



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Research Technician in Plant Nematology, Faculty of Biological Sciences



Salary: Grade 4 (£25,148 - £26,642 p.a.)

Reference: FBSBY1206

Available on a fixed-term basis for up to 6 months (to complete specific time limited work)

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements

Research Technician in Plant Nematology

Faculty of Biological Sciences

Are you an early career researcher looking for a challenge? Do you have a background in Biology, Plant Sciences or Engineering? Do you want to further your career in one of the UK's leading research intensive Universities?

Potato growers regularly consider potato cyst nematodes as their biggest concern due to their widespread presence, ability to devastate yields, and their ability to lay dormant for >30yrs waiting for a host to parasitise. Their control represents the biggest variable cost to the potato industry and is reliant on aggressive chemicals that have numerous health hazards for humans and wildlife, and likely soon to be banned. This project, titled "Waste to weapon: agricultural waste-derived pest control", will develop a system to generate sustainable and environmentally friendly nematicides from waste potato tubers. You will work on a day-to-day basis within the host research group in both the labroatory and glasshouses to develop the system and test its application.

You should be educated to A level, BTEC or equivalent, with particular knowledge and skills in general plant housekeeping. You may also have glasshouse and laboratory experience, or experience in method optimisation possibly from an engineering background.

What we offer in return

- 26 days holiday plus approx.16 Bank Holidays/days that the University is closed by custom (including Christmas) – That's 42 days a year!
- Generous pension scheme options plus life assurance
- Health and Wellbeing: Discounted staff membership options at The Edge, our state-of-the-art Campus gym, with a pool, sauna, climbing wall, cycle circuit, and sports halls.
- Personal Development: Access to courses run by our Organisational Development & Professional Learning team.
- Access to on-site childcare, shopping discounts and travel schemes are also available.

And much more!



The University of Leeds and the Faculty of Biological Sciences are committed to providing equal opportunities for all and offer a range of family friendly policies. The University is a charter member of Athena SWAN (the national body that promotes gender equality in higher education), and the Faculty of Biological Sciences was awarded a Silver award in 2020. We are proud to be an inclusive Faculty that values all staff, and are happy to consider job share applications and requests for flexible working arrangements from our employees. Our Athena SWAN [webpage](#) provides more information.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Assisting in the day-to-day running of the laboratory and glasshouses, including the care and maintenance of some laboratory equipment or machinery and ordering supplies;
- Developing a hydroponic collection system for waste potato tubers and testing efficacy on the hatching of plant parasitic nematode eggs
- Explaining laboratory procedures to new users and students within the research group;
- Carrying out routine maintenance checks and report faults;
- Managing and prioritise own day to day workload to ensure tasks are completed in a timely manner;
- Maintaining good records and laboratory notebooks of work carried out, including providing clear understandable data to other members of the research group where necessary;
- Attending regular meetings with the supervisor to discuss progress;
- Liaising with academics and researchers to perform techniques and protocols as appropriate. These would include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - General glasshouse upkeep
 - Maintaining biological stocks (plant-parasitic nematodes, aphids, AMF)
 - Microscopy and imaging
 - Laboratory related experiments
 - Accurately recording data
- Setting up and conducting simple experiments for the use of the laboratory group;
- Providing verbal and written explanations to new Undergraduate and Post Graduate students joining the research group who may be working on similar techniques ensuring their understanding of the need for safe working in the laboratory;



- Maintaining health and safety records and supporting the production of risk assessments for new and existing protocols;
- Liaising with other members of the Faculty and Technical Services Team on Health and Safety matters;
- Maintaining biological stocks and distributing items in response to requests from other laboratories.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

Qualifications and skills

Essential

- Educated to A level, BTEC or equivalent or equivalent experience;
- Laboratory experience (this can include a period in Further or Higher Education.);
- Experience working with plants and parasitic nematodes (this can include a period in Further or Higher Education);
- Experience in method optimisation, either from a Biology or Engineering background.
- Good verbal and written communications skills, with the ability to clearly articulate and present information, modifying your approach to suit different audiences;
- The ability to work accurately;
- The ability to maintain up to date records;
- Good organisational and time management skills, with the ability to work unsupervised and use your own initiative to meet deadlines;
- Good IT skills, including MS Office software, with experience of record keeping;
- Willingness to develop and learn new skills.

Desirable

- Previous experience of microscopy and staining techniques;
- RSci (Registered Scientist) or RSci Tech (Registered Science Technician);



Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

Dr [Chris Bell](#), UKRI Discovery Fellow

Email: c.a.bell@leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the School of Biology we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, those who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Information for disabled candidates

Information for disabled candidates, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found under the 'Accessibility' heading on our [How to Apply](#) information page or by getting in touch by [emailing HR via hr@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:hr@leeds.ac.uk).

Salary Requirements of the Skilled Worker Visa Route

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen, this may be your status under the EU Settlement Scheme.



This role is not eligible for Skilled Worker visa sponsorship. Information on other visa options is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>

Security checks

Appointment to this post will be subject to appropriate security checks being carried out with your permission by a third party company

Criminal record information

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.

