



SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST: MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY

(Payclass 09; 18 months contract)

Drug Discovery and Development Centre (H3D), Faculty of Science

The Drug Discovery and Development Centre (H3D) is an interdisciplinary, soft-funded research unit at the University of Cape Town engaged in the discovery of preclinical drug candidates for treating malaria, tuberculosis, and drug-resistant infections caused by Gram-negative bacteria. H3D staff and laboratories are situated across two sites on the UCT campus. H3D is seeking to appoint a Senior Research Scientist with expertise in synthetic organic chemistry and/or medicinal chemistry on a 18-months contract, starting on 1 May 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter and ending on 31 October 2027. This position will be predominantly laboratory-based, with the main purpose to synthesize potential antibacterials in an H3D Tuberculosis drug discovery project. The position will interact with senior chemists who will provide mentorship and growth opportunities as well as exposure to multi-disciplinary discussions and meetings in a drug discovery environment.

Requirements for the job:

- Minimum BSc (Hons) in organic chemistry/medicinal chemistry or equivalent qualification
- At least 3 years of industrial or academic hands-on lab experience in synthetic organic chemistry and/or medicinal chemistry
- At least 1 year experience in working in a disease-related project
- Up to date on laboratory technologies and strong bench experience in synthetic organic chemistry, incl. multi-step syntheses and multi-gram syntheses, and characterization (NMR, LC/MS etc) of organic compounds

Advantages:

- Demonstrated use of fundamental concepts of drug discovery, e.g. SAR analysis, DMPK etc will be advantageous.
- Ability to write effectively for patent and scientific publications will be advantageous.

Responsibilities will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Independently troubleshoot synthesis issues, synthesize, and deliver bioactive compounds to reach the project goals.
- Periodically present results to supervisor and/or drug discovery team
- Provide basic data analysis and assistance in compound design
- Comply with standard operating procedures for laboratory safety, use of instruments, and data management.

The annual cost of employment for 2026, including benefits, is between R531 313 – R625 071.

For any further information on the position, please contact Dr André Horatscheck on 0216504629.

Any applications for the position to be sent to Ms Chanté Foentjies at chante.foentjies@uct.ac.za

Please ensure the title and reference number are indicated in the subject line. An application which does not comply with the above requirements will be regarded as incomplete. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and may be required to undergo a competency test.

Telephone: 021 650 4629

Website: www.h3d.uct.ac.za

Reference number: E26327

Closing date: 06 April 2026

"UCT is a designated employer and is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity, and redress in achieving its equity targets in accordance with the Employment Equity Plan of the University and its Employment Equity goals and targets. Preference will be given to candidates from the under-represented designated groups. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/eepolicy.pdf."

When you apply for a position at UCT, we collect your personal information to assess your application, communicate with you, and coordinate interview logistics. Information such as race, gender, nationality, and disability status is used to support our Employment Equity obligations. We also verify your references, qualifications, conduct criminal and, for certain roles, credit checks. For more information about how the University of Cape Town uses personal information and your rights, please email popia@uct.ac.za.

The University reserves the right to extend the closing date for applications if deemed necessary and reserves the right to make no appointment.