



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**POSITION TITLE:** 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 institute located in Heidelberg. Our mission is to discover and develop breakthrough therapies to help people live better with cancer and defeat it. Our research laboratories sit alongside patient treatment facilities to optimise collaboration between researchers and clinicians. The integration of laboratory and clinic ensures the rapid translation of scientific discoveries into clinical trials for the development of new cancer treatments. We investigate and develop treatments for cancers of the breast, bowel, lung, melanoma, prostate, liver, gastrointestinal and brain. The ONJCRI is a global leader in the development of immunotherapies, targeted therapeutics and personalised cancer medicine and sponsors early phase clinical trials.

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.

The position is within the Cell Death and Survival laboratory, which is involved in basic and early stage translational research investigating the molecular basis cell death and autophagy pathways, and developing new reagents to target these processes.

### PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Research Assistant will be required to perform a range of animal, molecular biology and cell biology, as well as basic biochemical experiments. These will include mouse handling, tumour cell injection, drug treatment, as well as standard western blotting, basic molecular biology techniques including cloning, PCR, genotyping) and routine maintenance of cell lines. Experience using FACS would be an advantage.

### REPORTING LINES:

This position reports to the Laboratory Head, Cell Death and Survival Laboratory and senior research staff within the laboratory. The Research Assistant may be involved with supervision of junior staff and students.

### KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

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

#### Internal:

- Scientists and staff within the Cell Death and Survival Laboratory
- Other research groups within the ONJCRI
- Professional Services staff of the ONJCRI

**External:**

Major collaborators in Melbourne and overseas  
Relevant hospital departments and groups  
Other collaborators as warranted by the program

**ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

**Conduct a range of standard experiments in a Research laboratory setting:**

- Mouse handling, tumour cell injection, drug treatment (I.P./tail vein injection, oral gavage)
- Cloning of DNA constructs in standard vectors
- Cell culture, maintenance and documentation of cell lines
- Maintain highly accurate records and validation of data
- Analysing experimental data and preparing reports of an interpretive nature

**Laboratory Maintenance**

- Maintain supplies and validate operational status of equipment
- Purchasing
- Maintain laboratory databases

**AUTHORITY:**

Delegated authority is in accordance with ONJCRI policies and procedures.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Accurate and meticulous collection of specimens and validation of data for reports and presentation
- Some out of hours work may be required
- Contribute to efficient and safe operation of laboratories
- Maintain an awareness of the short and long terms goals of projects

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

The Research Assistant will have a science degree (preferably with honours) or equivalent qualifications or experience in pharmaceutical or biological sciences such as molecular biology, biochemistry, and pharmacology.

**EXPERIENCE & CAPABILITIES:**

- At least 2 years laboratory experience as part of a research team with demonstrated ability to work both independently and co-operatively in a small team environment with minimal supervision.
- A meticulous approach to experimental work including the ability to accurately process clinical specimens, store and retrieve for analysis
- Excellent organisational and computer skills involving the accurate entry of data, performing basic calculations and analysis

**THE FOLLOWING ATTRIBUTES WOULD BE ESSENTIAL OR STRONGLY REGARDED**

- Experience with mouse handling (very important)
- Experience in molecular biology techniques such as cloning, PCR (very important)
- Experience with cell culture and techniques such western blotting (very important)
- Ability to analyse data and to produce reports of an interpretive nature
- Demonstrated research productivity at a high level
- Ability to work with thoroughness, accuracy and attention to detail with demonstrated innovative problem solving skills in order to complete projects according to deadlines.
- Willingness to learn new techniques and the capacity for flexibility and willingness to change direction based on research needs
- Effective interpersonal and communication skills together with the capacity to participate in laboratory meetings and provide feedback
- Ability to maintain the laboratory together with experience in maintaining lab supplies via ordering, receiving and associated documentation