. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.

7. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.

8. Excellent IT skills.

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

1. PhD in Neuroscience.
2. A strong work ethic.
3. Commitment to high-quality research.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Emerging track record of high-quality publications in reputable journals and other appropriate media of similar standing.

2. Experience of generating research or knowledge exchange income.

3. Experience in use of zebrafish for research.

4. Experience in molecular biology.

5. Experience with multiphoton imaging of neuronal activity.

6. Experience in analysing neural circuits.