

Rehwinkel Lab Handbook

MRC Translational Immune Discovery Unit
MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine
Radcliffe Department of Medicine
University of Oxford



**Medical
Research
Council**



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1. Welcome

Welcome to the Rehwinkel Group! We are a team of researchers based at the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine (WIMM) at the University of Oxford. In 2026, everyone in the group helped write this document. The purpose of our lab handbook is to ensure that all new members of the group and the wider research community, including those considering applying to join our group, have an insight into how we operate. Moreover, the lab handbook is intended as a point of reference for those already working in the group.

Here, you will find detailed information about life as a group member, what we expect from our researchers, and the support we can offer to your research and career development. We hope this document serves as a useful resource throughout your time at the WIMM. We expect new members to read this document by the end of your first month of joining our lab. If you have any questions or concerns, Jan R will be very happy to discuss. We welcome feedback that you may have on this document, and how we can continue to improve researcher experience across the academic spectrum.

History and research interests of our group

Our group was set up in 2012 by Jan Rehwinkel, Anne Bridgeman, Jonathan Maelfait and Rachel Rigby. Since then, over 45 researchers and students have worked and trained in our lab. We are interested in how nucleic acids activate innate immunity. We investigate RNA and DNA sensors surveying the cytosol for viral or unusual cellular nucleic acids. Over the years, we have worked on the nucleic acid sensors RIG-I, MDA5, ZBP1 and cGAS, and on proteins regulating nucleic acid sensing, including SAMHD1 and ADAR1. More recently, we have also developed an interest in type I interferon signalling and interferon stimulated genes. Most of our work is hypothesis-driven fundamental discovery research. We also explore the translational potential of our findings for viral, autoimmune and malignant diseases. Please consult the [lab website](#) and PubMed for more information and our publications. Since 2012, we have been funded continuously by the UK Medical Research Council. We belonged to the MRC Human Immunology Unit from 2012 until 2024 and have been supported by an MRC Programme Grant since, retaining an affiliation with the MRC Translational Immune Discovery Unit. We are grateful for MRC funding and additional funding from the Wellcome Trust, Lister Institute, EU and industry partners.

2. Roles & Expectations

a) Everyone

Big Picture

Science is hard. But it's also fun. In the Rehwinkel Lab, we want to make sure that everyone experiences a positive, engaging, hostility-free, growth-oriented and rewarding lab environment. To maintain that environment, we all have to do a few things:

- Work on what you're passionate about, work hard at it, and be proud of it. Be so proud of it that you have to suppress bragging (but it's ok to brag sometimes).
- Scientists have to be careful. Don't rush your work. Think about it. Implement it. Double and triple check it. Incorporate sanity checks. Ask others to look at your data if you need help or something looks off. It's ok to make mistakes, but mistakes shouldn't be because of carelessness or rushed work.
- If you make a mistake, you should tell everyone who might be impacted. We admit our mistakes, and then we correct them and move on.
- We all want to get papers published and do great things. But we do this honestly. It is never okay to plagiarise, tamper with data, fabricate data, omit data, or fudge results in any way. Science is about finding out the truth, and null results and unexpected results are still important. This can't be emphasised enough: no research misconduct!
- Science is a marathon, not a sprint. Take personal time and vacation when you need it and cultivate a life outside of the lab. Respect that other lab members also have a life outside of the lab. We do not glorify workaholic behaviour. There may be times that you have to work longer or harder to finish something, but this should be balanced out over time.
- Academia may feel different from other types of jobs, but it is still a job. You should treat coming into the lab with the same respect that you would treat any other position.
- Share your expertise with the group and contribute actively to lab discussions and collaborations.
- Present your work at internal events, invited talks and/or scientific conferences.
- Support your fellow lab-mates. Help them out if they need help (even if you aren't on the project) and let them vent when they need to. Science is collaborative, not competitive. Help others, and you can expect others to help you when you need it.

- Respect your fellow lab-mates. Respect their strengths and weaknesses, respect their desire for quiet if they need it, and for support and a kind ear when they need that. Respect their culture, their religion, their beliefs and their sexual orientation.
- Respectfully challenge ideas, including Jan R's, when you have a different scientific perspective. A healthy lab environment allows multiple scientific opinions to coexist.
- If you're struggling, tell someone (feel free to tell Jan R!). Your health and happiness come first. The lab looks out for the well-being of all its members. We are here to help. It's ok to go through hard patches (we all do), but you shouldn't feel shy about asking for help or just venting.
- If there is any tension or hostility in the lab, something has to be done about it immediately. We can't thrive in an environment we aren't comfortable in, and disrespect or rudeness will not be tolerated in the lab. If you don't feel comfortable confronting the person in question, tell Jan R. In any case, tell Jan R.
- If you have an issue with another lab member that cannot be solved by talking with them about it, please talk with Jan R. If you have a problem with Jan R and are comfortable telling him about it, do! If you aren't comfortable, then seek advice from a mentor or, if you are a student, from your co-supervisor, college advisor or director of graduate studies (for smaller issues) or contact departmental/university support schemes (for more serious issues).
- Stay up to date on the latest research by reading relevant scientific articles. As a rule of thumb, everyone in the lab should read in detail at least one manuscript every week and scan several more. You can identify relevant literature in two ways:
 - Create a PubMed account and set-up regular (e.g. weekly) PubMed feeds to receive a list of all articles that are related to your project. The names of the genes and proteins you work on make good search terms, but you may need to spend some time to identify the most effective search terms (e.g. using just 'STING' returns many articles on insect bites).
 - Subscribe to journal email alerts to receive the table of contents from top journals in our field. That way, you will learn about key findings outside your immediate project. Include *Nature*, *Science*, *Cell*, *Immunity*, *Nature Immunology*, and *Science Immunology* as a minimum (ideally more).
 - Also consider following scientists in the field on social media and checking preprint servers such as bioRxiv regularly.
- Discuss your career goals (academia or non-academia) with Jan R and others to ensure you receive appropriate training and support.

- Apply for jobs (academic, industry, or other career paths) when you are ready, and no later than the beginning of your final year as a student/postdoc.

Small picture

- Switch off the lights and any relevant equipment if you're the last one leaving for the day.
- Keep the lab tidy. Put lab equipment back where you found it. Keep common areas uncluttered.
- Follow all health and safety requirements. Eating, drinking and the application of cosmetics is prohibited in the lab, as is the wearing of open footwear (such as sandals).
- Dress code is casual but keep in mind health and safety requirements. If you are working in the lab, wear something that is comfortable with a lab coat. When presenting your work or participating in a scientific event (e.g. a conference), don't wear pyjamas or sweatpants – but casual/comfortable is fine.

b) Students

Students in our lab are usually those who are doing either their PhD (aka DPhil) or Master's, although sometimes we have visiting students for shorter periods of time. As a student in the lab, you are expected to meet all general lab expectations (outlined in the "Everyone" section), as well as the following:

- You are responsible for successful completion of your degree. Others in the lab may help you better understand your milestones and deadlines, but it's down to you to keep track of them and make sure you don't miss any.
- A fun part of being a DPhil student in our lab is that you're the leader and driving force of your project. You are expected, with the help of Jan R. and your co-supervisor(s), to learn the background of your project, formulate research hypotheses, plan short- and long-term research strategy, perform and analyse experiments.
- To successfully do all the decision making, students should stay up-to-date with their field: we highly encourage them to allocate a significant amount of time to reading papers and going to talks and conferences.
- That said, students should always feel free to ask for feedback and advice within and outside of the lab and look for any kind of help they feel they need internally

and externally. For example, this may include asking for reagents via the WIMM mailing list, approaching authors of manuscripts reporting interesting techniques, or reaching out to experts in the field.

- Develop ideas for generating research income such as external funding. Grant writing experience is an important part of your professional development and securing funding benefits both you and the lab.
- As a Master's student, your project usually forms part of a fellow lab member's bigger research plan. All the things above apply to you, with the only difference being that you should consult with your day-to-day supervisor before planning experiments to make sure that they align well.

c) Postdocs

Postdocs are experienced members of the team who contribute scientific and technical expertise and specialised knowledge to the group, often spearheading new methodologies or complex research directions. They also play a vital role as mentors, bridging the gap between the PI and students to provide daily guidance and foster a collaborative lab culture. As a postdoctoral scientist in the lab, you are expected to meet all general lab expectations (outlined in the "Everyone" section), as well as the following:

- Develop and lead your own independent line of research.
- Mentor and support students when they ask for help or when requested by Jan R.
- Develop ideas for generating research income such as external funding. Grant writing experience is an important part of your professional development and securing funding benefits both you and the lab.

d) Staff/Research Assistants

The Lab currently has one Research Assistant, Anne Bridgeman. In addition to everything under "Everyone" above, my main roles are (1) to work on my own project and (2) to support the lab and its members in achieving their research goals. I also see myself as a resource and a sound board for any ideas that need testing.

e) PI

My goal is to foster an environment of consistent scientific excellence and personal development that supports every lab member in reaching their full potential and helps us have fun while doing great science. I want you to be happy and productive while you are here.

In addition to everything under “Everyone” above, you can expect me to:

- Have a vision of where the lab is going.
- Apply for and secure the funding necessary to keep the lab going.
- Make the time to meet with you regularly and talk about science and any other issue you want to discuss. I will give honest and direct feedback, both on what is going well and on what needs improvement. The definition of "regularly" may change over time or over the course of a project, but typically I mean once a week for students and research assistants, and twice monthly for postdocs, or more often as needed.
- Support you in your career development, including with advice, writing letters of recommendation, introductions to other scientists, conference travel, and promoting your work as often as possible. We support careers in both academic and non-academic settings, but you have to tell me what your goals are.
- Support you in your personal growth by giving you flexibility in working hours and environment and encouraging you to do things other than science.
- Care about you as a person and not just a scientist. I am happy to discuss with you any concerns or life circumstances that may be influencing your work, but it is entirely up to you whether and what you want to share. I care about your happiness.
- Read through your manuscripts.
- Obsess over font choice, punctuation, and graphic design.

f) Recruitment

Everyone in the lab contributes to recruitment of new lab members. You may be asked to help shortlist applicants and participate in formal interviews. Everyone is expected to meet shortlisted candidates on a 1-to-1 basis or in small groups, and to provide Jan R with feedback on scientific suitability and team fit. For short-term visitors and project/rotation students joining the lab for a few months only, we typically operate a simplified process. Although recruitment decisions are ultimately taken by Jan R, he will not make an offer if lab members raise concerns about a candidate.

3. Being in the lab

a) Meetings (lab internal)

Lab meetings are every Thursday (9:30-11:30; John Clegg Room). These meetings are cancelled if Jan R is away from Oxford. At the beginning of lab meetings, general lab issues are discussed and everyone is encouraged to raise any points. Everyone is then expected to present what they have worked on since the previous meeting. Typically, lab members present one or a few slides (from personal laptop computers) for 5-10 minutes (no more than 15 minutes, please). A good (but not prescriptive) narrative is:

- Tell us what question you were working on
- Explain the experimental (or computational) approach
- Show the data / results
- Offer an interpretation and suggest next steps

It is important to present experiments that did not work, such that we can trouble shoot. Following an individual contribution, everyone is encouraged to comment in a polite but honest manner. If you are not convinced by someone's approach or data, say so in a nice and constructive way. If the data are convincing, offer praise!

Everyone receives a 'Joker' card from Anne Bridgeman when joining the lab. If you do not want to present at a lab meeting, hand your Joker to Jan R. This card serves as an aid-memoire to Jan R to ask you to present first at the next lab meeting, when Jan R will return your Joker.

Journal clubs are every Friday (12:15-13:15; John Clegg Room) and come in two formats: "big" and "small".

Small Journal Clubs (weekly when there is no Big Journal Club) provide an overview of recent publications and focus on take-home messages. Please briefly summarise a paper in 3-5 min, showing the graphical abstract (or a single key figure) as a visual aid. Small Journal Clubs should last 30-45 mins and will go ahead when Jan R is not around. Attendance is not compulsory and you can attend without presenting.

Big Journal Clubs (monthly) should be educational and cover an area rather than just a paper. Big Journal Clubs have an assigned presenter, please arrange a swap if you are not around. The presenter chooses the paper(s) and distributes these one week prior via email. Everyone is expected to read the paper in full beforehand. Big Journal Clubs should last about one hour. Give a broad overview of the area in the first 20-30 min. Then discuss one or multiple specific papers in more detail (20-30 min). There is no need to discuss each and every figure – focus on what is essential. Put the findings into the context of the field. Big Journal Clubs will be re-scheduled if Jan R is not around and attendance is compulsory.

b) Lab Retreat

Lab Retreats are held annually and provide a forum for unconstrained discussion. Lab retreats are meant to be engaging and fun, to renew our scientific directionality and enthusiasm, and to generate new ideas.

Lab retreats are residential events, typically involving four nights away from Oxford in a large self-catering holiday home, either in the UK or in continental Europe. Jan R will lead on planning lab retreats, and you may be asked to help with organisation. Everyone in the lab will give a long talk (typically 60 minutes + 30 minutes Q&A). The purpose of these talks is to provide a big-picture overview of your project and to discuss future and publication plans. We also have an additional scientific activity, such as horizon scanning, and a team building activity. If acceptable, we share twin rooms with another lab member to save costs, but exceptions will be made, including for new starters. You are also expected to help with food shopping, cooking and cleaning. The lab pays for travel, accommodation, the team building activity and one restaurant dinner. Other food and drinks expenses are shared between all lab members. A tradition is to play ‘who’s in the bag’ after dinner, which we hope you will enjoy!

c) Seminars

Seminars in the WIMM

The TIDU and WIMM host different seminar series:

TIDU:

- Fridays (term time), 09:15 – internal speakers (students/postdocs)
- Wednesdays (occasional), 13:30 – external speakers (immunology)

WIMM:

- Thursdays (term time), 12:00 – external speakers

You will receive emails announcing these seminars and posters are displayed on the noticeboards. Jan R encourages you to attend at least 70% of these talks, irrespective of whether the topic is related to your own research. Listening to talks outside your comfort zone will broaden your knowledgebase and can result in unexpected new ideas.

Seminars elsewhere in Oxford

There are many talks at other departments around Oxford. You should sign up for email alerts from 'Oxford talks' and read through the list of speakers to identify interesting seminars. We encourage walking or cycling to other buildings as the most sustainable and often fastest means of getting there. We reimburse bus fares where needed but not taxi fares.

d) Conferences and Travel

Attending - and presenting at - scientific meetings is an integral and fun part of our job. Conferences allow you to learn what is new in the field, raise your own profile and build a network. Jan R will occasionally highlight conferences of interest, but you are expected to look for suitable conferences yourself. The *Nature Immunology* website provides a fairly comprehensive list of international immunology conferences.

To attend a conference, your project will need to be at a stage that allows you to submit a strong abstract. Exceptions may be made if attending smaller national meetings (e.g. BSI events). The lab will pay for no more than one conference per year, and you are expected to fundraise, too. You should arrange economy travel (and where applicable visas and travel permissions) well in advance to take advantage of low-ticket fares. Please use trains instead of airplanes whenever possible; we aim to travel sustainably. Taxis, luxury/expensive hotels and extra nights will not be reimbursed. Typically, only one person from the lab will attend any given conference. When you return to Oxford, you should present conference highlights at the next lab meeting. That way (as opposed to many lab members attending the same conference) we as a group will get a good overview of what is going on in the field.

Whilst at the conference, keep it very general when speaking about other lab member's projects, you should not divulge any unpublished or sensitive data. You can discuss your own work in detail if you feel that is appropriate (ask Jan R for advice before going!).

Whilst travel can be a perk of the job, it can also present challenges. Travel can be a hardship for those with disabilities or caring responsibilities. Furthermore, people may feel that travel to specific places is unsafe or not morally justifiable. You should not feel pressured to travel and should not experience disadvantages if you don't or can't travel. Jan R can discuss your concerns and advise on means to alleviate them.

e) Working hours and holidays

Staff and students in the WIMM typically start their working day around 9-10am, finishing around 5-6pm. Lab members are encouraged to typically do most of their work from the lab/WIMM. However, we happily accommodate flexible working patterns, including remote working (e.g. to write your paper or thesis). Everyone is free to decide how to structure their working day and week, provided you complete the agreed number of hours by the end of it. DPhil students are expected to work 40 hours per week, whereas the weekly hours of postdocs and research assistants are specified in their contracts.

You are not expected to regularly come into the lab on weekends and public holidays, or stay late at night. Occasionally, this may be necessary due to experimental timelines. In that case, take some time off another day. For meetings and seminars, plan to attend in person. Anyone working remotely for a full day or more should inform the group and be reachable via email and WhatsApp. If you're taking the whole day off, please inform Jan R.

When working outside core hours, please keep in mind that you are responsible for safety. Avoid lone working if you are inexperienced or performing safety-critical experiments involving hazardous reagents.

All lab members, including students are entitled to, and encouraged to take, annual leave of 38 days (30 working days plus 8 public holidays), as well as 10 working days per year to attend training and other career development events.

f) Sickness

Nobody is expected to come to work if they are unwell, this includes both physical and mental illnesses. If you are sick, please inform Jan R but you are not required to disclose

the nature of your condition. Reschedule your meetings and experiments as soon as possible. If you have time-sensitive work ongoing, don't hesitate to ask fellow lab members for help; we are here to support one another. If you feel well enough to work but have lingering symptoms (particularly respiratory diseases), please be mindful of your colleagues and wear a face mask to prevent the spread of illness in the lab.

All staff and students need to provide a sick note if they are off for more than seven consecutive days.

g) Communication

Clear communication is essential for the lab to run smoothly. We use Email for official business, such as documentation, scheduling, and matters that need a formal record. For day-to-day coordination, quick questions, or urgent updates, we use our WhatsApp group. You should be reachable on both platforms during your working day, and we ask that you check for new messages at least once during your working day.

When a message requires a response, please aim to get back to your colleagues within 24 hours or by the following working day. If you're tied up, a quick acknowledgement like "I got your message and will get back to you on ..." helps everyone stay on the same page. You aren't expected to respond to messages outside your working hours, and we ask that you limit out-of-hours WhatsApp messages to genuine emergencies. Finally, if you are away on holiday, please set an automatic "out-of-office" email reply that includes your return date.

h) On- and Offboarding

Onboarding

All new starters in the WIMM follow the WIMM onboarding procedure, which entails most admin-related requirements, including key training sessions, building access and laboratory inductions.

On your first day, you will meet with Jan R (and your co-supervisor, if applicable) to discuss relevant matters. If Jan R is unavailable, another team member will welcome you, and your introductory meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible. If you are joining an existing project - for example, as a Master's student - Jan R will organise a group meeting with all involved parties to align on project plans, responsibilities, and authorship expectations.

Off-boarding

When the time comes for you to move on from the lab, Jan R will arrange an off-boarding meeting to discuss the transition and relevant matters and, if requested, provide a reference letter. Reference letters can also be requested at any point in the future. Jan R will be delighted to write these but asks for requests to be emailed to him well before deadlines.

When leaving the lab, all data, notes, reagents, and samples must remain accessible so that Jan R and other lab members can understand and build upon your work. The best way to ensure a smooth transition is to manage your records "along the way." This includes using consistent experiment codes to organise electronic files and ensuring that all raw data — such as full western blots, FCS files, or raw Incucyte images — are preserved for future publication.

Electronic data must be stored on the lab server. While you are encouraged to keep copies for yourself, the lab's versions must be complete. For large datasets like sequencing, please deposit these on hard drives or password-protected public repositories before you leave, ensuring Jan R has the access details. Similarly, all reagents, plasmids, and samples must be logged in the lab databases as they are generated, rather than leaving this task for your final week.

Before your final day, please ensure you have completed the following:

- All data, protocols, and detailed documentation must be on the lab server or a handed-over hard drive. Documentation should be clear enough for a new person to take over without confusion.
- Discuss with Jan R well in advance which samples to keep. Typically, these should be stored in the -80°C freezer and correctly annotated in the freezer database.
- Verify that all plasmids, oligos, and cell lines are correctly annotated and stored in their designated locations.
- Your bench and desk should be cleared and cleaned, and any reagents or buffers in communal spaces must be disposed of or reallocated.
- Return any lab-owned computers or equipment.
- Provide Jan R with your updated contact details if you wish to be included in or notified about future publications.

i) Shared Responsibilities

Being part of our lab means sharing the responsibility for the communal tasks that keep our research moving. These duties include:

- cleaning of tissue culture (TC) incubators and water baths
- ordering and restocking communal reagents and buffers (e.g. buffers, IMS bottles, SDS etc)

We use a cleaning rota for the TC water baths and incubators. Please check this regularly and carry out your assigned cleaning on schedule without needing a reminder. You'll find standard operating procedures (SOPs) alongside the rota - please follow these closely to ensure everything stays sterile and functional.

To avoid interrupting anyone's experiments, please refill or reorder communal reagents in a timely manner. A good rule of thumb is to ensure that after you've used a reagent, there is enough left for at least the next two users to complete their work. For selected buffers/consumables (e.g. TAE, WB transfer buffer, WB membranes, LB broth and agar), we have a "spare" rule; if you need to use the spare stock, please refill the empty ones. If you're ever unsure about how to reorder something or who is responsible for a specific reagent, just ask Anne or another lab member for guidance.

j) Local Support

Our lab is one of 13 groups within the MRC Translational Immune Discovery Unit (TIDU). We share several communal resources, including tissue culture rooms, a well-stocked chemical room and various equipment, ranging from scales and plate readers to centrifuges and freezers. Also provided by the unit are selected general laboratory consumables, which can be found in the stock room.

Our unit managers and support staff ensure that all operations run smoothly; overseeing the servicing of equipment, ordering and stocking of general consumables, washing of the shared lab glassware and autoclaving items and preparing sterile PBS and dH₂O. A weekly mycoplasma testing service is also provided.

Most of what we need is available within the TIDU, but we occasionally use equipment in the Molecular Haematology Unit (MHU). If you need to use their facilities, please get permission from their lab manager beforehand.

Additionally the WIMM also offers the [WIMM Graduate Student Association](#) and the [WIMM Postdoc Association](#), which organise social events, career seminars and offer non-academic support.

4. Research

a) Big picture

Experiment codes

We perform many experiments, ranging from large-scale project milestones to quick tests of "crazy" ideas. It can be easy to lose track of these, so we use a coding system for naming every experiment. Each experiment you perform must have a code that, at a minimum, contains your initials and a unique number (e.g., JR_001 or JR_2026_001). All experiments, along with their codes, must be recorded in your experiment list. In this Excel sheet, you should list the main objectives and briefly describe the main outcomes or findings. Jan R will provide you with a template and will discuss this important and essential point with you when you start in the lab.

Reproducibility

Reproducible science is at the foundation of good scientific practice. However, conducting reproducible science is more than just repeating an experiment to reach the "golden N=3". It requires consistency, organisation, and maintaining your records and outputs in such a way that allows you and others to return to it at a later stage. Practically, this involves proper note-taking: be explicit when deviating from a protocol or noticing a strange phenotype, provide catalogue and lot/batch numbers when using a specialised reagent or antibody, and list all your experiments, not just the ones that worked!

Statistics

Good statistical practice ensures we draw sound conclusions only from suitable data. You are not required to fully understand the deep mathematical principles behind every test, but you must know which test is appropriate for a given dataset. This can include checking if your data meets the assumptions of a specific test (e.g., normality) or performing power analyses to determine optimal sample sizes. If you are unsure which test to use or how to interpret the results, please seek advice before finalising your analysis.

Open research

We fully support open science. Within the lab, sharing protocols, data, and expertise is a must. We often share our resources and expertise with other labs, both locally and internationally; this not only benefits our work but also supports the wider scientific

community and progress in the field. We share our research at conferences and scientific meetings and, where possible, publish in open-access journals and as preprints (e.g., bioRxiv). Sequencing datasets, other large datasets and code will also be made available upon publication.

Within the institute, requests for reagent sharing are regularly circulated. If you believe we are in a position to help, please confirm with Jan R before sharing.

b) Lab

Animal Work

Working with animals in research is a privilege, not a right. In the Rehwinkel Lab, we are committed to the highest standards of animal welfare and ethical conduct. We only use animals when there is no alternative method to answer critical scientific questions about the complex systemic nature of innate immunity, viral infection, and autoimmune disease.

Sustainability

We care about the environmental impact of our work. Lab and computational work generate waste, consume energy and require other resources. We consider these impacts in our decision making and day-to-day work patterns. We are guided by The Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework ([LEAF](#)), an innovative scheme to drive improvements in laboratory efficiency. Our lab currently holds LEAF Silver accreditation, and we strive for Gold in the future. The steps we take, amongst many others, include:

- Switching off unused equipment and lights at the end of the day
- Reusing plasticware where possible
- Sharing reagents
- Considering plastic usage when purchasing kits/reagents
- Considering energy ratings when purchasing equipment
- Championing sustainable travel (e.g. Jan R travels by train to all UK and most continental European destinations such as Belgium, Netherlands, France, Germany, Poland, Italy, Switzerland)

c) Computational

Computers

The lab has a supply of laptops for work use, which will be provided to you when you join whenever possible. There may be a short delay if there is an overlap or if a departing member needs time to finalise their work before returning their device. You are also welcome to use your personal laptop; however, if you choose to do so, please take note of the WIMM IT requirements regarding the use of personal computers for work purposes. If you use a computer owned by the lab, it must be managed by the WIMM IT team and returned to Jan R on your last day (unless agreed otherwise).

The unit also provides Display Screen Equipment (DSE) – including laptop stands, keyboards, and mice – to ensure a safe and comfortable working environment.

Databases

The lab maintains dedicated databases for cell lines, viruses, antibodies, enzymes, plasmids, oligonucleotides, and TaqMan qPCR probes. All lab members are responsible for keeping these records accurate and up to date.

These databases are managed across two platforms:

- *FileMaker (Lab Server)*: Cell Lines, Viruses, Antibodies, and Enzymes. You can install the legacy FileMaker software directly from the installation disk stored in the lab. In time, all information currently hosted in FileMaker will be migrated to LabArchives.
- *LabArchives (Cloud)*: Plasmids and Primers. This platform is accessible via your web browser and requires your university SSO login.

Inventories

In addition to the databases, the lab maintains several inventory spreadsheets hosted on Google Drive. As with the databases, these records must be kept as up to date as possible:

- *Fridges and -20°C freezers*: The general inventory covers communal spaces and reagents. Personal shelves are not included; however, you are required to maintain an up-to-date personal record of your own materials.
- *-80 °C freezers*: The lab currently has two -80 °C freezers and both have a shared inventory system. You are strongly encouraged to log your personal -80°C materials in the shared spreadsheet. If you choose not to do so, you must maintain an up-to-date record in a compatible electronic format.

d) Manuscripts

Authorship

Our lab follows the [APA guidelines](#) with respect to authorship. To be listed as an author, a person must meet the following criteria:

1. *Contribution:* to either study conception/design, data or funding acquisition, or data analysis/interpretation
2. *Manuscript involvement:* Contribute to drafting the article (figures and/or text) and/or critically revising it and (at a minimum) approve manuscript in a timely manner before submission to journal
3. *Accountability:* Agree to be accountable for all aspects of their own work, and to ensure that any questions relating to the integrity or accuracy of any part of the work, not just their own, is appropriately investigated, resolved, and the resolution documented

If somebody does not meet all three criteria, they will be named in the acknowledgment.

We aim to be transparent about credit from the start. Authorship is typically discussed and documented before a project begins so that everyone's expectations are aligned. In general, the DPhil student or postdoc who takes the primary lead on a project will be the first author, with Jan R as the last and corresponding author. However, changes to authorship may occur over the course of a project. If a new person joins the research or roles change significantly, we will discuss and document these updates with everyone involved to ensure communication remains clear.

If a manuscript is published after you have moved on from the lab, your inclusion as an author depends on staying engaged. To remain on the author list, please ensure you meet the following requirements:

- Provide Jan R with a personal email address that you check regularly. If we cannot reach you to confirm authorship, we may have to move your name to the acknowledgments section.
- Aim to respond to emails regarding the manuscript within five working days. If you are away, please ensure an "out-of-office" reply is active.
- You must respond promptly to any direct requests from the journal, such as formal authorship confirmations.

If Jan R is repeatedly unable to reach you, or if you do not participate in the proofreading process, you will be moved from the author list to the acknowledgments.

Collaboration

Our lab pursues a policy of openness to collaborations of all kinds. If another lab member or an external collaborator is helping with study conception or design, data acquisition and/or data analysis or interpretation, this must be clearly documented in the corresponding lab book, to serve as a record when considering authorship and acknowledgments. If using a shared reagent, plasmid, cell line or other resources not bought or developed by the lab, this should also be documented and listed in any databases, so that the correct person can be acknowledged and MTAs are maintained.

e) Data and reagent ownership

Data, notes, reagents and samples always are the property of the lab. If you wish to use any samples or reagents (including both published and unpublished materials) or unpublished data for future work outside the group, you must always seek Jan R's permission. As a general principle, Jan R will strive to fulfil your request, but there are a number of considerations. These include:

- Materials available from commercial suppliers or repositories should be acquired at your new place of work from these sources.
- If your next place of work is outside academia, transfer of any materials and data, whether or not published, will require an MTA with the University of Oxford, and in the case of commercial entities, adequate financial support related to the lab's expenses in generating the materials and data.
- If your next place of work is in academia:
 - You are able to use aliquots of published materials.
 - For materials supplied to the lab by collaborators, whether published or not, you must obtain permission from the collaborator, and they may request an MTA.
 - You are able to use unpublished materials, data, or ideas that you generated solely yourself while being a member of our lab. This is because we are keen on supporting people to make the next step in their career, for example when starting out as a junior PI or when applying for fellowships. You are encouraged to generate preliminary data supporting your future career.

Typically, this happens as a side project towards the end of your time in the group.

- If you would like to use unpublished materials, data, or ideas that others in our group generated, or that you generated together with collaborators or other lab members, including situations where Jan R. had a significant role such as project design, we will need to balance the research interests of the lab as a whole and of other individuals in the lab with your future research interests outside the lab. We will try to accommodate your request, but this may not be possible, for example, if your future research is very similar to what we are planning to do in the lab, or if you're joining the group of a competitor.
- In all scenarios, an MTA may be required, for example for safety critical reagents.

If you leave behind unpublished data or materials, Jan R may assign another lab member to take over and lead on the project. However, you will be a co-author of future manuscripts using your unpublished data and/or reagents/samples.

4. Resources

a) University Policies

The University of Oxford has a comprehensive list of policies that can be accessed [here](#). The following list of policies may be of particular interest:

- Academic integrity in research
- Confidentiality
- Data protection
- Equality policy
- Harassment policy
- Health and Safety
- Intellectual property
- Mental Health

Additionally, students should consider the policies of their respective colleges. This includes positions such as welfare representatives, deans of welfare, and college supervisors, which can offer pastoral support.

b) Mentoring

Periodically receiving unbiased and independent advice can be invaluable for your career development and personal growth. To support this, the RDM mentoring scheme is available to all lab members. You are encouraged to register as a mentee, while staff and students with at least 12 months experience within the RDM/university are also able to register as a mentor.

c) Facilities

The WIMM hosts several excellent core facilities that provide specialised equipment, services, and technical expertise. As a lab member, you have access to resources such as:

- The Flow Cytometry Unit
- The Wolfson Imaging Centre
- Genome Engineering, Virus Production and Transgenics Facility
- The High-Performance Computing Facility

Depending on the facility, you may need to complete a short training session before you can use the equipment. You can find more information and links to each facility's webpage on the [WIMM webpage](#).

5. Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Author(s)
1.0	30/06/2026	Lab Handbook Created	All lab members