Postdoctoral Research Officer – Behavioural Neuroscience

Department Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology, The John Radcliffe Hospital

Post Reference No. BU-001-2010WTP

Grade 7: £28,983 - £35,646 (with a discretionary range to £38,951)

Thank you for your interest in this job.

These pages provide the following information:

- The department and its work
- The post and the selection criteria
- Notes for candidates including how to apply
- Pay and benefits
- Working for the University of Oxford
- Procedure for confirming an appointment to the University of Oxford

Please read this extra information carefully, particularly the section headed ‘How to apply’: this explains what you need to tell us about yourself, where to send your application, and when it needs to arrive.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.
About the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology

The University is organised into about 140 different departments, each of which recruits its own staff. This job is in the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology which is based at Level 5 and 6, West Wing, The John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford OX3 9DU. The department is part of the Medical Sciences Division of Oxford University, pursuing scientific and clinical research into a range of areas related to the eye and vision and has about 45 staff. We also teach the principles and practices of ophthalmology to medical students during their clinical training. For more information, please visit our web-site at: [http://www.eye.ox.ac.uk/](http://www.eye.ox.ac.uk/).

Postdoctoral Scientist – Behavioural Neuroscientist

We are seeking a neuroscientist with a strong background in behavioural analysis to work within the Wellcome Trust Programme ‘Melanopsin signalling: Phototransduction, Behavioural Regulation and Clinical Relevance’ on the project entitled ‘Determining the role of rods, cones and pRGCs in the modulation of cognition’. The successful candidate will be responsible for driving specific research projects at the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology and will work closely with Prof Nick Rawlins of the Rodent Behaviour Group in the Department of Experimental Psychology. The goal of the specific project will be to identify the role of rod, cone and pRGC photoreceptors in the modulation of cognition by screening transgenic and mouse mutants using behavioural techniques. Specific screens to be used in identifying these factors will include spatial and non-spatial memory testing and auditory psychomotor vigilance techniques. In addition, it is our expectation that you will see a number of projects through to presentation and publication which should lead to applications for further funding. A Home Office Licence (1-3/4) is essential. The post is full-time and is offered for 2 years in the first instance.

The post holder will report to the Programme Co-I, Dr Sumathi Sekaran; collaborator Prof Nick Rawlins and Programme PI, Prof Russell Foster in Oxford. They will also work alongside staff members of the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology and with staff at the Department of Experimental Psychology. The post holder will be expected to contribute to the training and mentoring of some junior staff.

Main duties and responsibilities

- To contribute to our understanding of the photoreceptors modulating cognition by determining the effects of light on behavioural responses in transgenic and mutant mice with specific photoreceptor defects at different times over the 24 hour cycle.
- To perform cognitive analysis on tests including those for spatial memory, non-spatial memory, auditory psychomotor vigilance and anxiety.
- To collect data and perform data analysis, write reports, and present results.
- To undertake scientific project management.
- To produce high quality oral and written communication at national and international level
- To contribute to internal and external meetings

Main skills and experience required (‘selection criteria’)

**Essential**

- Hold a PhD or equivalent in Neuroscience
- Have a strong background in behavioural testing
• Possess a current Home office licence (1-3/4)
• Have good communication skills, both written and oral
• Have a publication record commensurate with experience
• Have good IT skills
• Have proven ability to organise work efficiently and deliver results to the required standard and schedule
• Have the ability to work independently but within a multidisciplinary team

Desirable
• Experience with cognitive behavioural testing
• Familiarity in multivariate statistical analysis
• A background in circadian biology, vision research or photobiology would be an advantage

Notes for candidates
We are delighted that you wish to apply for a post with the University of Oxford. Please read this information carefully before submitting your application. You should complete and return all sections of the application form.

How do I apply?
Applications for this post must include all of the following:
• your curriculum vitae (CV)
• a letter explaining how you meet the requirements of this post

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how your skills and experience match the requirements of the post. You should therefore ensure that you use the covering letter to describe how your skills and experiences meet the selection criteria for this role.

You should ensure that your CV details what you have been doing over at least the last 10 years. This may have been employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependent, travel, or for any other reason. We are happy to consider transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Please note that we will not accept any additional documentation (e.g. references) at this stage, and only your CV, covering letter and personal details will be circulated to the selection panel.
Please e-mail your covering letter and CV to: maria.fernandez@eye.ox.ac.uk, or send to:

Maria Fernandez  
University of Oxford  
Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology  
Levels 5 and 6, West Wing  
The John Radcliffe Hospital  
OX3 9DU  
United Kingdom

no later than noon on Friday 19 November 2010. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Interviews are expected to be held during the period 29 November – 10 December 2010. Please quote reference number BU-001-2010WTP.

How will the information on the forms be used?

The information collected on the equal opportunities recruitment monitoring form does not form part of the selection process and will not be circulated to the selection panel. It will be used solely to monitor the effectiveness of the University’s equal opportunities policy.

Your CV, covering letter, and personal details form will be circulated to the selection panel. They will use this information to assess your suitability for the post against the selection criteria. If appointed, your application will be retained on your confidential staff file. If you are unsuccessful, your application will be retained for six months and then disposed of securely.

At all times the information will be held securely in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Am I eligible to apply to work for the University?

All appointments are made in accordance with the University of Oxford Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice and applications are welcomed from a wide range of candidates. The University undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully against any applicant on the basis of any information revealed.

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 make it a criminal offence for employers to employ someone who is not entitled to work in the UK. We therefore ask applicants to provide proof of their right to work in the UK before employment can commence.

Applicants who would need a work visa if appointed to the post, are asked to note that under the UK’s new points-based migration system they will need to demonstrate that they have sufficient points, and in particular that:

(i) they have sufficient English language skills (evidenced by having passed a test in basic English, or coming from a majority English-speaking country, or having taken a degree taught in English)

and that

(ii) they have sufficient funds to maintain themselves and any dependants until they receive their first salary payment.

Further information is available at:  
http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/tier2/generalarrangements/eligibility/
Will I be asked to provide any other information?

You should ensure that you describe what you have been doing over at least the last 10 years. This may have been employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependant, travel, or for any other reason. Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how your skills and experience match the requirements of the post, and we are happy to consider evidence of transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Employment with the University is conditional upon satisfying the following requirements:

- proof of identity - in the form of a passport, birth certificate, or other acceptable document;
- proof of address - in the form of a recent utility bill or bank statement;
- proof that you are entitled to work in the UK or proof of eligibility to apply for a work permit;
- proof of any qualifications required for this post - in the form of certificates or transcripts.

Please note that you will need to provide original documents and where any documents are not in English a certified translation will be required. *Do not include these documents with your application.* You will be sent a request for the relevant information at the appropriate point in the selection process.

In addition, if you are selected for this post:

- your medical fitness to undertake the duties of the post will be assessed by the University’s Occupational Health Service; and
- we will take up references from previous employers to ensure your suitability for appointment.

Employment with the University is also subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

References

Please give the details of two people who have agreed to provide a reference for you. If you have previously been employed, your referees should be people who have direct experience of your work through working closely with you for a considerable period, and at least one of them should be your formal line manager in your most recent job. Otherwise they may be people who know you from recent college, school, or voluntary experience. It is helpful if you can tell us briefly how each referee knows you (e.g. 'line manager', 'work colleague', 'college tutor'). Your referees should not be related to you.

Your referees will be asked to comment on your suitability for the post and to provide details of the dates of your employment; your attendance during the last 12 months; and of any disciplinary processes which are still considered ‘live’. We will assume that we may approach them at any stage unless you tell us otherwise. If you wish us to ask for your permission before approaching a particular referee, or to contact them only under certain circumstances (for example, if you are called to interview) you must state this explicitly alongside the details of the relevant referee(s).
Pay and benefits

The salary offered for a full-time appointment to this job will be University grade 7, in the range £28,983 - £35,646, (with a discretionary range to £38,951), depending on qualifications and experience. If you are appointed at a salary below the top of the substantive range, your salary will automatically be increased each year until you have reached the top point. Increases beyond this point may be available in certain cases. If appointed within the discretionary range, no automatic incremental progression should be expected during this appointment. There is also an annual ‘cost-of-living’ salary review, which normally takes place in summer each year. For a full-time appointment, the annual holiday entitlement will be 38 days (including 6 days to be taken on fixed dates at Christmas and Easter, and 8 public holidays). Full time hours of work are 37.5 hours per week. Pay and benefits (including holiday entitlement) for part-time appointments are worked out on a ‘pro rata’ basis.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a two-year probationary period, during which the notice period will be one month on either side. Once the appointment has been confirmed, the notice period will be three months on either side. This post is offered for 2 years in the first instance.

The post is pensionable and the post holder eligible for membership of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), a contributory scheme to which members pay 6.35 per cent of annual salary. Subject to the Statement of Pensions Policy, which will be issued to the successful candidate, the appointee will be deemed to be in membership of the above pension scheme until such time as he/she gives notice in writing to exercise the right not to be a member of the scheme. Members of staff are required to retire not later than the 30 September following their 65th birthday unless they can demonstrate a vested interest (as defined in the University’s statutes) in retirement at 67. Employees contributing to USS will also be automatically enrolled in the University’s Salary Exchange scheme for pension contributions from three months after joining the pension scheme, unless they give notice in writing to the Payroll Manager that they elect not to take advantage of this facility at least one month before automatic enrolment. Details are available from the following website: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/salaries_expenses/salexchange/index.shtml. The University also offers a Stakeholder pension scheme which most employees may join either instead of, or in addition to, the main scheme.

The University has a generous maternity leave scheme and also offers paternity leave to expectant fathers and partners, and adoption leave. It offers subsidised nursery places, a childminding network, a holiday playscheme, and tax and National Insurance savings schemes. For further information see http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/.

Equal opportunities at the University of Oxford

As an Equal Opportunity employer, we positively encourage applications from people of different backgrounds. All our jobs are filled in line with our equal opportunities code of practice, which helps us make sure that men and women, people of different religions or beliefs, ages, racial groups, and those with disabilities are all treated fairly. If you have any questions about equal opportunities at the University of Oxford, please visit our web-site at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/.
POLICY STATEMENT

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of his or her gender, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, racial group, age or disability.

Working for the University of Oxford

At the University of Oxford, we’re naturally very proud of our outstanding reputation for scholarship and research. But we’re also proud to say that we’re one of the region’s biggest and best-established employers, with a real diversity of staff helping to sustain our success - from lab assistants, cleaners, technicians and secretaries, to IT, finance and administrative professionals. Join us, and you can expect to find yourself working in a friendly, open-minded atmosphere where your ideas will be welcomed, with an interesting and satisfying job to do, and with plenty of opportunities to learn new skills, or maybe even get some extra qualifications.

As well as pay and other benefits such as generous holidays and an excellent pension scheme, we may be able to help you with:

- **Training** – We train our staff, both in the skills needed for starting the job, and to help them develop afterwards. If you don’t have all the skills we are looking for (e.g. computer packages), but you know that you are a quick learner, it’s worth asking if training might be available.

- **Working hours** – We may be able to be flexible about working patterns to help you combine work with responsibilities at home. Even for full-time jobs, we can often adjust starting and finishing times, or even sometimes consider term-time-only working: if this is important to you, let us know.

- **Disability** – If you have a disability, we have specialist staff who can help you to start and stay in work.

- **Childcare** – We have several subsidised nurseries for under-fives, a holiday play scheme, and tax and national insurance savings schemes. For further information see [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child/).

- **Parenting** – As well as providing childcare facilities, we have generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave schemes to help new parents on our staff.

- **Cultural and religious needs** – We respect the cultural and religious lives of our staff. If you need time away from work, or special facilities, and can give plenty of notice for arrangements to be made, this will always be considered.

- **Travel arrangements** – We offer an interest-free season ticket loan scheme for bus or train season tickets. Annual passes for Oxford Bus Company routes are available at discounted rates.

- **Use of University facilities** – All University staff can use the study facilities provided by University libraries and museums; join the University Club, a sports and social club
which has its own bar, café, and reading room; and make use of the University Sports Complex and the Pulse fitness centre.

- **Discounts** – A number of discounts are available to University staff e.g. for insurance, holiday travel, and computer equipment.

The range of benefits is continuously reviewed and extended. For further information see [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/benefits/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/benefits/)

If you come from outside the area, you may be interested to know that as well as the famous tourist attractions such as the ‘dreaming spires’ of all the lovely old buildings, the river, and a number of attractive parks and gardens, Oxford also has a busy shopping centre and a lively nightlife, particularly during term time. Housing is relatively expensive within the city, but nearby areas such as Didcot or Bicester are more reasonably priced. Although car parking is difficult during the day, there are good train and bus services, including several ‘Park and Ride’ routes; and, of course, lots of cycle paths.

**Procedure for confirming an appointment to the University of Oxford**

To protect the University’s employees and property, and to establish the right to work in the UK, appointments to university posts are subject to checks to confirm the identity of the person appointed. **This document outlines the appropriate original documentation which should be supplied to the person who sent you this letter before you commence work for the University.** You will need to present this in person, so that the appropriate checks can be made. Copies are not acceptable. Original documents provided for an identity check will not be retained by the University; they will be photocopied and given back to you, and the photocopies will be kept on your personnel file.

Where it is not possible for you to provide these original documents this will not automatically mean that you cannot be employed. However, further checks may be necessary before employment can be confirmed and these would be discussed with you. Doubt about the authenticity of a document provided will also necessitate further checks. If you have any queries about this process, or about the documentation required, please contact the person who sent you this letter.

1. **Proof of the right to work in the UK**

To comply with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, before you begin working for the University you must supply original documentation proving that you have a right to work in the United Kingdom (UK). This documentation will be copied and retained on your personnel file.

Please provide one of the original documents, or two of the original documents where a combination is set out as being required, from List A or List B, below:

**List A**

**Note:** If you can provide a document or documents as described in List A, you will not be asked to provide any further proof of your right to work in the UK during the course of your employment.

(i) A passport showing that you are a British citizen or a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies having the right of abode in the United Kingdom.

(ii) A passport or national identity card showing that you are a national of the European Economic Area or Switzerland. * [see below]
(iii) A residence permit, registration certificate or document certifying or indicating permanent residence issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.

(iv) A permanent residence card issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to the family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.

(v) A Biometric Immigration Document issued by the UK Border Agency which indicates that you are allowed to stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom, or have no time limit on your stay in the United Kingdom.

(vi) A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you are exempt from immigration control, are allowed to stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom, have the right of abode in the United Kingdom, or have no time limit on your stay in the United Kingdom.

(vii) An Immigration Status Document issued to you by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency with an endorsement indicating you are allowed to stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom or have no time limit on your stay in the United Kingdom, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(viii) A full birth certificate issued in the United Kingdom which includes the name(s) of at least one of your parents, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(ix) A full adoption certificate issued in the United Kingdom which includes the name(s) of at least one of your adoptive parents, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(x) A birth certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(xi) An adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(xii) A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(xiii) A letter issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to the holder which indicates that you are allowed to stay indefinitely in the United Kingdom when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

List B

Note: If you provide documents as described in List B, since these will indicate that you have limited leave to remain in the UK, these will need to be checked at least on an annual basis with you, to ensure that you continue to have the right to work in the UK.
(i) A passport or travel document endorsed to show that you are allowed to stay in the United Kingdom and are allowed to do the type of work in question, provided that it does not require the issue of a work permit.

(ii) A Biometric Immigration Document issued to you by the UK Border Agency which indicates that you can stay in the United Kingdom and are allowed to do the work in question.

(iii) A work permit or other approval to take employment issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency when produced in combination with either a passport or another travel document endorsed to show you are allowed to stay in the United Kingdom and are allowed to do the work in question, or a letter issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to you or the University of Oxford confirming the same.

(iv) A certificate of application issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to or for a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland stating that you are permitted to take employment which is less than 6 months old when produced in combination with evidence of verification by the UK Border Agency Employer Checking Service.

(v) A residence card or document issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to you as a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.

(vi) An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency stating that you are permitted to take employment, when produced in combination with evidence of verification by the UK Border Agency Employer Checking Service.

(vii) An Immigration Status Document issued to you by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency with an endorsement indicating that you can stay in the United Kingdom, and are allowed to do the type of work in question, when produced in combination with an official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

(viii) A letter issued by the Home Office or the UK Border Agency to you, or to the University of Oxford, which indicates that you can stay in the United Kingdom and are allowed to do the work in question when produced in combination with an official document giving your Permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

* Information for Nationals from the European Economic Area

(i) Nationals from the following countries can work in the UK without restriction:

    Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

(ii) Nationals from the following countries can work in the UK without restriction, but will be asked to confirm that they have registered with the UK Border Agency within one month of starting work in the UK:

    Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

(iii) Nationals from the following countries can work in the UK only if they hold a valid accession worker authorisation document issued by the UK Border Agency:

    Bulgaria and Romania.
If you are Bulgarian or Romanian you will need to provide the original worker authorisation document, or any other documents that establish that you are exempt from the requirement for authorisation, before starting work for the University.

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

- Please note that we have special arrangements in place for refugees and asylum seekers. When an application is received from an asylum seeker or refugee, the department concerned will seek advice from the University’s Head of Diversity and Equal Opportunities.

2. **Identity checks**

In addition to the documents required to prove you have the right to work in the UK, you are also asked to provide the following original documents confirming your identity:

(i) Proof of address e.g. a recent utility bill or bank statement

AND

(ii) Where specific qualifications are required for the post, either original certificates or transcripts verifying that you hold these qualifications.

3. **Confirmation of suitability for appointment**

To ensure that persons appointed to university posts are able to fulfil the duties of the post any appointment made will be subject to the employing department receiving:

(i) satisfactory written references, normally including a reference from the successful candidate’s most recent line-manager, and

(ii) confirmation from the University’s Occupational Health Service that the successful candidate is medically fit for this post (allowing for any reasonable adjustments that may be required, for example to accommodate a disability).

4. **Criminal Records Bureau**

Appointees who will be working with children or vulnerable adults will be the subject of a full screening procedure carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau.