Research Technician (Akrami and Erlich Labs)
Information for Candidates

Sainsbury Wellcome Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour at UCL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Description</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services at the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of the Research Technician</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Duties and Responsibilities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection Criteria</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Us</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vacancy Reference: 1887657
Job Title: Research Technician (Akrami and Erlich labs)
Department: Sainsbury Wellcome Centre
Grade: 6
Hours: 36.5 per week (full-time, 1.00 FTE) over four days including weekends.
Reports to: Senior Research Technician

About the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre (SWC) brings together world-leading scientists to investigate how brain circuits process information to generate perception, form memories and guide behaviour. Developed through the vision and partnership of the Gatsby Charitable Foundation and Wellcome, and with substantial investment from these partners, the mission of the SWC is to generate experimentally testable theories of brain function.

The Centre comprises 12 highly interdisciplinary experimental research groups accommodated in a new, purpose-designed building, offering an outstanding and unparalleled research environment. SWC scientists use a broad spectrum of the latest advances in molecular and cellular biology, imaging, electrophysiology and behavioural techniques and enjoy state-of-the-art research laboratories, cutting-edge scientific equipment, technologically-advanced prototyping and fabrication laboratories and custom in-house high-performance computing facilities. The full complement of scientists in the Centre is expected to reach around 150 together with circa 50 dedicated support staff.

SWC is part of the UCL School of Life and Medical Sciences (LMS). LMS brings together four UCL Faculties to create one of the largest and most prestigious aggregations of academics in biomedical, life and population health sciences worldwide. The School has a global reputation for teaching, informed by cutting-edge research. A full profile of the School can be found at: The School is structured into four Faculties: Brain Sciences; Life Sciences; Medical Sciences; and Population Health Sciences. SWC is most closely linked with the Faculties of Brain Science and Life Sciences, and is aligned administratively with Life Sciences. The Faculty of Life Sciences leadership team works closely with the SWC leadership to support and enable their mission and facilitate research excellence.

Further details about UCL can be found at www.ucl.ac.uk.

Professional Services at the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre has a specialist and experienced professional services team. It is structured to efficiently support research activity and deliver effective management and operational leadership of the SWC.

SWC prides itself on offering a high quality administrative, technical and operational support function, and fully supports the professional development and progression of its staff, actively encouraging colleagues to learn new skills and broaden their experience. The SWC is supported in this aim by UCL’s Organisational Development team, who run a wide range of training programmes for all staff types and grades.

Work Environment

SWC offers staff an award-winning work environment in the heart of Fitzrovia with an on-site brasserie and access to pleasant outdoor spaces. The Centre also offers the full range of UCL staff benefits, including a generous annual
leave entitlement, occupational pension schemes, excellent family-friendly policies such as occupational shared parental pay, a work-life balance policy, and a range of financial benefits such as a season ticket loan scheme and staff discounts.

About the Akrami and Erlich Laboratories
Our labs are generally interested in the neurobiology of cognition. We study mice, rat, human and synthetic agents to investigate how real and artificial neural networks generate behavior. What sets us apart from many other labs studying behavioral and computational neuroscience is that we use a highly automated facility to train hundreds of rodents per day. This facility uses modern tools from the information technology industry: databases, web dashboards, pub/sub messaging frameworks, deployment tools, version control, issue tracking and project management software.

The Role of the Research Technician

We are looking for a motivated and organised Research Technician to train rats and mice in our high throughput facility.

The main purpose of the role will be the care, handling and training of animals. However, there is also opportunity to contribute experimentally to the work in the lab: including helping to perform stereotaxic surgeries, assisting in the collection of electrophysiological data or optogenetic perturbations, intracranial infusions, pharmacological manipulation, etc.

You should have excellent organisation and communication skills and the ability to work independently and using their initiative.

You will be expected to work in a collaborative and multidisciplinary research environment, communicate regularly with all other lab members and SWC staff, and work in especially close collaboration with members of the Neurobiological Research Facility.

This post is available for one year in the first instance with the possibility of extension subject to funding.

Hours of Work
This post has non-standard working hours with a shifted work week including weekends. For example, working 9 hours per day Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday each week (with Wednesday, Thursday and Friday serving as days off) or working Thursday to Sunday with Monday to Wednesday off.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Monitoring the health of the animals (rats and mice) in the lab.
- Handling the animals (taking them from their home cage and placing them in training boxes).
- Monitor, calibrate and repair behavioural set up to ensure it functions at the correct levels.
- Logging duties in accordance with protocols and procedures.
- Performing simple animal procedures, such as giving an injection of medicine.
- Assisting the researchers in the lab to carry out scientific research.
- To contribute to the overall activities of the research team and the department as appropriate.
- Maintain lab equipment, lab supplies and databases to ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with statutory and UCL regulations as appropriate.
- Keeping meticulous records, write up results, and document work, maintaining a permanent record of the methodologies, techniques and duties performed.
- Contribute to the induction and direction of other research staff and students if so requested by the Principal Investigator.
- Maintain lab cleanliness and organisation of the lab space.
• Adhere to good lab practice at all times and observe all required health and safety procedures.

• Observe all ethical and legal requirements in relation to the use of animal models in research.

• Observe all required Data Protection and Security requirements.

The above description is not exhaustive and the post-holder will be required to undertake any other duties as may reasonably be requested within the scope, spirit and purpose of the post. Job descriptions are reviewed on a regular basis including at the annual appraisal. As duties and responsibilities change, the job description may be amended in consultation with the post-holder.

The post-holder will be expected to actively follow all UCL policies and procedures including Equal Opportunities, maintain an awareness of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations, carry out duties in a resource efficient way as well as actively support UCL’s Sustainability policies and objectives, attend management meetings and undertake such training and development as may be required for the post.

All staff are required to act professionally, co-operatively and flexibly in line with the requirements of the post.
## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria outline the skills, knowledge and experience required in order to perform this role. Applicants will be selected based on how well they demonstrate that they meet the essential, and if appropriate, desirable criteria for this particular role.

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<th>Qualifications</th>
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<th>Desirable</th>
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<td>A bachelor’s degree in Neuroscience, Biology, or a related field.</td>
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### Knowledge and experience

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<th>Knowledge and experience</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to contribute to research projects within the laboratory.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Experience of handling rodents (mice and rats).</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
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<td>Experience of animal research.</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of monitoring the health and caring of rodents.</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of behavioural neuroscience</td>
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<td>Desirable</td>
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### Skills

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<td>Able to prioritise, manage your own time, and multi-task and integrate demands of a range of different activities and deadlines in parallel.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Computer literate with the ability to use databases and systems related to record keeping.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Excellent oral and written communication skills.</td>
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### Personal Attributes

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<td>Able to work effectively alone, but also contribute and work well as part of a team.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Accountable, reliable and resourceful</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<td>Works ethically, legally, and with integrity.</td>
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### UCL Ways of Working for Professional Services

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<td>Demonstrating an interest in personal development.</td>
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<td>Taking responsibility for your work.</td>
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<td>Delivering work to agreed standards.</td>
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Contact Us

If you have any queries relating to the vacancy or how to apply please contact the SWC HR team, swc.hr@ucl.ac.uk

Applying for the Role

Redeployment candidates
To begin the online application process, please access the advertisement by searching for it via the UCL Redeployment Service using the vacancy reference number.

Please complete the online application form, attaching a CV and cover letter to detail your interest in the role and how you meet the selection criteria. Applications will be shortlisted based on the strength of the examples used to demonstrate that the applicant meets the selection criteria.

All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.

External candidates
To begin the online application process, please access the advertisement by searching for it on the UCL vacancy search page the vacancy reference number, and click on the “Apply Now” button at the bottom of the vacancy advertisement.

Please complete the online application form, attaching a CV and a one page statement of interest explaining why you are applying for the role and your future goals. You may also wish to attach any supporting documents as evidence of completed research.

cover letter to detail your interest in the role and how you meet the selection criteria. Applications will be shortlisted based on the strength of the examples used to demonstrate that the applicant meets the selection criteria.

All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.
Pre-employment Checks
Confirmation of appointment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references, verification of proof of right to work in the UK and to satisfactory pre-employment health and security screening.

Salary
Starting salary will be on the Grade 4 scale according to relevant skills, knowledge, experience and achievement. Staff incrementally progress along the salary scale; the effective date of incremental progression is 01 August each year. You must have completed the period of service stipulated in your contract of employment (typically your probationary period) to be eligible to increment. Incremental progression does not include the discretionary contribution points on the salary scale. Cost of living pay awards are negotiated nationally and are normally effective from 1 August each year.

Pension
Post-holders will be eligible to join SAUL (Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London) subject to the Scheme’s rules and eligibility conditions.

Conditions of Service
Conditions of Service for Research, Teaching and Professional Services Staff can be found online here.

Probation
Appointments are subject to a probationary period of 6 months.

Hours of Work and Overtime
UCL’s full time working week is 36.5 hours per week. SWC is willing to consider flexible-working arrangements, subject to discussion and agreement with your line manager.

Pre-agreed overtime will be offered as equivalent time off in lieu.

Annual Leave
Staff are entitled to 27 days annual leave per year (pro rata for part-time staff). In addition, staff are entitled to 8 days public and statutory holidays, and around 6 UCL closure days with pay per year.

Location
The Sainsbury Wellcome Centre is located in the heart of London around five minutes' walk from the main UCL campus. The mainline railway stations at Euston, King’s Cross, St Pancras, Marylebone and Paddington are within easy reach as are the London Underground stations located at Warren Street and Goodge Street.

Equal Opportunities
SWC is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion for its staff, students and visitors and is fully supportive of UCL’s Equal Opportunity Policy.

SWC holds an Athena SWAN Bronze award.