

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	(Senior) Research Officer
Program (or DSG Organisation):	Ovarian Cancer Research Group
Reports to (Title):	Dr Philippa O'Brien
Job Classification & Grade:	RO - SRO
Approved By:	Dr Philippa O'Brien
Date:	July 2007

SUMMARY

The Research Officer is accountable for supporting the research of the Ovarian Cancer Project into the identification of new tumour markers with potential as novel diagnostic and therapeutic markers of ovarian cancer.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES

The Research Officer reports to the Head of Ovarian Cancer. No staff report directly to the Research Officer but a high level of interaction with Research Assistants and PhD students in the Ovarian Cancer Project and other Groups within the Cancer Research Program is essential. As the project develops, further RAs and PhD students may be recruited to the project, potentially under the direct supervision of the Research Officer. The level of appointment will be dependent upon the incumbent's experience and qualifications.

The Research Officer's specific responsibility with the Ovarian Cancer Project is the identification of methylated and silenced genes in ovarian cancer, and to determine their potential as markers for the detection and treatment of disease.

Research Excellence

- to make original contributions in research that creatively address questions of science in the Research Officer's field but under guidance from the Head of the Ovarian Cancer Project.
- to successfully complete several research projects in an efficient and timely manner and have the outcomes of these projects published under joint authorship in leading scientific journals.
- to gain peer recognition by presentations at national scientific meetings in the Research Officer's field.
- to provide general research guidance to more junior research staff whose work might have an impact on wider Program research goals.

Team effort:

- to develop agreed research priorities with the Head of the Ovarian Cancer Project and other postdoctoral staff that address related research within the Program.
- to work to achieve agreed work priorities for the Research Program and participate with other team members in reviewing progress against overall goals and collaborative effectiveness.
- to help (when assigned to do so by the Program Director) to co-supervise the activity of more junior staff including undergraduate scholars.

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- to provide data for the preparation of publications and research proposal submissions to external funding bodies.

Institute contributions:

- to interact productively (where appropriate) within and across Programs, lead constructive discussion at the Garvan's Friday seminar program and be seen as a person whom more junior staff can approach for technical advice.
- to assist in raising the profile of the Garvan by becoming aware of and developing contacts in the Research Officer's research area nationally and internationally.
- to make some productive contribution to the Garvan's organisation and management.

KEY COMMUNICATIONS

Internal: All Cancer Research Program staff, particularly the Head of the Ovarian Cancer Project and the Program Director. Members of other Garvan Research Programs where this might enhance the Institute's overall research effort, including other Post-doctoral Research staff, Research Assistants and Technical Officers, Purchasing staff and, occasionally, members of the Development and Support Group.

External: Other scientists in the incumbent's research area nationally and internationally

DECISION MAKING

Decisions related to how the aims of the project are to be achieved and the future directions of the project will be made in consultation with the Head of the Ovarian Cancer Project.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Problems likely to be encountered are those related to experimental design and interpretation of results.

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Cancer Research Program is an integrated series of strongly interactive Research Groups undertaking research aimed at increasing the international knowledge base on the development, progression, treatment and prevention of human cancers. The current emphasis centres on developing a deeper understanding of the control of cellular proliferation and differentiation in hormone-dependent cancers particularly breast, prostate and ovarian cancer. At present the areas of research activity being pursued include: signal transduction, cell cycle, steroid-regulated genes, gene knockout and translational research.

The Ovarian Cancer Project within the Translational Group of the Cancer Research Program is concerned with understanding the genetic basis of epithelial ovarian cancer development and progression, with a view to identifying new tumour markers with clinical application. The group currently focuses on identifying epigenetically silenced genes, including but not limited to, tumour suppressor genes, that hold promise as detection or therapeutic markers for ovarian cancer; and on the functional characterisation of novel tumour suppressor genes that are implicated in the pathogenesis of disease.

FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS

The *Research Officer* will have a PhD in an area of science concerned with molecular biology and/or cancer biology, and potentially will have completed a first postdoctoral position with publication of their work in appropriate journals.

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EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS REQUIRED

The position holder should have significant experience in standard molecular biology techniques, particularly as applied to cancer research. Experience in epigenetics techniques, in particular methylation analysis, would be a significant advantage. An understanding of cell biology would be desirable.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The position holder should possess the following personal attributes and qualities:-

- have a strong commitment to translational research
- be highly motivated
- possess an innovative approach to problem solving
- have a strong commitment to quality
- have excellent communication skills for written reports and oral presentations
- demonstrate a capacity to work co-operatively with other Group and Program members
- be well organised and a good time manager
- have sound administrative abilities

GENERAL

All staff:

- are required to exercise Occupational Health Safety and Rehabilitation responsibility, accountability and authority as outlined in the Garvan OHS Roles and Responsibilities Document (located on the Garvan Intranet) to ensure a safe working environment for self and others;
- are required to cooperate with and adhere to all health and safety policies, procedures and programs of the Garvan and take all reasonable care that their actions or omission of actions do not impact on the health and safety of others in the Institute;
- have a responsibility to co-operate with management and staff with nominated or elected OH&S functions;
- not misuse, damage, refuse to use, or interfere with anything provided in the interest of occupational health and safety;
- must immediately report any unsafe work conditions or equipment to management; and
- must participate in compulsory safety training.