

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX



Advertisement

Research Fellow in Medicinal Chemistry

School/department: School of Life Sciences, Sussex Drug Discovery Centre.

Hours: full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1 FTE, core hours 10am-4pm. Requests for [flexible working](#) options will be considered (subject to business need).

Contract: fixed term until July 2023

Reference: 8203

Salary range: £34,304 to £40,927 per annum, pro rata if part time

Placed on: 1 April 2022

Closing date: 5 May 2022 Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected start date: ASAP

The Sussex Drug Discovery Centre (SDDC) wishes to recruit a talented scientist with experience in medicinal chemistry, synthetic chemistry and CNS ion channel drug discovery. SDDC is a multi-disciplinary team of drug discovery scientists developing novel cancer (including fragment based drug discovery towards DNA damage and epigenetic targets) and ion channel therapeutics. Working closely with the Genome Damage and Stability Centre, leaders in industry and academia, the position will allow the candidate to take a prominent role towards the development of new treatments and chemical probes. This is a unique opportunity to join a research group working in a multidisciplinary environment on an exciting and emerging area of oncology drug discovery research. The project is led by Prof John Spencer and an overview of research within the SDDC can be found at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sddc/index>

EDI statement:

The School of Life Sciences is committed to increasing the diversity of its staff and providing an inclusive working environment. The School currently holds an Athena SWAN Silver Award, has developed a Race Equity Action Plan and hosts an active Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. Applications are particularly welcomed from Black and minority ethnic candidates, and women, trans and non-binary candidates, who are under-represented in the School of Life Sciences.

Applications to posts from candidates who wish to work part-time or as job-sharers are welcome. 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](#)

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

Visa Sponsorship Queries:

This role has been assigned an eligible SOC code and meets the salary requirements for Skilled Worker Sponsorship. Please consult our [Skilled Worker Visa information page](#) for further information about Visa Sponsorship.

Please note that this position may be subject to [ATAS clearance](#) if you require visa sponsorship.

2. The School of Life Sciences

The [School of Life Sciences](#) has a mission statement *to enhance human health and environmental sustainability, through research, education and knowledge exchange*. It undertakes research, teaching and engagement across a wide range of the Life Sciences, from Chemistry through a range of Biological and Medically-related Sciences to Conservation Biology. The breadth and depth of cutting-edge research and innovative teaching practice requires a diverse community who work across boundaries to deliver excellence.

The School is the largest in the University in terms of research activity, with an annual research income of c£16m, and is one of the largest in terms of student and staff population: The School has a teaching and research faculty of around 100, over 200 research fellows and technicians, and an administrative team of around 25. We aim to develop scientists that are able to connect with global issues and develop innovative solutions to the challenges that face the planet.

Academics within the School of Life Sciences apply their [research](#) to create impact in areas as diverse as addressing neurodegenerative diseases, saving endangered species, fostering sustainable agriculture and developing diagnostics for cancer and rare diseases. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF2014), more than 96% of the School's research was rated as 'world leading', 'internationally excellent' or 'internationally recognised', putting us above many Russell Group institutions. As part of our research impact, we have developed relationships with business, policy and community partners. Our vibrant post-graduate research community is made up of around 180 PhD students and they are key to our success, undertaking cutting-edge research across all of our areas of interest in the Life Sciences.

Research in the School of Life Sciences is structured into [six collaborative Subject Groups](#), led by a Subject Chair who is a leader in their field. These are *Biochemistry & Biomedicine, Genome Damage and Stability Centre, Neuroscience, Evolution, Behaviour & Environment, Sussex Drug Discovery Centre* and *Chemistry*. The Head of School (Professor Sarah Guthrie, in post since 2017) leads the Head of School Executive, which includes two Deputy Heads of School (one focussed on research, the other on education), the School Administrator and the Director of Technical Services. Wider School organisation and administration is overseen by the School Management Committee, which includes the Subject Chairs and others in Directorship roles.

The School's teaching is firmly based on our research excellence and offers students an intellectually stimulating yet supportive experience, with opportunities for personal research experience and use of modern technology to enhance learning. The School has a population of around 1650 undergraduates studying a [range of subjects](#) across the School's expertise. For each degree we offer a 3-year BSc and a 4-year integrated Masters (MSci or MChem). We also offer a Life Sciences Foundation Year, which is ideally suited for students whose A-level (or equivalent) qualifications don't meet the requirements for direct entry on to our

BSc/MSci degrees. We have a population of around 85 postgraduate taught students undertaking [MSc or MRes courses](#) across our subject expertise.

The School is committed to the [University's core values](#) of kindness, integrity, inclusion, collaboration and courage. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (with representation on the School Management Committee) promotes and encourages our values across the School, [championing initiatives](#) that meet the [University's goals](#) of being Equal, Diverse, Accessible and Flexible. We currently hold an Athena SWAN Silver Award and have a BAME Awarding Gap Committee who closely liaise with the University's Race Equality Charter committee. The School also hosts a wellbeing room and a multi-faith prayer room within its estate. We believe that equality, diversity and inclusion is everyone's business and aim to provide a friendly and supportive environment for all who work, study and visit the School of Life Sciences.

3. Job Description

Job Title:	Research Fellow in Medicinal Chemistry
Grade:	Research Fellow I, Grade 7
School:	School of Life Sciences (Sussex Drug Discovery Centre)
Location:	Chichester II
Responsible to:	Prof John Spencer through to Head of School
Direct reports:	n/a
Key contacts:	Members of research group, members of faculty within the School and University.
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.
2. To contribute to School teaching activities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1 Research, Scholarship & Enterprise

- 1.1 Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.
- 1.2 Conduct research projects individually and in collaboration with others.
- 1.3 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
- 1.4 Produce high-quality research outputs for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate, and contribute to the School's REF submission at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence.
- 1.5 Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.
- 1.6 Individually or with colleagues, explore opportunities for enterprise activity, knowledge exchange income and/or consultancy, where permissible.
- 1.7 Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.
- 1.8 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. Make a significant contribution to the GluK1 drug discovery projects through the design of efficient synthetic routes and the synthesis and characterisation of target molecules
- 4.2. Advance the hit expansion and early lead optimisation by the application of expert data analysis (predicted, biological, physicochemical etc) to the design of prospective target molecules and generation of new intellectual property
- 4.3. Ensure efficient, effective collaboration across all team members.

4.4. Present and report results as required.

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 or 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.

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. Recognised expertise in medicinal chemistry, synthetic chemistry and drug discovery
2. Ability to synthesise, purify and characterise molecules and develop new synthetic routes and techniques
3. Able to work independently and design innovative solutions to problems
4. Experience of leading medicinal chemistry strategies applicable to CNS drugs
5. Demonstrable track record of working on ion channel modulator projects

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Experience of working with structurally enabled targets