

Call for Applications: Program-Specific Researcher

Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS),
Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study (KUIAS)

19 June 2026

Job Title

Program-Specific Researcher

Number of Positions

Two (2)

Affiliation

Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS), Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study (KUIAS)

Place of Work

Institute for Chemical Research (ICR), Kyoto University, Gokasho, Uji, Kyoto 611-0011 Japan
(Range of alteration)

If the university permits or requests teleworking, the place of work includes the home, etc.

Research field: The Nomura Research Group focuses on reimagining druggability through chemoproteomic platforms to develop transformative medicines. One of the greatest challenges that we face in discovering new disease therapies is that most proteins are considered “undruggable,” in that most proteins do not possess known binding pockets or “ligandable hotspots” that small-molecules can bind to modulate protein function. Our research group addresses this challenge by advancing and applying chemoproteomic platforms to discover and pharmacologically target unique and novel ligandable hotspots for disease therapy. We currently have three major research directions. Our first major focus is on developing and applying chemoproteomics-enabled covalent ligand discovery approaches to rapidly identify small-molecule therapeutic leads that target unique, novel ligandable hotspots in undruggable protein targets and pathways. Our second research area focuses on using chemoproteomic platforms to expand the scope of targeted protein degradation technologies. Our third research area focuses on using chemoproteomics-enabled covalent ligand discovery platforms to develop new induced proximity-based therapeutic modalities. Collectively, our lab focuses on developing next-generation, transformative medicines through pioneering chemical technologies to overcome challenges in drug discovery.

Job Description: We are seeking a highly motivated and creative postdoctoral fellow to join the laboratory of Daniel K. Nomura at Kyoto University. The successful candidate will work at the interface of chemistry, biology, and drug discovery to develop next-generation induced proximity-based therapeutic modalities. Research projects will focus on using covalent chemoproteomic and chemical biology approaches to discover and engineer small molecules that reprogram biological pathways and cellular networks for therapeutic benefit.

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, targeted protein degradation, molecular glues, transcriptional rewiring, targeted protein stabilization, and other emerging induced proximity platforms for drugging historically intractable or “undruggable” targets. The candidate will employ a multidisciplinary approach integrating covalent ligand discovery, synthetic chemistry, chemoproteomics, proteomics, molecular and cellular biology, and translational therapeutic development.

The postdoctoral fellow will have access to a highly collaborative and interdisciplinary research environment with extensive expertise and infrastructure in chemical biology, covalent chemoproteomics, mass spectrometry-based proteomics, and drug discovery. The candidate is expected to contribute intellectually to project development, mentor junior trainees, communicate findings through publications and presentations, and help drive innovative therapeutic platform development.

Qualification: The candidate should hold a Ph.D. in chemistry, biochemistry, molecular and cell biology, chemical biology, pharmacology, or a related discipline. Applicants should possess strong scientific creativity, independence, and a demonstrated track record of productivity.

The ideal candidate will have experience spanning both chemistry and biology, including expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Synthetic organic chemistry and medicinal chemistry
- Chemical biology and covalent ligand discovery
- Covalent chemoproteomic platforms and proteomics
- Induced proximity approaches, including molecular glues or targeted protein degradation
- Cell and molecular biology techniques
- Cancer biology, transcriptional regulation, or signal transduction
- Mass spectrometry-based proteomics
- Assay development and mechanistic studies
- Computational or systems-level approaches relevant to therapeutic discovery

Experience with interdisciplinary research and translational drug discovery efforts is highly desirable. Candidates should also possess strong communication and organizational skills and be enthusiastic about working in a fast-paced, collaborative, and highly innovative research environment.

We are particularly interested in candidates who are intellectually adventurous, mechanistically driven, and excited about building entirely new therapeutic paradigms rather than making incremental advances. Individuals who thrive in ambitious, high-impact environments and are motivated to tackle difficult biological problems using innovative chemical approaches are especially encouraged to apply.

Starting Date

As soon as possible after appointment (the start date is negotiable).

Term Limit

From the earliest possible date after appointment through March 31, 2029.

The appointment may be renewed upon expiration of the initial term, subject to a maximum total employment period of five (5) years. Decisions regarding renewal will be made based on factors such as workload at the end of the contract period, job performance, work attitude, abilities, progress of assigned duties, the University's financial circumstances, and the availability of external funding for the position.

Initial probationary employment period: six (6) months

Working Conditions

Discretionary labor system, based on 7 hours, 45 minutes (8:30–17:15 work schedule with a one-hour break) per day, 38 hours 45 minutes per week

- If the discretionary work system for specialized work is not applied, the employee works from 8:30AM to 5:15PM with one hour break (12:00-13:00).
- Overtime may be required when necessary.

Holidays

Saturdays and Sundays; Statutory public holidays of Japan; Year-end and New Year holidays (December 29 through January 3); Kyoto University's Foundation Day (June 18) as per University guidelines

Salary

To be determined in accordance with Kyoto University regulations (annual salary system)

Allowance

No allowance (such as for commuting, housing, bonuses, etc.) will be provided.

Social Insurance

Eligible for MEXT* mutual aid association membership, employees' pension, employment insurance, and worker's accident compensation insurance

*MEXT: Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Application Procedure

Candidates are requested to submit the documents in English listed below via e-mail. All documents should be merged into a single PDF file in the same order as listed below. The PDF file should be titled "X_Application for Postdoc", where 'X' is your surname. Please submit applications in English.

1. Curriculum vitae
2. List of academic publications plus reprints of up to three (3) key research papers
3. List of printed publications other than research papers
4. Detailed record of academic activities (affiliated societies) as well as research grants (e.g. "KAKENHI" Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research) and awards received
5. Research achievements up to present (within 2 pages of A4 format)
6. Research plan (purpose and methods) at iCeMS if hired (within 2 pages of A4 format)
7. Future vision of the candidate's research and to the research field mentioned above (within 2 pages of A4 format)
8. Names and e-mail addresses of two (2) personal references

Closing Date

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please submit all application documents by e-mail to the address below.

GPone_Koubo*icems.kyoto-u.ac.jp (To send your application, please replace " * " with "@".)

Evaluation Procedure

Submitted applications will be reviewed, followed by interviews for short-listed candidates.

Contact

For further details, please contact KUIAS via e-mail at: GPone_Koubo*icems.kyoto-u.ac.jp (To send your application, please replace " * " with "@".)

Miscellaneous

- All submitted documents and personal information of the candidates contained therein will be used solely for the purpose of screening and will not be disclosed, transferred or lent to any third party without justifiable grounds.
- Kyoto University promotes gender equality. Applications from female and foreign researchers are highly welcomed.
- Indoor smoking is prohibited at all campuses in Kyoto University. Outdoor smoking is prohibited except for designated smoking areas, in order to prevent second-hand smoking.
- KUIAS is working to raise awareness among faculty, staff and students of the importance of compliance in research activities.
- If you have interrupted your research due to childbirth, childcare, or nursing care, the screening committee will take this into consideration when reviewing your research achievements upon your request.