



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Department of Clinical Pathology**  
Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences

### Research Assistant

<b>POSITION NO</b>	0057673
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>	Level A
<b>SALARY</b>	\$80,258 - \$108,906 p.a.
<b>SUPERANNUATION</b>	Employer contribution of 17%
<b>WORKING HOURS</b>	Full time (negotiable)
<b>EMPLOYMENT TYPE</b>	Fixed-term contract (2-years)
<b>OTHER BENEFITS</b>	<a href="https://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/staff-benefits">https://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/staff-benefits</a>
<b>HOW TO APPLY</b>	Online applications are preferred. Go to <a href="http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers">http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers</a> , select the relevant option ('Current Opportunities' or 'Jobs available to current staff'), then find the position by title or number.
<b>CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES ONLY</b>	A/Prof Richard Tohill Email: <a href="mailto:rtohill@unimelb.edu.au">rtohill@unimelb.edu.au</a>  <i>Please do not send your application to this contact</i>

For information about working for the University of Melbourne, visit our websites:  
[about.unimelb.edu.au/careers](http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers)

## ***Acknowledgement of Country***

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples (Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Parkville, Southbank and Werribee campuses), the Yorta Yorta Nation (Dookie and Shepparton campuses), and the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders of all Indigenous nations and clans who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent, with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years. We also acknowledge their enduring cultural practices of caring for Country.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy. As a community of researchers, teachers, professional staff and students we are privileged to work and learn every day with Indigenous colleagues and partners.

## ***Position Summary***

We are seeking a highly motivated and technically proficient Research Assistant to be part of a new translational research project involving the development of innovative diagnostic methods for the analysis of cell-free DNA in the blood of cancer patients.

The Rare Disease Oncogenomics (RADIO) Laboratory within the Department of Clinical Pathology and University of Melbourne Centre for Cancer Research (UMCCR) is dedicated to translational research of rare cancers of unmet clinical need. The laboratory specialises in the field of cancer genomics and development genomic methods that can help improve and speed up a cancer diagnosis as well as identify better treatment options.

The Research Assistant will provide research support to the established team of wet and dry lab researchers within the RADIO lab and will work closely with collaborators at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre. The role will principally involve application of innovative new next-generation sequencing methods as well as assisting in the collection and banking of patient samples.

The role will also contribute to the University of Melbourne's partnership with international genomics company Illumina. The University has entered a long-term strategic partnership with Illumina, a global leader in genomics technology, to jointly foster the development of world-leading genomics research and innovation activities and to accelerate the translation of these innovations through to adoption in the healthcare system. Together, Illumina and the University have established The Advanced Genomics Collaboration (TAGC), a Victorian Government funded initiative which aims to support a pipeline of commercially focused genomics innovation projects to deliver a cluster of new high growth, high-tech start-ups within the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct.

The Research Assistant will be required to keep accurate records of all their work and to present this work to the laboratory head at regular meetings. Formal and informal presentation of this work, as well as participation in team/group discussions/presentations, is essential. Another important responsibility of the incumbent will be the day-to-day maintenance of the laboratory.

## 1. Key Responsibilities

- ▶ Library preparation for next-generation sequencing using a range of different protocols.
- ▶ Technical evaluation of new commercial kits and methods using appropriate controls
- ▶ Contribution to the receiving, processing and storage of tissue and blood samples, including logging, invoicing, result analysis, maintaining sample database and ensuring the preservation of patient confidentiality.
- ▶ Extraction of nucleic acids from patient tissue and blood samples and appropriate record keeping in databases
- ▶ Responsible for contributing to the operational management of the laboratory, including via keeping track of stocks and general laboratory, budgeting and administrative functions.
- ▶ Contribution to the technical training and supervision of students and staff working in the Rare Disease Oncogenomics Laboratory
- ▶ Software-assisted analysis, interpretation and reporting of data.
- ▶ Jointly responsible for preparing and maintaining standard operating procedures in respect of OH&S regulations
- ▶ Assisting with general laboratory upkeep, including cleaning, maintenance of adequate laboratory supplies and upkeep of equipment.
- ▶ Participating in internal or external training sessions and conferences as required.
- ▶ Undertake research under supervision with the collation of research results for presentation and publication.
- ▶ Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) responsibilities as outlined in section 6 and participation in their meetings.

## 2. Selection Criteria

### 2.1 ESSENTIAL

- ▶ Bachelor of Science (Honours), Bachelor of Biomedicine (Honours) or Master's degree in a relevant biomedical sciences area
- ▶ Demonstrated knowledge of the molecular basis of cancer.
- ▶ Demonstrated high level of technical competency using molecular methods.
- ▶ Ability to undertake research evidenced by contributions and outputs within the scope of the level of appointment and career achievement.
- ▶ Demonstrated computer skills, including experience in using Microsoft Office, image analysis and statistical software, and database programs.
- ▶ Attention to detail with demonstrated ability to consistently produce high quality output and to meet established targets and deadlines.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to collect and record information accurately and reliably.
- ▶ Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to communicate effectively with senior staff.
- ▶ Well-developed organisational as well as written/oral communication skills
- ▶ The ability to work under direction as part of a small team with some degree of autonomy.

- ▶ Demonstrated ability and willingness to learn new techniques and follow established protocols.

## 2.2 DESIRABLE

- ▶ Prior experience with next-generation sequencing platforms including library preparation and down-stream analytics and interpretation.
- ▶ A strong commitment to collaborate with other institutes and laboratories and clinicians around the Parkville campus.

## 3. *Special Requirements*

- ▶ The work will involve handling of human tissues. Skills and experience in biohazard containment procedures will need to be demonstrated.
- ▶ Vaccination for Tetanus and Hepatitis A and B is required to perform the tasks associated with this position (available at the University).
- ▶ This position may require the incumbent to work flexible hours when necessary, including after hours and weekend work. Work hours may be flexible provided the needs of the projects are met.

## 4. *Job Complexity, Skills, Knowledge*

### 4.1 LEVEL OF SUPERVISION / INDEPENDENCE

The incumbent shall operate under direct supervision and general direction of the Rare Disease Oncogenomics Laboratory Head.

This position will contribute to the running of a laboratory and to ensuring that assays performed in this laboratory are performed according to Good Laboratory Practice. To this effect the incumbent is expected to contribute to the daily technical supervision of students and staff working in this laboratory and will provide regular technical and operational reports to the Group Leader, Professor Richard Tothill

### 4.2 PROBLEM SOLVING AND JUDGEMENT

The incumbent will be required to apply the correct standard operating procedures (SOP) for all performed assays and will be expected to refer to relevant SOPs to determine guiding principles when required to resolve any uncertainty arising during their experimental work. If existing SOP's do not provide sufficient guidance to the circumstance in question, the incumbent will seek further professional guidance from supervising staff. In these circumstances, problems relating to test integrity and safety matters should be discussed immediately with the Laboratory Head. The incumbent will be required to take corrective action, where possible, in the event of equipment malfunction and advise senior staff accordingly. The incumbent will be responsible for individual time management on a day-to-day basis, and for using initiative in prioritising work and balancing a range of tasks. Judgement will be needed to ensure matters are escalated when necessary.

### 4.3 PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The incumbent is expected to have the training and skill at undergraduate degree level to undertake a range of routine molecular and cell biology tests and assist with more complex tests.

The incumbent must be familiar with general laboratory procedures and comply with relevant Faculty and University policy and procedures as well as procedures pertaining to the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC) building.

### 4.4 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The incumbent contributes to the effective running of the laboratory, including information flow and management of documentation and records.

The incumbent will be required to develop a good working knowledge of the University financial systems for the purpose of ordering and receiving reagents and consumables for the laboratory. They will also be responsible for the management of reagents and consumables stock levels.

### 4.5 BREADTH OF THE POSITION

The position will work within the Rare Disease Oncogenomics Laboratory in the University of Melbourne Department of Clinical Pathology, located within the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre building. The role will liaise with a range of staff at a variety of levels across the University and with stakeholders such as partner hospitals and institutes, located locally and nationally, including Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

## 5. *Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion*

The University is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a workplace free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. The University makes decisions on employment, promotion, and reward on the basis of merit.

The University is committed to all aspects of equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and to providing all staff, students, contractors, honorary appointees, volunteers and visitors with a safe, respectful and rewarding environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and victimisation. This commitment is set out in the Advancing Melbourne strategy that addresses diversity and inclusion, equal employment opportunity, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and appropriate workplace behaviour. All staff are required to comply with all University policies.

The University values diversity because we recognise that the differences in our people's age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, physical ability and background bring richness to our work environment. Consequently, the People Strategy sets out the strategic aim to drive diversity and inclusion across the University to create an environment where the compounding benefits of a diverse workforce are recognised as vital in our continuous desire to strive for excellence and reach the targets of Advancing Melbourne.

## 6. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

All staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other personnel who may be affected by their conduct.

OHS responsibilities applicable to positions are published at:

<https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/people/community/responsibilities-of-personnel>

These include general staff responsibilities and those additional responsibilities that apply for Managers and Supervisors and other Personnel.

## 7. Other Information

### 7.1 THE DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL PATHOLOGY

<https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/school-structure/clinical-pathology>

The Department of Clinical Pathology focuses on graduate learning and teaching, research and engagement in the clinical discipline of pathology. The Department is located at the Parkville campus with offices in the state-of-the-art Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC) building.

The Department of Clinical Pathology collaborates broadly with other Departments, Centres, Schools and Faculties of the University of Melbourne, health services and medical research institutes to generate new knowledge in cancer research to improve the outcomes of patients. Initial programs of research will specifically focus on the molecular defects of tumours and the utility of applying the knowledge of these defects to prognostication and treatment of patients with cancer. The Department of Clinical Pathology also provides specialist laboratories for cancer cell biology, DNA bio-banking, rapid large scale, next generation sequencing and organoid generation and testing.

Whilst the initial research focus of the MMS Department of Clinical Pathology is cancer research it also has a more generalist remit for graduate learning and teaching and engagement across the broader areas of clinical pathology. The Department of Clinical Pathology teaches into the Melbourne Medical School's flagship course, the Doctor of Medicine and has thriving Honours, Masters and PhD student cohorts.

### 7.2 MELBOURNE MEDICAL SCHOOL

<https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au>

Established in 1862, Melbourne Medical School (MMS) in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at The University of Melbourne is the oldest medical school in Australia. It is internationally renowned for global leadership in teaching and training, health research, policy and practice. MMS is ranked 14th in the world (Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022 for clinical, pre-clinical and health), has strong academic partnerships and ground-breaking collaborative research programs with leading public and private hospitals, as well as leading medical research institutes and centres in Australia and internationally.

Under the leadership of Professor Nicola Lautenschlager, MMS spans all major fields of medicine and is comprised of thirteen clinical departments:

- Baker Department of Cardiometabolic Health;
- Clinical Pathology;

- Critical Care;
- General Practice and Primary Care;
- Medical Education;
- Infectious Diseases;
- Medicine;
- Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Newborn Health;
- Paediatrics;
- Psychiatry;
- Radiology;
- Rural Health; and
- Surgery.

MMS has more than 1,200 academic and professional staff members located at the Parkville campus or embedded within health services throughout metropolitan Melbourne and rural Victoria. Staff are privileged to work alongside more than 2,296 honorary appointees from the health sector who generously contribute their time, knowledge, research and clinical expertise.

MMS is committed to improving community wellbeing through the discovery and application of new knowledge. With annual research income of \$165 million, the School's research effort is highly collaborative, spanning research programs from basic to translational. The School has research collaborations across the 47 partner organisations in the vibrant Melbourne Biomedical Precinct, as well as nationally and internationally. These partnerships enable medical advances to impact healthcare delivery as rapidly and seamlessly as possible.

The School's flagship Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree was the first Masters level entry-to-practice qualification of its kind developed in Australia, setting a new benchmark in medical education. Now, the new curriculum launched in 2022 has created more responsive, modular, technology-enhanced learning for state-of-the-art curriculum delivery. Continuous research and discovery options, and an ability to tailor the degree, allows each student to gain deeper experience in areas of greatest interest. The MD Rural Pathway offers students the opportunity to undertake their entire program in rural Victoria, with a \$6.5 million expansion of facilities in Shepparton to accommodate this. There is also an expanded range of joint degree pathways on offer. The School utilises the Department of General Practice's continually expanding network of general practitioners and primary healthcare providers in the community to ensure that MD students are also provided with quality community-based medical education.

In addition to the MD, MMS has an ever-expanding portfolio of other vocationally oriented programs. These teach research skills, leadership and continuing professional development in specific disciplines. An emphasis on the clinician-scientist career trajectory – with training, support and ongoing career pathways at graduate and postgraduate levels – is central to the School's development of future leaders in all aspects of healthcare, education, research and policy. MMS has over 600 higher degree by research candidates located both within Departments and across its network of partners.

School staff and honorary appointees lead and participate in public debate and advocacy around key health issues and policy based on the MMS values of commitment, integrity, compassion, respect and service. The School also offers a range of initiatives and programs in support of its diverse and inclusive culture:

<https://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/about/diversity-and-inclusion> MMS is always looking to recruit talented individuals across a wide range of medical disciplines which include leadership roles. This presents a wonderful opportunity for appointees to help drive the strategy, growth and continued excellence of Australia's leading medical school.

### 7.3 FACULTY OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

[www.mdhs.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.mdhs.unimelb.edu.au)

The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) plays a vital role in the delivery of the University of Melbourne's Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Growing Esteem by providing current and future generations with education and research equal to the best in the world. It is Australia's largest and leading biomedical research faculty. It employs more than 1,700 members of staff, has more than 8,000 students, and total revenue of \$607 million for 2015. Reflecting the complexity of today's global health landscape, the Faculty is made up of six different Schools and four Strategic Research Initiatives, and draws together all areas of human health, ranging from the most basic to the most applied areas of research. The Faculty contributes close to 50 per cent of research conducted at the University.

The Faculty has appointed Australia's first Associate Dean (Indigenous Development) to lead the development and implementation of the Faculty's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will be aligned with the broader University-wide plan. To enable the Faculty to improve its Indigenous expertise knowledge base, the Faculty's RAP will address Indigenous employment, Indigenous student recruitment and retention, Indigenous cultural recognition and building partnerships with the Indigenous community as key areas of development.

### 7.4 THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Established in 1853, the University of Melbourne is a leading international university with a tradition of excellence in teaching and research. The main campus in Parkville is recognised as the hub of Australia's premier knowledge precinct comprising eight hospitals, many leading research institutes and a wide-range of knowledge-based industries. With outstanding performance in international rankings, the University is at the forefront of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

The University employs people of outstanding calibre and offers a unique environment where staff are valued and rewarded.

Further information about working at The University of Melbourne is available at <http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers>

### 7.5 ADVANCING MELBOURNE

The University's strategic direction is grounded in its purpose. While its expression may change, our purpose is enduring: to benefit society through the transformative impact of education and research. Together, the vision and purpose inform the focus and scale of our aspirations for the coming decade.

Advancing Melbourne reflects the University's commitment to its people, its place, and its partners. Our aspiration for 2030 is to be known as a world-leading and globally connected Australian university, with our students at the heart of everything we do.

- ▶ We will offer students a distinctive and outstanding education and experience, preparing them for success as leaders, change agents and global citizens.
- ▶ We will be recognised locally and globally for our leadership on matters of national and global importance, through outstanding research and scholarship and a commitment to collaboration.



- ▶ We will be empowered by our sense of place and connections with communities. We will take opportunities to advance both the University and the City of Melbourne in close collaboration and synergy.
- ▶ We will deliver this through building a brilliant, diverse and vibrant University community, with strong connections to those we serve.

The means for achieving these goals include the development of the University of Melbourne's academic and professional staff and the capabilities needed to support a modern, world-class university. Those means require a commitment to ongoing financial sustainability and an ambitious infrastructure program which will reshape the campus and our contribution to the communities we engage with. This strategy, and the priorities proposed, is centred around five intersecting themes; place, community, education, discovery and global.

## 7.6 GOVERNANCE

The Vice Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and responsible to Council for the good management of the University.

Comprehensive information about the University of Melbourne and its governance structure is available at <https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance>