



Scientific Consulting & Training Senior Scientist

Position Description

MISSION

The mission of the National Serology Reference Laboratory, Australia (NRL) is to promote the quality of tests and testing for infectious diseases globally.

BACKGROUND

NRL operates as a division of St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research (SVI) whose mission is to carry out high-quality biomedical research to improve the health of the community by prevention, detection, or better treatment of common diseases. It is located in the St Vincent's Hospital campus which lends NRL unique opportunities to collaborate with clinicians, researchers and academics as well as work together on joint campus initiatives such as the HMS Trust Living BioBank. Whilst given natural free rein to deliver its specific scientific activities, NRL is an integrated component of SVI and as such the NRL works closely to help achieve SVI's strategic objectives

NRL was established as part of the Australian Government's HIV and AIDS strategy in 1985. Contracted by the Department of Health and licensed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), NRL supports collaborative scientific partners worldwide in the promotion of accurate diagnosis and management of human communicable diseases, including HIV, HCV and HTLV. It does this by providing specialised services, including pre- and post-market evaluations of test kits, provision of quality assurance programmes to laboratories, specialised testing services, and consultation, education and training for laboratories nationally and internationally. NRL is unique in that it is the only organisation in the world that delivers this full suite of services. The organisation has a promising future with opportunities to significantly grow its market and services globally.

Job Title	SENIOR SCIENTIST, SCIENTIFIC CONSULTING & TRAINING
Unit	NRL Division of SVI, Scientific and Business Services
Reports to	Scientific Consulting & Training Manager
Classification	Medical Scientist Grade 3
Annual Salary Range	\$94,307 - \$106,850
Status	Full time; one-year contract with probable extension
Hours	38 hours per week

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this position is to contribute to the building of sustainable capability in laboratories in Australia and overseas, specifically in the context of improving the quality of infectious disease testing. As a senior member of the NRL's Scientific Consulting and Training Service, the Senior Scientist will work within a team to provide high level expertise through the delivery of training, mentoring, consultancy and advocacy. Important elements of the role include the design, development and delivery of training and technical materials to support quality improvements in laboratories internationally, while advocating for the implementation of quality assurance methods at an international and regional level. Some travel to countries in South-east Asia may be required once borders are open. The role will also involve the co-ordination of input from other key NRL Scientists and support for budgeting, training and reporting activities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities

- Demonstrate an excellent understanding and high level of expertise in infectious disease testing and laboratory quality assurance.
- Execute the design, review and delivery (in-person and virtually) of high-quality training programs, technical guidance documents and competency- based assessments using a variety of methodologies and formats.
- Undertake travel to deliver training and consulting services internationally, as per specific project requirements.
- Represent NRL and provide technical advice at national, regional and international scientific meetings.
- Liaise with National Reference Laboratories, Ministries of Health, funding bodies and other stakeholders to deliver project outputs and outcomes in a timely manner, and to a high standard.
- Seek new consultancy and training opportunities nationally and internationally and assess and communicate commercial opportunities to NRL Executive and NRL Customer Engagement staff
- Actively maintain and develop relationships with current and potential funding bodies and key collaborating partners.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on progress of project against pre-defined outcomes.
- Manage the completion of quality management system document review, plans and corrective action requests (CARs) as required and by applying a risk-based approach.
- Support the development of promotional material for NRL Scientific Consulting and Training Services as necessary, in collaboration with the Customer Engagement Team.

Judgement and analysis

- Troubleshoot laboratories' technical and quality issues and advise partner laboratories on laboratory best practice and standards using a risk-based approach.
- Communicate with internal and external stakeholders (clients, regulators, accreditation/certification bodies, suppliers, contractors).
- Manage workload across multiple projects and communicate any difficulties or challenges faced to NRL Executive and/or the client in a timely and professional manner.
- Assess if changes to a project requested by clients are realistic and communicate decisions in a respectful and professional manner.
- Be flexible and adaptable to change where required and be able to think on your feet.
- Decisive and confident in scientific judgement and support decisions and advice with strong evidence.
- Manage clients' and stakeholders' expectations and communicate NRL's expectations to stakeholders.

Financial Management

- Support the Scientific Consulting & Training Manager in the preparation of project budgets, if required.
- Review and report on project budgets in line with funding body reporting requirements as required.
- Prepare and review budget of Scientific Consulting and Training Services in conjunction with Finance Business Partner and the Executive Manager, Scientific and Business Relations.
- Review finance reports and provide justification for variances from budget.
- Contribute to the development of regular budget re-forecasts and financial planning and budgeting relating to Scientific Consulting and Training Services

Supervision and Training

- Train and mentor partner laboratories on high quality laboratory testing and its quality assurance and management.
- Co-ordinate other scientific staff and subject matter experts at NRL also involved in the provision of consultancies and training when required.

- Develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks for Scientific Consulting and Training Service projects and activities.
- Plan and monitor the progress of Scientific Consulting and Training Service projects and activities.
- Ensure projects and activities are managed according to pre-defined milestones and within defined budget.
- Participate in organisational activities as directed by EM- S&BR or NRL Executive.

Presentation of data, findings and trends

- Deliver internal and external presentations, in person or on-line (virtual training).
- Represent NRL Scientific Consulting and Training Services in National and International scientific fora where required
- Prepare monthly and quarterly summary reports of Scientific Consulting and Training Service activities for Executive team and relevant funding bodies as required

Occupational Health and Safety

- Knowledge and awareness of safe systems for good laboratory practice and preventative approaches to effectively manage and minimise occupational risk
- Ensure staff safety through monitoring the safety of work environment and operational work processes, compliance with safety systems, the use of PPE and investigation of root causes of any incidents and near misses.
- All employees must also take responsibility for their own safety, and that of fellow workmates, as required by the Safety Policy and the Safety Manual, and should apply a common-sense approach to work methods to minimize risk to themselves and others.
- Work performed in accordance with NRL's specific workplace safety regulations and procedures.

PERFORMANCE RESULT AREAS

Quality and Risk

- Undertake all activities in accordance with NRL's documented procedures, in compliance with relevant accreditation, certification and regulatory standards including ISO standards, TGA, NATA, BSI and NRL's own quality management system.
- Deliver effective services with an emphasis on continuous improvement including making contributions to risk identification, assessment, prevention / mitigation and management.
- Ensure high standards of customer satisfaction in response to service delivery.

Productivity measures

- Raised profile and presence of NRL at national, regional and international laboratory networks.
- Planned project timeframes, risk assessments, outputs and outcomes achieved in a timely manner to a high standard.
- Innovative approaches and problem solving
- Collaboration with all other NRL Services to identify appropriate staff to conduct and support training, where required.
- Actively seek and develop new Scientific Consulting and Training Services revenue sources
- Increase in revenue and profit of Scientific Consulting and Training Services.
- Good relationships developed and maintained with funders and stakeholders.

Operational efficiency and effectiveness

- Deliver on project requirements efficiently, to a high scientific standard, and with attention to accuracy.
- Work independently with minimal supervision seeking guidance and clarification when required.
- Work as constructive member of NRL contributing ideas and supporting the work of others.
- Adopt practices that result in efficient use of time and resources.
- Proactively identify improvements in processes and methods.

- Maintain a professional work ethic.
- Participate in periodic performance development discussions.
- Maintain competency in all relevant tasks.

Standards and organisational environment

All NRL employees are expected to:

- Strive to achieve the objectives of the organisational mission statement as expressed in the Quality Manual
 - Work in accordance with the quality management system
 - Review documents as required within the allocated timeframe
 - Strive to act in accordance with our Core Values and Behaviours Consistent with those Values
 - Contribute to NRL's internal audit function as appropriate
 - Provide support and assistance where appropriate to all other core areas
 - Provide customers with an efficient and effective service
 - Maintain a professional work ethic complementary to the organisation
 - Build and enhance professional relationships with the laboratory network
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SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications, skills and experience

Essential

- Tertiary qualifications – Bachelor or higher in medical or biological science.
- Masters of Public Health or equivalent highly desirable.
- At least 8 years’ experience performing laboratory testing and its quality assurance as applied to infectious diseases.
- High level of skill and expertise in the design, delivery and management of laboratory training programs.
- Demonstrated expertise in the delivery of scientific information in the form of written reports and effective presentations to groups.
- Demonstrated effective planning, organisational and project management skills.
- Well-developed skills in Microsoft Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- Ability to undertake frequent travel once borders re-open, and remain in-country for potentially up to 4-6 weeks to deliver on project outcomes, in resource-limited settings.

Desirable

- Background in education or instructional design
- Expertise in quality assurance methodology, such as External Quality Assessment (EQA) and/or Quality Control (QC)
- Expertise in performing laboratory assessments, and supporting and mentoring laboratories towards accreditation to ISO 15189 or similar standards.
- Experience in working with laboratories in-country, in resource-limited settings.
- Experience in designing monitoring and evaluation indicators to assess project activities
- Expertise in project management (MS Project or other software)
- Extensive network of contacts in the laboratory capacity development setting
- Experience in representation at senior government and NGO official fora internationally
- Experience in managing staff
- Background in biosafety and biosecurity

Personal Attributes

- Excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills, both written and verbal
- Advanced analytical and problem-solving skills
- Ability to remain calm under pressure
- Confidence in working autonomously and apply sound decision making, but able to exercise appropriate judgement and seek advice and support as appropriate
- Able to troubleshoot unfamiliar scenarios or unexpected results, think on their feet, apply critical thinking and common sense to a response and resolution
- Ability to train and guide others
- Strong attention to detail and accuracy
- Excellent organisational skills, able to multitask and prioritise work during busy periods
- Self-motivated, enthusiastic and passionate about laboratory capacity development and public health issues
- Strong work ethic.
- Reliable and trustworthy
- Culturally sensitive
- Professional yet personable

I understand and agree to undertake the requirements of the role, as described above:

Incumbent Name..... Signature..... Date.....