

Job Description Form (JDF)

Position details

Position title: Laboratory Scientist
Position number: 70191452
Classification: Specified Calling Level 2
Physical location: Perth Metropolitan Area
Award: PSA 1992
Agreement: PSCSAA 2024
Pillar: Biosecurity and Emergency Management
Directorate: DPIRD Diagnostics and Laboratory Services
Branch: Animal Pathology

Reporting relationships

Reports to: Principal Laboratory Scientist (70191451), Specified Calling Level 4
This position
Direct reports: Nil

Role summary

At an experienced professional level, under general direction and using initiative and independent judgement, undertakes scientific activities in the laboratory.

Undertakes investigation, diagnosis, testing, identification and reporting of animal (terrestrial/aquatic) and/or plant diseases and/or pests, including surveillance for emergency diseases, emerging diseases and pests, residue incidents, endemic disease/pest testing/identification and associated research activities.

Conducts laboratory examination and uses appropriate protocols and assays, manages specimen submissions, interprets and integrates laboratory results and prepares draft reports for internal stakeholders.

Contributes scientifically valid diagnostic/testing/identification and surveillance data to support WA and national animal and/or plant health monitoring and market outcomes.

About us

Our department (DPIRD) leads sustainable development of WA's regions and agriculture, aquaculture, food and fisheries sectors. Our Ministerial portfolios are Agriculture and Food, Fisheries and Regional Development.

We **unlock and guide economic opportunities** for these sectors and regions, balanced with the **stewardship of our land and aquatic resources**.

In everything we do we take the approach of:

- **Protect** through stewardship of our people, land and aquatic resources.
- **Grow** our primary industries and regions through balancing social, economic and environmental drivers.
- **Innovate** through a culture of inquiry and adaptation.

We draw on our grow, protect, innovate approach to deliver priorities under three outcome areas:

1. Management and stewardship of WA's land and aquatic resources.
2. Capable and empowered communities.
3. Dynamic regions and primary industries

Our values

Our values are critical in creating a healthy and dynamic culture that helps each and all of us to make our best contribution, to develop a workplace where we feel excited about our work and results and where other people will increasingly want to join our team. Our values underpin how we operate:

- **Working together** – We achieve better outcomes with our colleagues, stakeholders and the community by engaging with their ideas, knowledge and expertise.
- **Acting with integrity** – We foster a culture where individuals are accountable for their actions, behaviours and contributions.
- **Responding with purpose** – Our actions and reactions are intentional, well thought out and align with a specific objective or goal.
- **Embracing curiosity and creativity** – There is always space to be innovative, through curious and creative thinking.
- **Aspiring for a better future** – Our combined efforts deliver sustainable results – environmentally, socially and economically.

Key responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the role include, but are not limited to, the following:

Diagnostics & Laboratory Services

- Undertakes animal and/or plant disease and/or pest investigations using relevant laboratory diagnostic and research skills and techniques (such as pathology, molecular biology, microbiology and taxonomy).
- Undertakes and records surveillance for animal and/or plant diseases and/or pests of significance.
- Remains prepared to recognise and respond to exotic disease and/or pest incursion, emerging diseases and/or pests, residue issues, zoonoses or other significant conditions of animals and plants or pest identification.
- Communicates requirements and outcomes of laboratory testing or identification to relevant clients including external and internal stakeholders.
- Assists with quality assurance, continuing education activities and observes laboratory procedures to help maintain DDLS NATA accreditation and professional competency.
- Meets communication requirements particularly with regard to animal and/or plant disease and/or pests and laboratory testing or identification.

Research and Development

- Applies laboratory expertise in areas such as pathology, molecular biology, microbiology and taxonomy to assist animal (terrestrial & aquatic) and/or plant industry development.
- Undertakes scientifically valid laboratory experiments to improve diagnostics and testing protocols for animal and/or plant diseases and/or pests.
- Contributes to the development and implementation of projects and maintains the conduct of project work, meeting project milestones, agreed outputs and internal and external reporting requirements.
- Develops and maintains an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of relevant research, development findings, issues and trends.
- Develops and maintains effective relationships with relevant staff members and stakeholders; promotes technology, services and resources that are available; collaborates and remains aware of relevant projects and trends.
- Prepares draft submissions for internal/external funding to industry funding bodies and progress reports to support the research program.

Strategic Planning and Policy Development

- Provides laboratory expertise into strategic planning and other planning processes regarding animal and/or plant health and laboratory practice.
- Participates in the development and production of strategic animal and/or plant health research and policy across the Department.
- Provides assistance to operational areas in translating strategic animal and/or plant health policy into relevant local policy and strategies.

General

- Prepares draft reports, summaries and general correspondence as required.

- Participates in incident and emergency management activities commensurate with capability, capacity, training and level of experience.
- Other duties as required.

Work related requirements

In the context of the role:

Essential criteria

Role specific

1. Knowledge and experience in investigating disease/pests in animal/plant specimens by visual examinations; selecting appropriate diagnostic laboratory testing protocols; and interpreting and applying laboratory data in disease diagnosis or pest identification.
2. Understanding of reporting requirements to various stakeholders such as the public, industry groups and Government, with competent use of ICT applications such as databases, spreadsheets and word processing.

Core capabilities

3. *Build effective relationships*: Well-developed verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to confidently liaise, collaborate with and communicate scientific information to departmental staff, industry and the community.
4. *Challenge for innovation*: Ability to establish clear plans and timeframes, evaluate performance, identify the need for change, determine action and see tasks and projects through to completion.
5. *Think strategically*: Well-developed conceptual and analytical skills including the ability to provide practical solutions to challenging issues and problems.
6. *Deliver in a changing environment*: Well-developed project and time management and organisational skills including the ability to effectively respond to change and to develop and apply advanced scientific techniques to enable the generation of advice for animal and/or plant health and laboratory practice.
7. *Lead and empower others*: Ability to lead teams and work collaboratively in a team environment contributing to the achievement of team goals.

Desirable criteria

1. Experience in the use of laboratory testing techniques in disease investigation or pathology in animals (terrestrial/aquatic) or plants; or entomological identification.
2. Specific training and/or post-graduate qualifications in a relevant specialist discipline.

Special requirements/equipment

- A degree in Agricultural Science or Science (Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Animal or Plant Pathology, Entomology, or a relevant field) recognised in Australia.
- An acceptable National Police Certificate (police clearance) is required (if not currently held, must be acquired prior to commencement at applicant's expense).
- Occasional travel to and from metropolitan and regional offices may be required.
- DPIRD is an Emergency Management Agency and all employees may be required to work or travel during, or outside of, normal business hours to assist with incidents and emergencies.
- The contract of employment specifies terms and conditions relating to this position.

Certification

The details contained in this document are an accurate statement of the duties, responsibilities and requirements of this position.

Delegated authority

Position title: Deputy Director General, Biosecurity and Emergency Management

Endorsement Date: 7 May 2026