# Position Description

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

The following information is for applicants

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| Advertised job title**:** | CSIRO Postdoctoral Fellowship in Molecular Tools for Pathogen Control |
| Job reference: | 61555 |
| Relocation assistance**:** | Will be provided to the successful candidate if required |
| Applications are open to: | Australian Citizens Only  Australian/New Zealand Citizens and Australian Permanent Residents Only   * All Candidates |
| Percentage of client focus - internal: | 100% |
| Percentage of client focus - external: | 0% |
| Reports to the: | Team leader |
| Number of direct reports: | 0 |
| How to apply: | Please apply online at [jobs.csiro.au](https://jobs.csiro.au/) and enter the requisition number**.** Internal applicants please apply via ‘Jobs Central’ through the ‘People Hub’ icon |
| Contact details to discuss this position: | Dr Donald Gardiner via email at Donald.Gardiner@csiro.au |
| If you have difficulty applying please contact: | Call 1300 984 220 or email [csiro.online@csiro.au](mailto:careers.online@csiro.au) between 8.30 am and 5 pm Australian east coast time. |

## 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 Research Area:**

Gene drives are selfish genetic elements that are inherited at frequencies higher than normally expected. Recently this technology has been heralded as a potential game changer in the control of problematic species. What if we use this technology to reduce crop losses, reduce fungicide uses and make food safer? This postdoctoral fellow will investigate how natural gene drives work and if they could be used in sustainable agriculture. The successful applicant will undertake research directed at both:

1. Understanding the mode-of-action or biochemical mechanisms of natural gene drive systems, and
2. Gaining knowledge of how gene drives might behave in complex populations by combining experimental evolutionary biology and modelling approaches.

The experimental systems to be used will be relevant to Australian and global agriculture.

## Duties and Key Result Areas:

* Develop innovative approaches to understanding how natural gene drives work mechanistically. Some possible approaches could involve both biochemical (e.g. protein-protein interaction assays) and/or genetic approaches. The fellow will have the freedom and support, from the supervisory team, to determine how best to approach this challenge.
* Develop experimental evolutionary biology approaches to understand how gene drives might behave in complex populations.
* Interact with other researchers in CSIRO working in the areas of social licence and gene drives such as those in the Synthetic Biology Future Science Platform’s Maximising Impact and Environment and Biocontrol domains. These interactions will help guide the experimental work to maximise the potential for impact from the work.
* Lead the writing of reports and scientific papers resulting from the work.
* Develop collaborations within and external to CSIRO around gene drive technology and its application in agriculture.
* 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.
  + 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 plans and policies, Diversity initiatives and Zero Harm goals
* Other duties as directed.

**The CERC Postdoctoral Fellow learning and development program**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

<http://www.csiro.au/en/Careers/Student-and-graduate-programs/Postdoctoral-fellowships>

## CSIRO Competencies:

1. **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.**
2. **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.**
3. **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.**
4. **Judgement and Problem Solving:** Investigates underlying issues of complex and ill-defined problems and develops appropriate response by adapting/creating and testing alternative solutions.
5. **Independence: Recognise and makes immediate changes to improve performance (faster, better, lower cost, more efficiently, better quality, improved client satisfaction).**
6. **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:

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

1. A doctorate (or will shortly satisfy the requirements of a PhD) in a relevant discipline area, such as molecular plant pathology, molecular genetics, biochemistry or evolutionary biology.

***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. An understanding of biological containment practices to allow strict adherence to regulatory requirements of working with genetically modified organisms (GMOs).
2. Demonstrated experience in the design and execution of experiments to investigate complex biological processes
3. **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.**
4. **A sound history of publication in peer reviewed journals and/or authorship of scientific papers, reports, grant applications or patents.**
5. A record of science innovation and creativity, including the ability & willingness to incorporate novel ideas and approaches into scientific investigations.

## Desirable Criteria:

1. Experience working with fungal pathogens.
2. High level proficiency in the application of a wide range of molecular biology or biochemistry techniques (such as: molecular cloning, genomics, genome engineering, protein-protein interaction assays or genetic screens).
3. Knowledge of evolutionary biology theory and its application to microbiology.
4. Remain productive, positive and resilient in complex, ambiguous and/or uncertain environments.
5. **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 are 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.

**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! <https://www.csiro.au/en/careers/postdoctoral-fellowships>

## About CSIRO:

At CSIRO we solve the greatest challenges through innovative science and technology. See more [online](http://www.csiro.au/)!

Find out more about CSIRO [Agriculture and Food](https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/AF)

Find out more about CSIRO [Health and Biosecurity](https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/BF)

Find out more about CSIRO [Synthetic Biology Future Science Platform](https://research.csiro.au/synthetic-biology-fsp/)