



RESEARCH OFFICER

DEPARTMENT/UNIT	School of Psychological Sciences
FACULTY/DIVISION	Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences
CLASSIFICATION	HEW Level 5
DESIGNATED CAMPUS OR LOCATION	Clayton campus

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Monash is a university of transformation, progress and optimism. Our people are our most valued asset, with our academics among the best in the world and our professional staff revolutionising the way we operate as an organisation. For more information about our University and our exciting future, please visit www.monash.edu.

The **Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences**, is the largest faculty at Monash University, and offers the most comprehensive suite of professional health training in Victoria. We consistently rank in the top 40 universities worldwide for clinical, pre-clinical and health sciences. We want to improve the human condition. That is our vision - it has no expiration date. Through academic health centres, other translational models and by educating the healthcare workforce of the future, our staff, students and alumni directly improve quality of life. Setting the global health care agenda, the Faculty aspires to lead in all areas of research activity and influence local, national and international policy to improve health and social outcomes and health inequalities. We've made a major impact in the world of medical research and become globally recognised for our quality education of over 41,000 doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals. We are ambitious and aim to maintain our position as a leading international medical research university. We're recognised for the breadth and depth of our research, for our commitment to translational research, for the quality and scale of our research capability, and as a thriving biotechnology hub.

To learn more about the Faculty, please visit www.monash.edu/medicine.

The **Monash School of Psychological Sciences** is ranked among the best in the world. Our School's mission is to develop students and research outcomes that make significant contributions to improving the lives of others globally. Our overarching vision is to make significant and long-lasting impact that changes the world around us, beginning in infancy and across the lifespan. Drawing on the expertise of our staff and the University's unique research platforms and technology, our mission is to sustain and build on Monash's position with world-class research and teaching in Psychology.

For more information about us and the work we do, please visit www.monash.edu/medicine/psych.

Housed within the School of Psychological Sciences, the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health is a world-leading institute dedicated to making significant contributions to basic and translational research, clinical care, and research training in brain and mental health. The Institute represents the largest grouping of cognitive and clinical neuroscientists in Australia and Asia Pacific.

To learn more, please visit www.monash.edu/turner-institute/research.

Our research team within Experimental Neuropsychology Research Unit (ENRU) focus on rare neurodegenerative disorders, such as Huntington's disease (HD) and Friedreich ataxia (FA). With respect to FA, we have established research collaborations across the Melbourne network, including with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Monash Health, and Monash Biomedical Imaging. We have a strong focus on utilising neuroimaging to map brain, spinal cord and cognitive dysfunction in FA, in an effort to improve early detection of disease and to uncover sensitive biomarkers of disease progression. Findings from this research will provide researchers and pharmacological companies with a suite of neuroimaging tools that will improve the sensitivity of outcome measures in clinical trials and thus enhance the development of therapeutic intervention.

FA is a progressive neurodegenerative genetic disorder that results in a range of symptoms including incoordination, muscle weakness, speech problems and heart disease. The affected person becomes increasingly affected by symptoms and eventually loses their capacity to walk. There is currently a large international push to identify a compound or an intervention that could at least halt, or optimistically cure this life shortening condition. As part of this push large-scale, comprehensive natural history neuroimaging studies are lacking in FA and are urgently needed.

Monash University is the lead partner in a global study (TRACK-FA) to track brain and spinal cord changes in people with FA, with a view to identify early markers of disease progression that can be incorporated into future clinical trials as soon as possible. TRACK-FA aims to improve understanding of the natural history of FA (specifically related to changes in the brain and spinal cord), validate neuroimaging markers in FA to deliver a set of trial-ready biomarkers and to develop a comprehensive database to facilitate ongoing community research and discovery. TRACK-FA is a collaboration between six international sites, including Monash University (Australia), University of Minnesota (USA), Aachen University (Germany), University of Campinas (Brazil), University of Florida (USA), and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (USA), sponsored by the Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance (FARA) in the USA, as well as leading industry partners globally. Participant enrolment in TRACK-FA commenced in early 2021, with the Melbourne site testing its first participant in April.

POSITION PURPOSE

The Research Officer provides a variety of high-quality research services to support the operations of the TRACK-FA study. In addition, the Research Officer performs a range of research activities to support the delivery of the TRACK-FA program outcomes. This includes undertaking recruitment and screening of participants with FA and age and sex matched healthy controls; arranging research appointment sessions/room bookings/managing travel and accommodation (for interstate participants); administering and scoring cognitive assessments, recording, scoring and data entry; coordinating clinical appointments; coordinating blood collections, processing of bloods, as well as shipping blood samples overseas; overseeing imaging assessment sessions at the Monash Biomedical Imaging facility; managing participant stipends; and participating in general research administration duties, while ensuring a compliant and safe research environment. Because TRACK-FA is a longitudinal study, assessments will be undertaken at baseline and at two further timepoints with a 12-month interval. Baseline visit recruitment is still ongoing.

The Research Officer operates with a focus on excellence in process and judgment and provision of sound and timely advice and support to research participants, research staff as well as supporting the efforts of the TRACK-FA neuroimaging consortium more broadly.

Reporting Line: The position reports to Professor Nellie Georgiou-Karistianis (Coordinating Principal Investigator of TRACK-FA)

Supervisory Responsibilities: Not applicable

Financial Delegation: Not applicable

Budgetary Responsibilities: Not applicable

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Support the achievement of research outcomes by undertaking a range of research and administrative support tasks, including scheduling bookings, administering cognitive assessments, overseeing imaging assessment procedures, data collection, input and analysis and if required preparing results in accordance with established research objectives, timeframes and protocols
2. Keep abreast of developments, activities and protocols in area of expertise through liaison with staff and peers, reading relevant literature and attending meetings
3. Assist in preparing documentation reports and other documentation, including undertaking literature reviews and data analysis (if and when required)
4. Comply with established research methodology, policy, protocols, OHS and regulatory requirements
5. Participate in training sessions and implement continuous improvement activities relating to project, research or technical procedures and quality assurance standards
6. Maintain open and effective channels of communication with colleagues, research collaborators and other stakeholders to support and facilitate research objectives
7. Other duties as directed from time to time

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Education/Qualifications

1. The appointee will have:
 - A tertiary qualification in a relevant field; and
 - substantial relevant skills and work experience in clinical research.

Knowledge and Skills

2. Sound analytical, technical and data analysis skills and a demonstrated capacity to apply effective technical methods, processes and systems
3. Strong organisational skills, including the ability to set priorities, manage time and plan work to meet deadlines
4. Ability to work as an effective member of a team as well as independently under general supervision
5. Strong attention to detail and accuracy and an understanding of confidentiality, privacy and information handling principles
6. Well-developed communication skills including the ability to draft a range of documentation
7. A high level of computer literacy, including demonstrated experience in learning and adopting new software packages as required
8. Ability to learn and administer a range of cognitive assessments in a standardised manner
9. Ability to be flexible and adaptable when managing competing priorities during participant research sessions

OTHER JOB RELATED INFORMATION

- Travel to other campuses of the University may be required
- There may be a requirement to work additional hours from time to time
- There may be peak periods of work during which taking of leave may be restricted
- A current satisfactory Working With Children Check is required
- Must have completed Good Clinical Practice (GCP) (or this can be arranged when appointed)

GOVERNANCE

Monash University expects staff to appropriately balance risk and reward in a manner that is sustainable to its long-term future, contribute to a culture of honesty and integrity, and provide an environment that is safe, secure and inclusive. Ensure you are aware of and adhere to University policies relevant to the duties undertaken and the values of the University. This is a standard which the University sees as the benchmark for all of its activities in Australia and internationally.