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# Position Details

## CSIRO Early Research Career (CERC) Postdoctoral Fellowship– CSOF4

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| The following information is for applicants | |
| Advertised Job Title | CSIRO Postdoctoral Fellowship in Optimising Biodegradation of Plastics |
| Job Reference | 67324 |
| Tenure | Specified Term of 3 years  Full-time |
| Salary Range | AU$86 434 to AU$94 679 pa (pro-rata for part-time) + up to 15.4% superannuation |
| Location(s) | Melbourne VIC |
| Relocation Assistance | Will be provided to the successful candidate if required |
| Applications are open to | * Australian/New Zealand Citizens and Australian Permanent Residents * Australian temporary residents currently residing in Australia (visa sponsorship may be provided to eligible candidates) |
| Position reports to the | Senior Principal Research Scientist |
| Client Focus – Internal | 100% |
| Client Focus – External | 0% |
| Number of Direct Reports | 0 |
| Enquire about this job | Contact Tom Peat via email at tom.peat@csiro.au or phone +61 3 9662 7304 |
| How to apply | Apply online at <https://jobs.csiro.au/>  Internal applicants please apply via **Jobs Central**  If you experience difficulties when applying, please email [careers.online@csiro.au](mailto:careers.online@csiro.au) or call 1300 984 220. |

### Role Overview

**CSIRO Early Research Career (CERC) Postdoctoral Fellowships** provide opportunities to scientists and engineers who have completed their doctorate and have less than three years’ relevant postdoctoral work experience. These fellowships aim to develop the next generation of future leaders of the innovation system through:

* A differentiated career development program to deliver capability excellence and breadth across all facets of the national innovation system.
* Research training via strategic research and development projects with a clear focus that will deliver real impact through science and engineering excellence;
* An innovative culture supporting the development and demonstration of original thinking and expertise leading to peer-recognition; and
* Opportunities to develop skills and experience in collaborative research teams to effectively work within national and global multi/transdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder environments.

CERC Postdoctoral Fellows **are appointed for three years or part time equivalent.**

The Postdoctoral Fellow will work in collaboration between the Manufacturing, Data61 and Land & Water business units (CSIRO) to design and develop novel enzymes capable of degrading plastic materials. Management of plastic debris presents a big challenge because of the chemical stability of the polymers, the complexity of the materials and the scattered pollution sources. The objective is to provide a biotechnological solution to the problem of plastic waste management and pollution of waterways by microplastics.

The role is focused on enzyme engineering applications, including rational design of protein variants with increased activity, thermal stability or affinity for specific substrates. The researcher will engineer poly(ethyleneterephthalate) (PET) esterase enzymes to create a pool of mutants to be used in a versatile range of biotechnological applications, from large scale industrial biodegradation of PET material to low temperature activity against high-crystalline PET. Increasing the substrate promiscuity of the enzymes will enable us to use them to degrade other types of polymer.

The role will engage broadly with other theoretical and life sciences scientists across the organisation, opening the possibility for further collaborations in areas of enzyme engineering and polymer design.

### Duties and Key Result Areas:

Under the direction of senior research scientists and engineers, CERC Postdoctoral Fellows:

* + Carry out innovative, impactful research of strategic importance to CSIRO that will, where possible, lead to novel and important scientific outcomes.
* Design of PETase enzymes with increased activity, thermal stability and hc-PET substrate specificity.
* Develop and test high throughput activity assay and mutant screening strategies.
* Manage, visualise and statistical analysis of complex data.
* Interact productively with a diverse multidisciplinary, multi-institutional team.
* Undertake regular reviews of relevant journal and patent literature.
* Produce high quality scientific and technical outputs including journal articles, conference papers and presentations, patents and technical reports.
* Represent CSIRO at leading national and international conferences and forums as agreed with your supervisor.
  + Recognise and exploit opportunities for innovation and the generation of new theoretical perspectives, and progress opportunities for the further development or creation of new lines of research.
  + Utilise design thinking methodology to plan and prepare research proposals, and apply non-academic impact methodology to research projects.
  + Carry out research investigations requiring originality, creativity and innovation.
  + Record, manage, and analyse data/information using relevant domain data science techniques.
  + Proactively undertake development to grow effective researcher capabilities to support career goals.
  + Adhere to the spirit and practice of CSIRO’s Code of Conduct, Health, Safety and Environment procedures and policy, Diversity initiatives and Making Safety Personal goals.
* Other duties as directed.

[**The CERC Postdoctoral Fellow learning and development program**](http://www.csiro.au/en/Careers/Student-and-graduate-programs/Postdoctoral-fellowships)is developed between the CERC Postdoctoral Fellow and their CSIRO supervisor. The program will focus on enhancing the Fellows’ capabilities to the level expected of an independent researcher and will include on-the-job and course-based development encompassing:

* Discipline-specific techniques and protocols
* Professional growth
* Project management
* Communication and influencing skills
* Working and collaborating with others

## **Required Competencies:**

* **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Cooperates with others to achieve organisational objectives and may share team resources in order to do this. Collaborates with other teams as well as industry colleagues.
* **Influence and Communication:** Uses knowledge of other party's priorities and adapts presentations or discussions to appeal to the interests and level of the audience. Anticipates and prepares for others reactions.
* **Resource Management/Leadership:** Allocates activities, directs tasks and manages resources to meet objectives. Provides coaching and on the job training, recognises and supports staff achievements and fosters open communication in the team.
* **Judgement and Problem Solving:** Investigates underlying issues of complex and ill-defined problems and develops appropriate response by adapting/creating and testing alternative solutions.
* **Independence:** Recognise and makes immediate changes to improve performance (faster, better, lower cost, more efficiently, better quality, improved client satisfaction).
* **Adaptability:**Copes with ambiguity or situations that lack clarity. Adapts readily to changing circumstances and new responsibilities (which may include activities outside own preferences) in the interests of achieving team objectives. Recognises the need for and undertakes personal development as a result of changes.

## **Selection Criteria**

#### Essential

*Under CSIRO policy only those who meet all essential criteria can be appointed.*

1. A doctorate (or will shortly satisfy the requirements of a PhD) in a relevant discipline area, such as biochemistry, biophysics, chemistry, biology or physics.

Please note: To be eligible for this role you must have **no more than 3 years** (or part time equivalent) of postdoctoral research experience.

1. Demonstrated capability in enzyme engineering, molecular biology, biophysics and protein characterisation.
2. Demonstrated experience in experimental design and management, visualisation and statistical analysis of complex data.
3. Proven ability to foster productive and inclusive interactions with colleagues from diverse scientific backgrounds and at a variety of levels of seniority (e.g. students, group leaders, professors etc).
4. High level written and oral communication skills with the ability to represent the research team effectively internally and externally, including the presentation of research outcomes at national and international conferences.
5. A sound history of publication in peer reviewed journals and/or authorship of scientific papers, reports, grant applications or patents.
6. A record of science innovation and creativity, including the ability & willingness to incorporate novel ideas and approaches into scientific investigations.

## **Desirable**

1. Domain knowledge in molecular modelling, bioinformatics and rational enzyme design.
2. Experience in biochemistry, protein production and directed evolution methods as applied to enzyme engineering.
3. Remain productive, positive and resilient in complex, ambiguous and/or uncertain environments.
4. **The ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary, potentially regionally dispersed research team, plus the motivation and discipline to carry out autonomous research.**

To be appointed as a CERC Postdoctoral Fellow within CSIRO, candidates will be expected to commence employment by December 2020. Candidates are also required to have **submitted** their PhD at the time of commencement, as a minimum requirement, if PhD conferment has not been obtained. If a candidate has submitted, but their PhD has not yet been formally attained, the starting salary will be CSOF4-1 ($83,687). Upon CSIRO receiving written confirmation that the PhD has been awarded (within a six month period from commencement date), the salary will be increased to the negotiated level and the difference will be back-paid to the Officer’s start date.

Special Requirements

Appointment to this role may be subject to conditions including provision of a national police check as well as other security/medical/character clearance requirements.

* The successful candidate will be asked to obtain and provide evidence of a National Police Check or equivalent. Please note that people with criminal records are not automatically deemed ineligible. Each application will be considered on its merits.
* If the successful candidate is not an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident, they may be required to undergo additional security clearances, which may include medical examinations and an international standardised test of English language proficiency (i.e. IELTS test).- <https://ielts.com.au/>
* The successful candidate must be willing to travel interstate as required.

**Our value proposition**

We want CERC Postdoc Fellows to join our world class science, engineering and digital teams to solve big, complex problems that make a real difference to the future of Australia and the world.

You'll get to work with some of the most talented minds in their fields, not just in Australia, but in the world. At CSIRO, we spark off each other, learn from each other, trust each other and collaborate closely to achieve more than we could individually.

CSIRO Early Research Career (CERC) Postdoctoral Fellow Experience Employee Value Proposition (EVP). Find out more [here](https://www.csiro.au/en/careers/postdoctoral-fellowships)!

## **About CSIRO:**

We solve the greatest challenges through innovative science and technology. To find out more visit us [online](http://www.csiro.au/)!

Find out more about CSIRO [Land and Water](https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/LWF)

Find out more about CSIRO [Manufacturing](https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/MF)

Find out more about [Data61](https://data61.csiro.au/)