

Research & Development Laboratory technician(s) in DNA-based monitoring

Location:	Egham, Surrey
Salary:	£24,000 - £ 35,000 per annum dependent on role and experience
Start:	Immediately
Duration:	Permanent

Applications are invited for Laboratory Technicians/Senior Laboratory Technicians to work in either the R&D Team or the Development Team within an expanding science-based company. Primarily a laboratory-based role focusing on either the delivery of R&D projects or the development of our existing products, you will also assist with analysis of samples for our commercial clients using DNA metabarcoding and other techniques. The successful candidate(s) will report to either the Head of R&D or the Lead Scientist (Product Delivery), dependent on role, and will also work closely with other members of the science team.

Applicants should have **significant experience of molecular laboratory work** and enjoy working in a dynamic, collaborative, team environment. Experience of working with environmental DNA or metabarcoding would be an advantage but is not essential.

- For the Research role we particularly welcome applications from candidates with experience in any of the following areas; Recombinase polymerase amplification (RPA), Loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP), Nanopore sequencing, and CRISPR.
- For the Development role we particularly welcome applications from candidates with experience in laboratory method & Assay development, troubleshooting, optimisation and robotics.

NatureMetrics is a high-growth business bringing DNA-based tools to environmental managers to measure and monitor biodiversity. We have grown steadily for five years and are now expanding following a recent investment raise. We are a team of bright, enthusiastic individuals who are excited to be breaking new ground and disrupting the world of biodiversity monitoring. We take great pride in our work and our team and are seeking new team members who will do the same.

The full specification can be found below. To apply, please email careers@naturemetrics.co.uk including a CV and covering letter and stating that you are applying for the R&D laboratory technician job. There is no fixed deadline for applications, and the positions will be held open until we find the right candidate.

Roles & responsibilities

General

Depending on experience/seniority, the role will include managerial responsibilities, training, and the full analysis and dissemination of results.

For both roles, the successful candidate(s) may be required to carry out routine analysis of clients' samples following established protocols where required.

Research technician

This technical role is part of the newly created R&D Team, which is tasked with developing, evaluating, and implementing novel technologies and methodologies to expand our current core biomonitoring services.

The key responsibilities for the successful applicant(s) are:

- Design and plan experiments with support of the Head of R&D and other members of the research team
- Assist with delivery of both externally and internally funded R&D projects
- Contribute to the development of new sampling technologies and sampling-kit design
- Utilise new and emerging technologies/methods for the analysis of DNA and RNA
- Contribute to the analysis and interpretation of experimental data (research technician)
- Be responsible for the generation, analysis and interpretation of experimental data, identify issues, troubleshoot and implement necessary changes (Senior Research technician)
- Provide the Development and Product Delivery teams with resources to implement new methods and technology

The successful applicant(s) would report to the Head of R&D working very closely with the existing laboratory Product Delivery team and would support in projects and experiments identified by the Products and Business Development teams.

Development technician

This technical role is core to the new Lab Development Team, which is responsible for optimising and expanding our current core services. These current services are based primarily on the high throughput sequencing of amplicons using Illumina technology, but additional services (see our [website](#)) exist that would benefit from systematic ground-up evaluation and optimisation.

The key responsibilities for the successful applicant would be to:

1. **Optimise** the throughput/quality of our current laboratory methods without compromising our quality of science
It is essential that the applicant has a good practical understanding of DNA extraction, PCR, library preparation, and sequencing technology, but also a willingness to bring in new methodologies and implement/evaluate them with the aim of developing new in-house protocols.
2. **Investigate**, through large scale experiments and statistics, the limitations of our current services.
e.g. Assist in the thorough testing of our existing products to inform the Product team of their limitations and potentially update our existing offerings.
3. **Validate** new assays to target new organisms using our existing kits and technology
e.g. NatureMetrics strives to offer highly validated assays, which we evaluate using published validation scales (e.g. Thalinger et al. 2021 - <https://doi.org/10.1002/edn3.189>). One of the roles for the successful applicant would be to perform the laboratory aspects that underpin the higher levels of validation for new assays.

The successful applicant(s) would assist in the research new methods/techniques to improve our current services, delivery of the experiments, analysis of the data generated, and the full documentation and dissemination of the results/changes to the wider team.

The successful applicant(s) would report to the Lead Scientist (Product Delivery), work very closely with the existing laboratory Product Delivery team, our in-house assay developer, and would support in projects and experiments identified by the Product team.

Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep detailed laboratory notes following our standard procedures ● Follow internal protocol for sample tracking & documentation ● Assist in expanding the current suite of templates used by the lab ● Generate standard protocols for internal use as an R&D output ● Prepare training documents/manuals/videos. ● Write detailed experimental plans
Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared to report the outcomes of these experiments to a growing team of technical staff, particularly where they result in changes to the standard operating procedure. ● Collaborate closely with other members of the laboratory team and maintain ongoing communication to ensure efficient planning and prioritisation of tasks. ● Keep the Lab manager informed on laboratory matters, including stock levels.
Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use COSHH and risk assessments, compliance with company procedures and HSE legal requirements

Person Specification

Education & qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No specific level of education is required, but you must have at least two years experience working in a molecular laboratory in either an academic or industry setting.
Specialist knowledge, skills & experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High level of attention to detail is vital ● Must be able to use pipettes with confidence and precision ● Core laboratory skills: DNA extraction, PCR, qPCR, high throughput sequencing technology, and a thorough understanding of the methodologies ● Able to write standard operating procedures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to pick up and apply new methods with minimal guidance (Senior Technician) • Able to generate and complete experimental plans (Senior Technician) • Able to effectively track and maintain the expected timelines of multiple on-going projects
Interpersonal & communication skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised & meticulous • Able to work independently and as part of a team • Willing to follow established protocols • Able to train other technicians
Additional requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applicants are legally required to demonstrate the right to work/permission to work in the UK.

Terms and Conditions

Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NatureMetrics Ltd, CABI Site, Bakeham Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9TY. The company will be relocating it's premises to Guildford in the second half of 2021.
Working pattern and hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The postholder is expected to work 40 hours a week Monday to Friday with core hours between 10am and 4pm.
Length of appointment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time, permanent.