

PhD Candidate Rheumatology Rheumatoid Arthritis, Leiden, the Netherlands

The position

The Rheumatology department is looking for an ambitious PhD candidate interested in elucidating the immunological mechanisms underlying RA. Do you have affinity/experience with immunological lab techniques and biostatistics, as well as a passion to understand rheumatic diseases? Then we are looking for you!

Background

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune disease characterized by chronic inflammation of the joints, in which autoantibodies are often detected. It is however unknown how the break of B cell tolerance is induced or how autoantibody-producing B cells are activated. Although there are strong indications that mucosal immune responses are involved in this process, their exact contribution remains unclear. This is why, in our research group, we have collected biomaterial from mucosal sites and blood from RA patients and healthy individuals. Based on our expertise in characterizing antigen-specific B cells and autoantibodies in RA, this new project will elucidate the role of antigen exposure at mucosal surfaces in the development of the autoimmune response underlying RA. Furthermore, the association between various autoantibody characteristics and clinical parameters will be investigated. Laboratory techniques to be used include B cell staining, both on blood (FACS) and on tissue (immunohistochemistry), enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISA), techniques to purify antibodies, and possibly work with laboratory animals (mice models). The project involves both fundamental and translational research in a multi-disciplinary and enthusiastic team of technicians, immunologists and rheumatologists.

Your profile

We are looking for a curious and ambitious PhD candidate with an MSc degree in medicine, biomedical or biopharmaceutical sciences or equivalent. You have a flexible mindset, excellent communication skills, and the ability to work in a multidisciplinary team consisting of preclinical scientists, clinicians, and technicians. Affinity with immunology/autoimmune research is appreciated, as well as hands-on experience with bio-statistics and standard immunological techniques such as ELISA and immunohistochemistry.

What we offer

You will be employed on the basis of a 36-hour week. Appointment is for the duration of the education, 4 years. Your salary will depend on your qualifications and experience, with a maximum of € 3,196 gross per month based on a 36-hour week (scale Pro, CAO UMC).

Working at the LUMC

The LUMC, situated in Leiden, the Netherlands, is an academic medical center for patient care, research and education, aiming to meet the challenges of tomorrow's health care. It has a strong focus on research, connecting and combining fundamental research into disease-causing mechanisms with patient-focused studies in areas like oncology, regenerative medicine and population health. The LUMC has research facilities that include capabilities for multiple appliances. The combination with clinical and societal outreach programs allows for ground-breaking research and innovation in basic and applied science.

At the department of Rheumatology, a EULAR Centre of Excellence, research is performed on the pathogenesis of different autoimmune diseases. The Rheumatology laboratory consists of 35 enthusiastic postdocs, PhD candidates and technicians. The Rheumatology outpatient clinic and the scientists in the lab, work in close collaboration to integrate fundamental and clinical research as much as possible.

More information

A detailed job description can be found at [www.lumc.nl / vacancies](http://www.lumc.nl/vacancies). Diane van der Woude M.D. Ph.D., rheumatologist, Rheumatology department. Telephone: +31 (0)71 526 34 23, dvanderwoude@lumc.nl

How to apply

Please apply via our online form at

<https://lumc.recruitee.com/l/en/o/phd-candidate-rheumatology-rheumatoid-arthritis-b21pvel83/c/new>

Closing date September 12th 2021