



Job Title:	Leicester British Heart Foundation Centre of Research Excellence Research Associate in Cardiovascular Genomics
Salary:	£39,906 to £46,049 per annum
Grade:	7
Division:	Division of Cardiovascular Sciences
Hours/Contract:	Full-time, fixed term contract for 2 years
Job Family:	Teaching and Research
Job Reference:	13176

Role Purpose

The British Heart Foundation Leicester Centre of Research Excellence (BHF CRE) is seeking to appoint a research associate who wishes to develop their own independent research programme in **cardiovascular genomics and clinical epidemiology** working within **our Discovery Theme's flagship Genetics and the Vascular Health Check (GENVASC) study**. This opportunity will provide protected research time and funding. Strong supervision and mentorship will be provided by the Centre investigators.

GENVASC is a prospective cohort study of over 44,000 individuals attending NHS Health Check appointments. The Principal Investigator is Professor Nilesh Samani, Professor of Cardiology. GENVASC recruited between 2012 and 2020 and now has an average of 10-years of prospective follow-up data available through primary and secondary care records. The whole cohort has recently been genotyped using a genome-wide array and polygenic risk scores calculated for a range of common diseases and traits. Therefore the cohort is immediately ready for a wide-range of potential analyses and opportunities to develop a Fellowship or other grant applications.

Our focus is to understand how genetic variants influence cardiovascular risk, identify new therapeutic targets, and develop clinically useful prediction tools. We welcome applicants with expertise and interest relevant to these aims. Prospective candidates are strongly encouraged to contact the BHF CRE discovery theme leads, Professor Matt Bown (m.bown@le.ac.uk) and Dr Tom Webb (tw126@le.ac.uk), to discuss how their skills and research interests align with the theme.

The post-holder will be a member of the BHF CRE and be expected to fully contribute to that community. The post-holder will also be expected to draw on academic experience to underpin and carry out activities across a range of areas of academic and university life, aligned with [the University's strategic themes](#) of 'World Changing Research' and 'Our Citizens,' together with the University values.

Whilst this project specifically focuses on the GENVASC study, the wider CRE Discovery theme spans the full discovery pipeline and brings together expertise in cardiovascular genomics, statistical genetics, clinical imaging, plasma biomarkers, molecular biology, multi-omics integration, functional genomics, bioinformatics, and translational research. Core members include Professors Sir Nilesh Samani, Matt Bown, Veryan Codd, Martin Tobin, Louise Wain, Dave Adlam, Toru Suzuki, Dr Christopher Nelson and Dr Tom Webb. The post will be based at the BHF Cardiovascular Research Centre, Glenfield Hospital, Leicester, with access to state-of-the-art research facilities and an interdisciplinary research community across the University. The principal mentor and line manager for this post will be Professor Samani.

Our approach to the academic career recognises its plurality and encourages a balance between breadth and specialisation. This is underpinned by the academic career map, which articulates the expectations of academic staff at each stage of their academic career, and clearly establishes what you can do in order to progress your academic career at Leicester.





Main Duties and Responsibilities

Research

- To work primarily on the GENVASC Study to contribute to the overall research programme using established and novel approaches.
- To actively seek opportunities to carry out multi-disciplinary research with other research groups at the University or stakeholders external to the University, with the approval of the Principal Investigator (PI).
- To undertake specific roles in developing research skills and experience in cardiovascular genomics and clinical epidemiology taking responsibility for some element(s) of the planned research.
- To contribute to the development of the choice of techniques, approaches and methods;
- In agreement with the line manager, liaise with project collaborators to progress the research.
- Develop research and enterprise leadership skills, contributing to promoting and embedding an inclusive and respectful university research culture.
- To contribute to research outputs and lead in writing up research findings for dissemination amongst the research team and broader research community, and represent research group by disseminating results/findings at national and international conferences and broader community.
- With the support of colleagues, identify opportunities to apply for fellowships and/or further project grants.

Professional Development

- Duties and opportunities to engage in work that support your own professional development.

Impact and Knowledge Exchange

- Network and contribute to the maintaining and furthering of the wider research programme and research area.
- To contribute to industry collaborations.
- To consult effectively on own specialism directly with people external to the University.
- To engage positively and pro-actively in research impact.

Leadership and Citizenship

- Guidance to other team members; providing mentoring and coaching to Early Career Researchers and research students.
- Pro-actively build networks and collaborations.

Internal and External Relationships

Develop mutually beneficial, effective relationships across the Centre and wider University, and with local partners, that support and deliver the University strategy.





Represent the University regionally and nationally.

Build relationships with external bodies to develop the Centre's impact agenda.

Coordination with central University offices.

Regular meetings with members of the programme research group.

Meeting members of the department for critical discussion of the research and exchange of new ideas and approaches that might benefit the research.

Planning and Organising

You will be required to effectively manage your time to plan your research activity and to deliver on the priorities of the project:

- Along with senior colleagues, shape the strategic direction in the research area, developing clear long-term (many months/years) plans for sustaining and enhancing the research programme.
- Prioritise tasks within agreed work schedules;
- Plan for specific aspects of research incorporating issues such as deadlines, project milestones and overall research aims;
- Adapt daily and weekly plans to accommodate new developments and be flexible to the changing priorities of the research project.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- PhD or equivalent in appropriate discipline or the equivalent professional qualification and experience *
- Evidence of a contribution to peer-reviewed journal papers or equivalent e.g., technical report/writing a piece of software *
- Evidence of proven analytical problem-solving capability *
- Expertise in relevant approaches/models and analytical techniques and ability to develop new ones where required.
- Relevant knowledge of cardiovascular diseases and traits to enable data analyses *

Desirable

- Expertise that complements or enhances existing strengths within the Department/School
- Clear forward plans for sustaining and enhancing the research programme
- Involvement in relevant research and professional networks and organisations on a national level
- Successful completion of CPD

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- Willingness and ability to work with internal and external stakeholders*
- Evidence of continued development of subject expertise*





- Excellent communication skills – written and verbal evidenced by the ability to communicate complex information *
- Evidence of working effectively as part of a team and the ability to work independently *
- Working towards independence and ability to be involved in collaborative research
- Evidence and commitment to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for yourself, and encourage commitment to learn and develop in others
- Collegiate member of a research team
- Ability to deliver classes using a comprehensive range of delivery methods, including lectures, seminars and tutoring
- A commitment to the delivery of a high-quality service to students

Desirable

- Budget management skills

**Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview*

Reason for Fixed Term Contract

The reason for the fixed term contract is stated in section 1.9 in the summary of contractual terms in your contract of employment.

Criminal Declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

NHS Research Governance

Where it is determined that the duties of this post for the purposes of research involve work with the NHS, it is necessary to ensure that the performance of the duties attached to the post are covered by NHS research governance arrangements and the appointee must comply with all such arrangements, including DBS & occupational health clearance.





Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are expected to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We expect all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required.

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - *As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community*

Freedom of Speech

The University is committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law throughout our recruitment processes. We ensure that all candidates are considered based on merit and suitability for the role, without regard to their lawful viewpoints or the expression of challenging or controversial ideas. Our recruitment policies and practices are designed to protect applicants from discrimination or adverse treatment on the basis of their opinions, and to foster an environment where open debate and diverse perspectives are valued as essential to our academic mission.

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equity support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high-quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equity, diversity and inclusion.

