

EMBL Australia Partner Laboratory Group Leaders– Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Are there any eligibility restrictions (e.g. age, gender, nationality)?*

There are no nationality, gender or age restrictions.

2. *What qualifications, experience (incl. minimum postdoctoral experience) and other conditions are required of the applicants?*

The candidate needs to hold a PhD or equivalent degree. There is no minimum postdoctoral experience required, we have hired candidates in the past that have had between one and 7 years of postdoctoral experience but this should be seen more as a guide than as a rule.

3. *What are the conditions of employment?*

The conditions of employment will be similarly to EMBL (Europe) terms and conditions. They will be consistent with Monash University terms and conditions together with the special items listed below:

Term of Employment: The initial term of the appointment is for 5 years.

Annual Leave: EMBL Australia Group Leaders will have 30 days paid annual leave per year.

Home Leave: For non-residents of Australia, there will be a contractual provision for a return economy flight to the home base, every 2 years, for all family members.

The period of home leave is deducted from accrued annual leave. However, an additional 2 days, special paid leave, may also be granted for travel time.

Allowances: There are a number of non-superannuable allowances that may be available to the EMBL Australia Group Leader, if eligible. These include: non-resident allowance, family allowance, children's allowance and education grant. Where eligible, these are paid on top of the basic salary.

Indemnity Allowance: If the Group Leader successfully fulfils the requirements of their 5 year contract, they may be eligible for this lump sum payment which equates to 10 weeks salary.

4. *What broad research topics are likely to be funded?*

EMBL Australia will be selecting scientists that will help to progress the Scientific Program that has been developed. The EMBL Australia Scientific Program can be downloaded at www.emblaustralia.org.au.

5. *How is the group leader position funded over the 5 year contract – and to what level?*

Funding is provided for the Group Leader and their associated group costs i.e. –

- One group leader
- one post-doctorate level scientist for 1 year
- a technician or equivalent position for 5 years
- other lab/research operating expenses for 5 years (see below for details).

6. What support will be provided for operating expenses?

The operating budget depends on the type of research pursued (e.g. whether equipment or consumable intensive). The sums involved will be discussed in detail during the selection process. It should also be emphasised that the operating budget is completely available for expenditure by the group on materials, travel and other costs as well as capital expenditure for equipment purchased in the group and Unit. Salary costs are not included in this budget. Salary budgets are allocated in addition to this allowance.

An additional central fund is available for the purchase of items of equipment whose cost exceeds that which can be carried by the Unit. A large variety of expensive technology and equipment is made available via EMBL Australia's agreement with BioPlatforms Australia and the extensive facilities available at ARMI and Monash University.

The initial equipment requirements of each group are different, and thus are dealt with on an individual basis during recruitment. The bottom line is that EMBL Australia will aim to meet your research needs.

7. Are group leaders able to secure external funding?

The budget for the Group Leader will provide for a group of roughly 2-3 people without requiring additional external funding. Postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to apply for external funding. Additional grant income would be retained by the Group leader for his/her research. There is no expectation that grant funding should be used to offset the EMBL budget.

8. What is the approach to the provision of central services?

Consistent with contemporary trends, EMBL Australia will aim to provide many services centrally. This avoids wastage of resource and frees scientists to pursue their science rather than administer contracts for routine services.

9. What support will be available for relocating a Lab to EMBL Australia Partner Laboratory

EMBL Australia is very flexible in helping new group leaders and unit coordinators move to the Laboratory. Sufficient laboratory and desk space is available for the average group. Support to transfer grants that are still extant can be provided as will support for the administration of the grant (where this is permitted by the funding institution).

Support in transferring key group members from the previous Institute to the EMBL Australia Partner Laboratory will be provided as well as support for the transfer of equipment from a previous lab where this is scientifically important and makes financial sense as compared to purchasing new equipment.

10. What are the visa requirements for the period at EMBL Australia?

Successful applicants (and their dependants) who are not already Permanent Residents of Australia will be sponsored for a Permanent Residency visa.

Further information about working in Australia is available from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship: <http://www.immi.gov.au/immigration.htm>

11. Is the successful Group Leader allowed to remain in Australia on completion of the contract?

Assuming that the Group Leader has been granted Australian Permanent Residency at the beginning of their appointment there will be no work restrictions on completion of the contract term.

Further information about working in Australia is available from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship: <http://www.immi.gov.au/immigration.htm>

12. How does the Australian Healthcare System work?

The Australian health system is widely regarded as being world-class, in terms of both its effectiveness and efficiency. The system is a mixture of public and private sector health service providers and a range of funding and regulatory mechanisms.

Universal health cover is provided by Medicare. If you are a permanent Resident or have applied for Permanent Residency you are eligible. The scheme gives you access to free treatment as a public patient in a public hospital and free or subsidized treatment by practitioners such as doctors, including some specialist and participating optometrists. Australian Medicare is funded through taxation and you will make financial contributions to the scheme through your taxes and the Medicare levy (1.5%), which is based on your taxable income.

Private Insurance is also available for residents of Australia at a cost to the individual. If you do not take out private health insurance cover you are likely to also have to pay an additional Medicare Levy Surcharge of 1% of taxable income. Further information for new residents can be found at:

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/migrants/new-residents.jsp>

13. How does the Australian Superannuation or Pension System work?

Superannuation (or “super” for short) is the process of accumulating a fund for retirement. The benefits provided by most super funds in Australia are in the form of a Lump Sum Benefits which can subsequently be used to purchase an annuity or pension if required. Superannuation for staff at Monash University is paid to UniSuper which is the fund nominated in the Monash Enterprise Agreement, and you are not able to choose an alternative fund. Full details regarding UniSuper can be found on their website at: <http://www.unisuper.com.au/home>

Although the Australian Government does provide an Age Pension, most people expect a higher income in retirement. The Government has introduced tax incentives and employment laws to encourage contributions to super. Employers must contribute to an employee’s superannuation fund. This is called Superannuation Guarantee, which came into operation on July 1, 1992. The amount of the contribution is 9% of an employee’s wages (excluding overtime, leave loading, fringe benefits and some allowances).

Superannuation funds in Australia are highly regulated and assets held in funds can be regarded as safe from misappropriation or mismanagement. However, it is important to remember that amounts held in accumulation style superannuation accounts are subject to rises and falls in investment markets and the performance of the investment option you choose.

As a Permanent Resident, if you leave Australia, your superannuation benefits will be “preserved” and, as such, you will not be able to access or transfer your benefit out of Australia until you reach your “preservation age” (between 55 and 60 depending on when you were born). Your benefits must remain in an Australian superannuation fund (of your choice) and will continue to be credited/debited with investment returns.