



## **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**POSITION TITLE:** Experienced Research Assistant

**POSITION LOCATION:** Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute

**EMPLOYMENT TYPE:** Full time and fixed term

### **POSITION CONTEXT:**

The Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute (ONJCRI) is an independent medical research located in Heidelberg. The ONJCRI is a leader in the development of experimental and breakthrough cancer treatments. We investigate and develop treatments for cancers of the breast, bowel, lung, melanoma, prostate, liver, gastrointestinal and brain. Our researchers and clinicians are running more than 200 clinical trials, giving patients access to potential new treatments including immunotherapies and personalised medicine. These trials are an integral part of our journey towards finding better, more effective treatments for cancer.

The ONJCRI is the successor to the global Ludwig Cancer Research organisation with a proud track record of a quarter century of collaborative clinical research programs with Austin Health. Much of ONJCRI's strong foundation is built on the Ludwig Cancer Research legacy. Moreover, through the ONJCRI's exciting partnership with La Trobe University as its School of Cancer Medicine, we play a pivotal role in training Australia's future generations of medical researchers.

This position is shared between the ONJCRI Cancer Immunobiology Laboratory (CIBL) and the Tumor-Immune Network (TIN) Laboratory. These Laboratories undertake basic research in cancer immunotherapy and the cellular biology of cancer, particularly melanoma, which is funded through both Australian and International competitive research grants and industry collaborations. We developed integrated clinical and laboratory teams focused on understanding immune responses against cancer and exploring new cancer therapies based on this knowledge. New insights into tumor resistance have shown that it is also critical to understand the biology of cancer plasticity to counter the mechanisms that underpin escape from immune control. Our research brings these elements together with the intention of achieving greater clinical benefit.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Research Assistant will be involved in a range of projects to identify novel targets and targetable mechanisms for melanoma and other cancers in the area of cancer-immunology. The major focus of the projects will involve cell culture, cell based assays including assays with human T cells, flow-cytometry (blood and cancer cells), mouse tumour models and IHC and IHC-F using state-of-the-art multi-colour staining. Other duties will include processing of tissue samples (blood and tumour).

### **REPORTING LINES:**

This position reports to the Joint Lab Heads Prof. Jonathan Cebon and Dr. Andreas Behren.

#### **KEY RELATIONSHIPS:**

The following key relationships that are an essential component of the position include:

##### **Internal:**

Lab Heads, CIBL and TIN  
All Staff, CIBL and TIN  
Lab Support staff of ONJCRI  
Administration Staff of ONJCRI

##### **External:**

Clinical Staff at Austin Health  
Collaborators at other institutions or industry

#### **ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

- Perform laboratory studies as directed by the laboratory heads. This includes but is not exclusive of other tasks that may be required from time-to-time;
  - Flow cytometry
  - Human T cell assays
  - IHC or IF
  - Mouse work including injections, blood draws and analysis of samples
  - functional assays for cell characterization
  - Isolation of RNA and DNA from cell lines and tumour samples
  - qPCR
- Precise documentation of all laboratory studies undertaken.
- Must be highly motivated and flexible to meet industry partner deadlines including work on public holidays and weekends
- Able to analyse data from experiments, prepare reports of an interpretive nature and present data.
- Comply with workplace safety requirements and laboratory regulatory environment.
- Order reagents and maintain stocks of reagents as required.
- Participate in communal housekeeping duties for the laboratory as required.
- Participate in committees or subcommittees of the Campus or Branch if required.

#### **CHALLENGES:**

This position requires an enthusiasm for work with patient samples and animals. We are searching for a research assistant with minimum 2 -3years of experience in flow cytometry, human T cell assays and animal models. The role includes the application of standard and non-standard techniques which should be performed with efficiency and accuracy and should consistently meet a high standard. Within this role it is necessary to be familiar with the use of, and be able to exercise diagnostic skills on sophisticated equipment and systems.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

An Honours or Masters/PhD degree in a relevant scientific area is essential. Extensive experience or specialist expertise in cell culture and flow cytometry techniques is required.

**EXPERIENCE & CAPABILITIES:**

- Strong laboratory skills in flow cytometry (immunology) and animal work.
- Expertise in immunological in vitro assay (T cells, MODCs)
- Experience with standard molecular techniques (DNA/RNA extraction/qPCR/cloning/Western-Blotting)
- Effective planning skills are required.
- Effective interpersonal skills including successful skills in collaboration and cooperation must be evident.
- Ability to participate as part of an effective working team.
- Experience in cell sorting would be an advantage.
- Must be capable of using standard and modified experimental procedures across a diverse range of laboratory methods and techniques.
- An understanding of and compliance with safety requirements in relation to experimentation with human cells or tissues is required.
- Experience with immunohistochemistry (desirable/optional).