

# Job Description Form (JDF)

## Position details

Position title: Laboratory Scientist (Biochemist)  
Position number: 70220058  
Classification: Specified Calling Level 3  
Physical location: Perth Metropolitan Area  
Award: PSA 1992  
Agreement: PSCSAA 2021  
Pillar: Sustainability and Biosecurity  
Directorate: Biosecurity  
Branch: DPIRD Diagnostics and Laboratory Services

## Reporting relationships

Reports to: Senior Laboratory Scientist, (70191447), SCL4  
Direct reports: Nil

## Role summary

At a broadly recognised professional level, demonstrating initiative and independent judgement, undertakes scientific activities in the laboratory.

Coordinates and 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.

Initiates and conducts laboratory examination and uses appropriate protocols and assays, manages specimen submissions, interprets and integrates laboratory results and prepares comprehensive reports to internal and external stakeholders.

Undertakes scientifically valid diagnostic/testing/identification and surveillance data to support WA and national animal and/or plant health monitoring and market outcomes, including surveillance for conditions of state and national significance.

## About us

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) role is to ensure that primary industries and regions are key contributors to the Government's agenda for economic growth and diversification, job creation, strong communities and better places. Our goals are to:

- **Protect:** to manage and provide for sustainable use of our natural resources and soils, and to protect Western Australia's brand and reputation as a reliable producer of premium, clean and safe food, products and services.
- **Grow:** to enable the primary industries sector and regions to increase international competitiveness, grow in value and social amenity and become a key pillar of the State's economy.
- **Innovate:** to support a culture of scientific enquiry, innovation and adaptation across primary industries and regions to boost industry transformation, economic growth and employment.

## 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:

- We value **relationships** - Our relationships with our clients, colleagues and stakeholders are at the heart of everything we do.
- We are **resilient** - We recover from setbacks, embracing and adapting to change because we have a clear focus on the big picture and long-term impact.
- We are **responsive** - We understand the needs of our clients, colleagues and stakeholders and add value by tailoring our solutions accordingly.
- We focus on **results** - We strive to develop and provide excellent services that delivers meaningful results to the community we serve.

## Key responsibilities

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

### Diagnostics & Laboratory Services

- Performs thorough 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).
- Conducts and records surveillance for animal and/or plant diseases and/or pests of national and state 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.
- Maintains DDLS NATA accreditation and professional competency by participating in quality assurance and continuing education activities and observing laboratory procedures.
- Anticipates DPIRD communication requirements particularly with regard to animal and/or plant disease and/or pests and laboratory testing or identification.

## **Research and Development**

- Undertakes laboratory activities in areas such as pathology, molecular biology, microbiology and taxonomy) to assist animal (terrestrial & aquatic) and/or plant industry development; and presents information as required at conferences, seminars, workshops and field days.
- Delivers scientifically valid laboratory experiments to improve diagnostics and testing protocols for animal and/or plant diseases and/or pests.
- Initiates and works on 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, innovative development findings, issues and trends.
- Develops and maintains effective relationships with relevant staff members and stakeholders; actively promote technology, services and resources that are available; collaborate and remain aware of relevant projects and trends.
- Develops submissions for internal/external funding to industry funding bodies and progress reports to support the research program.
- Publishes the results of research and investigational work in the scientific literature.

## **Strategic Planning and Policy Development**

- Researches, analyses and evaluates laboratory input 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 practical assistance to operational areas in translating strategic animal and/or plant health policy into relevant local policy and strategies.

## **General**

- Prepares reports, summaries and general correspondence as required.
- Provides supervision and direction of technical and casual staff as required.
- Participates in emergency responses as required.
- Performs other duties as required.

## Work related requirements

In the context of the role:

### Essential criteria

1. Demonstrated knowledge and experience investigating disease/ pests/ harmful residues in animal/plant specimens by visual examinations; selecting appropriate diagnostic laboratory testing protocols; and interpreting and applying laboratory data in disease diagnosis, pest identification or food safety.
2. Demonstrated 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:* Strong 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:* Well developed abilities 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 research, conceptual and analytical skills including the ability to provide innovative solutions to complex and challenging issues and problems.
6. *Deliver in a changing environment:* Strong project, time management and organisational skills including the ability to effectively contribute to the management of change and the ability to develop and apply complex scientific techniques to enable the generation of specialist input into plant and/or animal health and laboratory practice.
7. *Lead and empower others:* Proven ability to lead teams and work collaboratively in a team environment contributing to the achievement of departmental level outcomes.

### Desirable criteria

1. Demonstrated experience in 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

- 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.
- 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

Endorsed by:	Heather Brayford
Position title:	Deputy Director General, Sustainability and Biosecurity
Endorsement Date:	21 August 2020