

## The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute Faculty Model

### Introduction

The continuing success of the Institute critically depends on the recruitment and retention of the best scientists to deliver its strategy. The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute aims through its Faculty programme to:

- provide an optimal environment for the pursuit of world-class science;
- provide scientific leadership for its programmes and projects;
- support the career development of scientists;
- train genome scientists for future roles at the Institute and elsewhere;
- attract and nurture the very best scientific talent.

### Principles

The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute Faculty programme is characterised by the following:

- scientific excellence and strategic relevance
- independent and internationally competitive scientific programmes and projects
- a mix of hypothesis-driven research and data/resource generation
- access to unparalleled scientific resources and research facilities
- opportunities for basic and clinical scientists at all career stages
- personal [salary] support from core funding or an external grant/fellowship or a combination of the two
- level of core support in terms of positions, running costs and space
- encouragement to apply for external funding where appropriate
- scope for joint appointments with universities and other institutions
- system of regular internal review of individuals informed by external letters
- as part of active career planning and the need for the Institute to maintain a stream of fresh ideas and experiences and contribute to the success of the wider genome community, encouragement to look beyond the Institute for pursuit of longer-term career aims
- climate of healthy turnover in which scientific leadership is refreshed and skills are transferred within the genome community
- line management by member of the Board of Management [BoM] supplemented by mentoring from other senior members of Faculty
- personal and career development opportunities including taking on additional Institute responsibilities, access to relevant leadership programmes and other training provision

### Levels

The WTSI Faculty has three levels of seniority – CDF Group Leader, Group Leader and Senior Group Leader.

The career management and review arrangements for CDF Group Leaders differ from those for Group Leaders and Senior Group Leaders. Separate frameworks have been developed for the two cadres.

Levels of support and review terms/arrangements may vary for individuals holding 3<sup>rd</sup> party fellowships.

#### CDF Group Leader

These positions are designed for scientists or clinical researchers who wish to consolidate their research skills and make the transition from postdoctoral fellow to independent scientist. They provide the opportunity for researchers to establish independence and to lead a research group for the first time. They also enable individuals to capitalize on the Institute's resources in order to develop their careers. The expectation is that CDF Group Leaders will have the opportunity to develop the intellectual basis, biological resources and data to sustain a scientific programme in the long term and will pursue their career elsewhere at the end of the term.

#### *Level of support:*

Six years maximum

Own salary plus an agreed level of core support in terms of headcount, typically one or two positions, and running costs [*Note*: CDF Group Leaders will be strongly encouraged to obtain their own funding through recognised career development award schemes].

May supervise PhD students from the outset

#### Group Leader

These positions are designed to be the first or second leadership role for individuals after a period of postdoctoral training and/or career development award support.

Group Leaders will:

- have excelled as a postdoctoral/career development fellow/junior group leader with strong support from referees predicting likely success as an independent investigator
- typically, be in their first or second group leader role
- have multiple first author publications in excellent journals
- demonstrate strong evidence of a growing scientific reputation and of capability/personal qualities to lead a research team and direct an independent programme of work

#### *Level of support:*

Eight years maximum [unless promoted to Senior Group Leader]

Own salary plus an agreed level of core support in terms of headcount and running costs

May supervise PhD students from the outset

#### Senior Group Leader

These positions span a wide breadth of experience levels. On entry, individuals will be at least equivalent to Senior Lecturer/Reader at a UK University. More experienced members of the cadre will be competitive for professorial appointments at the best UK universities. At the upper end of the spectrum, individuals will be competitive for senior academic leadership positions in the UK or elsewhere such as department or divisional heads, or a Wellcome Trust Principal Fellowship.

#### *Level of support:*

Ongoing but with a 5 year individual review cycle

Own salary plus an agreed level of core support in terms of headcount and running costs

May supervise PhD students from the outset

## **CDF Group Leader**

### Purpose

To provide support for outstanding basic scientists or clinical researchers who wish to consolidate their research skills and make the transition from postdoctoral fellow to independent scientist. They provide the opportunity for researchers to establish independence and to lead a research group for the first time. They also enable individuals to capitalize on the Institute's resources in order to develop their careers. The expectation is that CDF Group Leaders will develop the intellectual basis, biological resources and data to sustain a scientific programme in the long term.

### Eligibility

Non-clinical applicants should have a PhD or DPhil and will normally have between 2 and 4 years postdoctoral experience at the point of application although more experienced candidates will be considered.

Medical graduates should normally be of specialist registrar or consultant status and have obtained a PhD, DPhil or MD in a basic science or clinical research project.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have the capability and personal qualities to lead a research team and direct an independent programme of work.

Applicants will be competitive for career development awards [or their clinical equivalents] from major funding bodies in the biomedical research sector ie. MRC Career Development Award, CR-UK Career Development Fellowship. *Note:* Fellowships from the Wellcome Trust may only be held at the Institute if they come under one of the Trust's clinical schemes.

There are no residency restrictions although the appointment of individuals from outside the European Economic Area [EEA] will be subject to obtaining an appropriate right to work in the UK and entry clearance. External awards may have their own eligibility criteria and these will take precedence.

Fellowships may be taken up on a part-time employment basis, where appropriate.

### Recruitment

CDF Group Leaders will be recruited in one of two ways:

- i) By applying in competition for advertised core-funded positions in strategically important areas;
- ii) With the sponsorship of a Board of Management [BoM] member, applying for and securing an external career development award of the type described in the eligibility section above

In both instances, at the outset the BoM will endorse the decision to recruit/host a Fellow in a given area. Proposals will need to demonstrate a good strategic fit with the Institute's scientific strategy and be expected to add value to the Institute's scientific portfolio over the next 6 years. They will also be expected to have elements that extend beyond 6 years.

Internal candidates may apply through either route and will be assessed in the same way as external applicants but with additional consideration of the relative benefits to the individual's career of a further period of time at the Institute.

For advertised positions, the relevant BoM member will convene and chair an appointments committee comprising Faculty members and, where appropriate, external representatives. Potential applicants for external fellowships will be assessed prior to application by a standing committee chaired by the Director.

Applicants via both channels will be asked to provide the following:

- curriculum vitae with a full publication list;
- a summary of scientific achievements [1-2 pages];
- an outline of future research plans [2-3 pages] indicating how these would link in with other Sanger programmes and infrastructure;
- brief outline of longer-term plans beyond end of term [1 page]
- details of 3 referees

Additional referees may be selected by the appointments committee.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to attend an interview with the appointments committee, meet with faculty members and to give a seminar [an open seminar covering past work followed by a future plans seminar to the faculty/appointments committee].

The appointments committee will make a recommendation to the BoM who will make the final recruitment decision. Offers made to fellowship applicants will be conditional upon the award of external funding.

### Review

CDF Group Leaders will normally be appointed for a fixed term of 6 years (or funding period if shorter) and are not subject to formal review although they will receive mentoring and other informal review/training support throughout. Discussions will be initiated 12 months ahead of their projected end date to ensure adequate preparation for the next career step which will normally be outside the Institute.

## **Group Leader/Senior Group Leader**

### Recruitment

New appointments may be made in the following circumstances:

- as part of a strategic initiative to appoint in a given field;
- as a replacement for someone who has left or retired where there is a continuing strategic need for a programme in that area;
- opportunistic recruitment of world-class candidates who fit with the Institute's strategic goals;
- where an individual secures an external senior fellowship [eg. Wellcome Trust Senior Clinical Fellowship] in a strategically aligned area;
- exceptionally, new appointments will be driven by the need to promote [and thereby retain] outstanding internal candidates in strategically important areas.

The majority of positions will be advertised and filled in open competition.

Applications to funding bodies under category 4 will require sponsorship by a Board of Management [BoM] member and prior acceptance of the strategic case by the BoM. Appointments will be contingent upon the award of the fellowship applied for.

Internal candidates may be considered either by applying in open competition to an advert or, under category 5, through formal nomination by their BoM line manager. In all cases the strategic case for making an appointment in a given area must be made and accepted by the BoM.

The Director will appoint an appointments committee which may include some external representatives.

Applicants will be asked to provide the following:

- curriculum vitae with a full publication list;
- a summary of scientific achievements [1-2 pages];
- an outline of future research plans [2-3 pages] indicating how these would link in with other Sanger programmes and infrastructure
- details of three referees

Additional referees may be selected by the appointments committee.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to attend an interview with the appointments committee, meet with faculty members and to give a seminar [an open seminar covering past work followed by a future plans seminar to the faculty/appointments committee].

The appointments committee will make a recommendation to the Director who will make the recruitment decision in consultation with the BoM.

### Review

Every Group Leader/Senior Group Leader will be formally reviewed by the BoM towards the end of their review cycle and a decision taken as to whether the appointment should be continued and, if so, at what level. The overriding criteria for continuation of support are sustained high performance coupled with continuing strategic fit of the research. Broader career development considerations may also have a bearing and the potential benefits of a move elsewhere compared to a further period of time at the Institute explored.

Group Leaders will be reviewed during their 5<sup>th</sup> year and again 12 -18 months before the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> year. Group Leaders are limited to an eight years maximum term [unless promoted to Senior Group Leader].

Senior Group Leaders will be reviewed during their 5<sup>th</sup> year and at 5 yearly intervals thereafter.

Further details of the review process will be provided on appointment.

### Resources

When a new Group Leader/Senior Group Leader is appointed s/he will be provided with an agreed reasonable level of resources – staffing, budget and space.

The initial level of staffing and space provision will be at the discretion of the Director and will depend on factors such as the requirements of their programme of science and take into account Institute budget and space considerations.

We will seek to provide individuals with stable resources at the agreed level for the duration of their review cycle but reserve the right to adjust resources up or down in the light of individual or project performance, the strategic fit of the project as

scientific strategy evolves and the overall budgetary and space resources at the disposal of the Institute. Specifically resource levels will be reviewed at the following points:

- individual 5 year review
- promotion
- Wellcome Trust Review of the Institute

Budgets will be allocated at the start of each financial year. Individuals will be expected to monitor their expenditure through the year and keep to budgets unless prior agreement to vary budget has been made with the Head of Finance and Procurement.

### **Diversity and equality**

The Sanger Institute values the diversity of its staff and where practical adopts a flexible approach to prevent any disadvantage that could arise from an extended period of absence, such as maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave and other caring responsibilities that have reduced working time.

In considering candidates for a Faculty position, where such absence may have had an impact on a person's career outputs (e.g. number and frequency of papers over such a period), consideration will be made of the likely outputs had there been no absence based on previous achievements and verified in the selection process and through references. Similarly, the research productivity of a candidate who has been working part-time would be considered in a pro-rated way.

Where such an absence or period of part-time working occurs within employment as a Faculty Member, the Institute will consider extending the individual review term and/or fixed-term contract, subject additionally in the case of external fellowship holders to the terms and conditions of the funding body. Guidance on entitlements to maternity, adoption and paternity leave and pay can be found under their respective policies and procedures on the Intranet or by contacting Human Resources.

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