

Wellcome Sanger Institute
Postdoctoral Fellow Brochure



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01. Welcome from the Head of Academic Programmes

“ Our Postdocs are helping to push the boundaries of science, driving our world-leading research further than ever before. We are preparing our Postdocs to be the next generation of leaders in genomic and bioinformatics research and beyond.

Postdocs from around the world choose the Wellcome Sanger Institute to pursue further training in a specific area of genomics and/or bioinformatics. I am proud to oversee Sanger's Academic Programmes, which prime the academic pipeline from Postgraduate students through to Faculty. Delivering a world-class Postdoc Programme is a critical component of this pipeline and is central to our vision of developing new scientific leaders.

We are thrilled that you are considering taking your next step with us. We are committed to providing Postdocs with an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone can thrive. The foundations of our Postdoc Programme comprise:

- Placing equality, diversity & inclusion at the heart of all we do
- Flexible training opportunities that cater for the community's diverse needs

- Career guidance that empowers Postdocs to target the best path for them
- Networking opportunities that broaden horizons and foster a collaborative and supportive Postdoc community

We aim to deliver innovative opportunities and flexible support for all Postdocs. You will join a community of scientific excellence where you can deliver science at exceptional scale and challenge yourself to broaden your horizons, accelerating you on your leadership journey.

We look forward to hearing from you soon. ”

Alice Mann, PhD
Head of Academic Programmes



02. Welcome from the Postdoc Programme Lead

“ I support Postdocs to extract maximum benefit from their time at Sanger so that you leave equipped with the knowledge and skills you need to become a successful leader in your future career.

Working collaboratively with the Postdoc Committee, I ensure the Postdoc Programme offers an engaging portfolio of development opportunities by scoping, developing and implementing training, careers and networking activities. I also support the Postdoc Committee to explore emerging ideas and challenges of relevance to Postdocs by advancing strategic projects (reactive and proactive) that facilitate the delivery of innovative solutions, support and policies to enhance the overall Postdoc experience.

The Postdoc community is incredibly diverse and new Postdocs arrive throughout the year so needs vary greatly from Postdoc to Postdoc. As such, I also deliver varied communications (including e-newsletters and new starter inductions) to heighten your awareness of the extensive benefits available to you and how to access them. As a first point of contact for Postdocs, I can also signpost you to colleagues, provide pastoral support, demonstrate resources and even offer proof-reading support.

I am continually inspired by the talent and motivation of #SangerPostdocs. It's an honour to see Postdocs from around the globe choose Sanger. I look forward to welcoming you in the future and playing a part in empowering you to reach your potential.

Diane Swallow, PhD
Postdoc Programme Lead



About the Wellcome Sanger institute

The Wellcome Sanger Institute is a world-leading genomics research centre, based on the Wellcome Genome Campus, arguably the largest single-site community of expertise in Genomes and Biodata in the world. We undertake large-scale research that forms the foundations of knowledge in biology and medicine. We are open and collaborative; our data, results, tools and technologies are shared across the globe to advance science.



Our ambition is vast – we take on projects that are not possible anywhere else.”

03. Introduction to Sanger

We apply and explore genomic technologies at scale to advance understanding of biology and improve health.

Discover [our history](#) and our recent achievements in our [2022-2023 Sanger Highlights](#).

The Institute's science is embodied as six Scientific Programmes encompassing areas of biology and disease in which genome sequences will be transformative.



Cancer, Ageing and Somatic Mutation

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/cancer-ageing-and-somatic-mutation/>



Cellular Genetics

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/cellular-genetics/>



Human Genetics

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/human-genetics/>



Parasites and Microbes

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/parasites-and-microbes/>



Tree of Life

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/tree-of-life/>



Generative and Synthetic Genomics

Learn more: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/programme/generative-and-synthetic-genomics/>

The success of our Institute depends on our people – we celebrate and value our staff for their differences in background, experience and perspectives. When you join us, you will become part of a unique and vibrant research ecosystem with an internationally outstanding genomic research centre at the heart. Our Institute is home to over 1,100 staff

plus almost 500 visiting workers, working collaboratively to drive forward the Institute's mission. The Institute is continually recruiting Postdocs – we host around 100 Postdocs at any one time plus visiting Postdocs - to inject innovative thinking into projects that explore new frontiers of genomics and bioinformatics. Find more about [our science](#) and [our people](#).



It's an exciting time to join Sanger as a Postdoc! In return for choosing us, we will deliver a Postdoc Programme that equips you with the skills and knowledge needed to prepare for future leadership roles in scientific research and beyond."



04. Our mission

We apply and explore genomic technologies at scale to advance understanding of biology and improve health. Our science has three main goals:

- To provide new insights into the biology of humans and other organisms.
- To enhance understand of the causes and progression of human disease and provide the scientific basis for improving disease prevention and management.
- To elucidate the evolutionary tree of life and to advance the scientific knowledge base for management of the living environment and for synthetic genomics.

Learn more about the three major experimental approaches we leverage to achieve our goals, here: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/strategy-and-funding/>

The Institute was founded on the principle that a genome is a public good and as such is proudly committed to sharing its data, as well as the resources, materials and publications it produces. Rapid and open data sharing strategically supports the Institute's mission by enabling research and accelerating translation.

Learn more about our commitment to open access science here: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/research-policies/open-access-science/>



05. Our Funding

Sanger is core-funded by the Wellcome Trust and most Postdoc roles (60%) are funded through this core mechanism (see table), which typically covers salary, research costs, relevant training and conference attendance.

Our core funding means we are less dependent upon third party funding than, for example, some University groups, affording our researchers greater freedom to be curious, react to emerging ideas and technologies, and recruit the talent required to drive new innovations. We are in a unique position where obtaining third-party funding is not essential to our ability to operate. However, we do welcome additional research funding through a number of external grants from funders including UK Research Councils, charities, philanthropic organisations and the EU. We also recognise that securing independent third-party funding is a key milestone for Postdocs on the academic pathway so we do welcome Postdocs with third-party funded Fellowships or other grants, and support our current Postdocs to apply.

Postdoc Funding Source	Proportion of Postdocs
Core-funded	60%
Third-party funded - Open Targets	20%
Third-party funded - Other	20%

Approximately 40% of our Postdocs roles are third-party funded either through Open Targets (~20%), with whom we have a close association, or other sources such as Fellowships (~20%).

As a Postdoc, you can apply as the lead applicant on (career development) fellowships, or as a co-applicant on other grant applications. You will be supported by

your Supervisor and Programme Research Managers, as well as the Grants Office and Legal & Governance Team. Together they support you to, for example, cost a proposal and assess legal and ethical considerations. Depending upon the scope and value of your proposal, some internal committees may need to offer their approval, but this is all coordinated for you through our Grants Office. The co-location of all of these supportive teams on our Campus guarantees a smooth and timely application process.



Our unique funding position also allows Postdocs to operate at an unrivalled scale. As a Sanger Postdoc, you can aim higher, and achieve more.”



About the Postdoc Programme

Sanger's Postdoc Programme specifically supports Early Career Researcher talent in genomics and bioinformatics to deliver leading-edge research outputs and prepare for future leadership roles in scientific research and beyond.

The Postdoc Programme's strategy is set upon the following foundations:

- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** sit at the heart of the Programme
- **Flexible training opportunities** cater for the community's diverse needs
- **Career guidance and support** empower Postdocs to target the path that's right for them
- **Networking opportunities** broaden horizons and foster a collaborative and supportive Postdoc community
- Oversight from a dedicated Postdoc Committee, comprising Postdocs themselves and other staff from across Sanger. The Committee **champions and represents Postdocs ensuring due recognition** of their impactful contributions and unique needs at senior decision-making levels.



06. Who are the Sanger Postdoc community?

Early Career Researcher talent from around the globe:

- Approx. 100 core-funded Postdocs, and approx. 50 visiting Postdocs, at any one time
- 50:50 Women:Men
- 70% of our Postdocs are from outside of the UK, representing at least 24 nationalities
- Approx. 1/3 of our Postdocs have caring responsibilities

Researchers with wide-ranging previous experience:

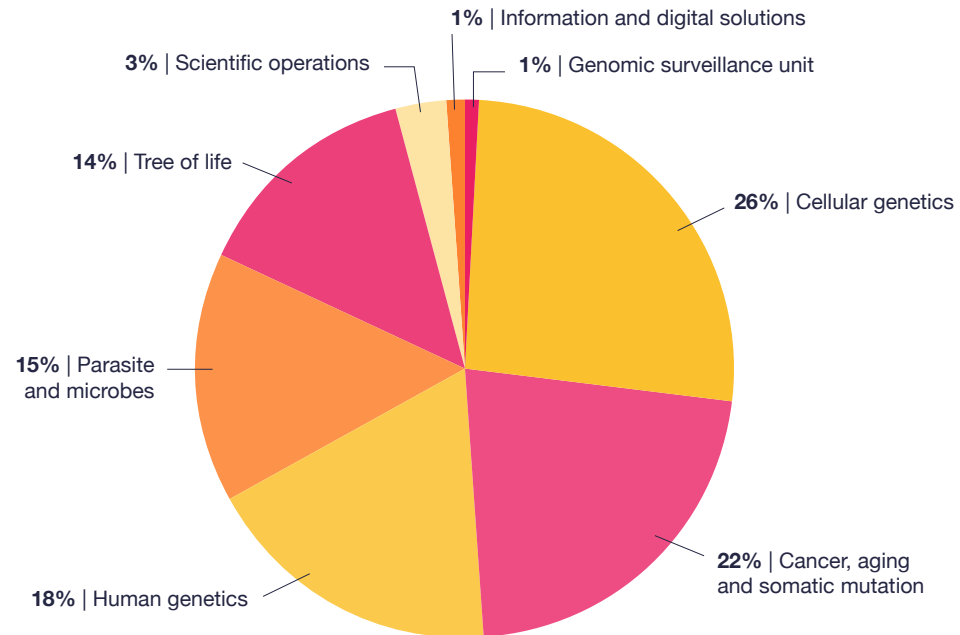
- Approx. 57% of our Postdocs are undertaking their 1st Postdoc role
- Approx. 26% of our Postdocs are undertaking their 2nd Postdoc role
- Approx. 17% have held at least 2 previous Postdoc roles

Provided the essential criteria in a role profile are fulfilled and candidates embody the six behaviours in our Behavioural Competency Framework, we will consider diverse Postdoc talent from those who have 'discipline-hopped' to those who've held multiple short-term Postdoc contracts, as well as those who have taken career breaks or spent time in other roles.

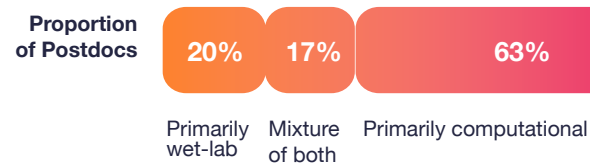
Drivers of wet-lab, computational and bioinformatics-based projects across the Institute*:

*Data based upon Postdoc community in Apr 2023

Postdocs are embedded throughout our scientific programmes and operational teams:



Postdocs drive both wet-lab and computational/bioinformatics based projects:



07. Becoming a #SangerPostdoc

Our Postdocs are Sanger employees, receiving the same benefits as other Sanger staff, in addition to the bespoke opportunities available through the Postdoc Programme. Here, you can discover these benefits and find out how to join us.

Ways to join us as a Postdoc

1. Open calls	
Apply for an advertised position to work on a specific project.	Open positions in our Faculty and Operational teams are listed on our recruitment site. Click here to view our latest Postdoc vacancies.
2. Sanger Fellowships (eligibility criteria apply)	
<p>Apply for a Sanger (or Partner) Fellowship e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janet Thornton Fellowship • Sanger Excellence Fellowship • EMBL-EBI-Sanger Postdoctoral (ESPOD) Fellowship • Sanger Epidemiological and Evolutionary Dynamics (SEED) Fellowship 	<p>These fellowships often have specific eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Calls vary between those to work on specific projects and those where you can co-develop a project with a member of Faculty.</p> <p>Calls can generally be found on our vacancies page.</p>
3. Direct approach	
Make a 'direct approach' to a member of Faculty and pitch yourself and/or a project that combines each of your knowledge and expertise and drives progress towards Sanger's vision.	<p>Sanger's core funding gives Faculty the freedom to (co-)create ad-hoc Postdoc projects if they are approached by individuals with skills and experience that will further their research ambitions. Such projects do not necessarily have to be advertised in an open call, but must satisfy Sanger's vision.</p> <p>The Postdoc will still be required to undergo a formal interview.</p> <p>You can approach Faculty at conferences or via email.</p>
4. Bring your own third party funding	
Secure research funding (e.g. a Fellowship) from a third party such as a research funder or private source.	<p>Sanger welcomes Postdocs with third party funding so long as a member of Sanger Faculty has agreed to host them, and the project contributes to Sanger's vision.</p> <p>If you are thinking about applying for third party funding to undertake a project at Sanger, you must secure a Faculty host before you submit your funding application.</p> <p>You can approach Faculty at conferences or via email.</p>

Postdoc salary

The Postdoc pay scale ranges from £38,000-£49,156, separated by 14 increments. The pay scale itself is reviewed annually against external factors, including inflation and Postdoc pay scales at other UK organisations (benchmarking) to ensure competitiveness.

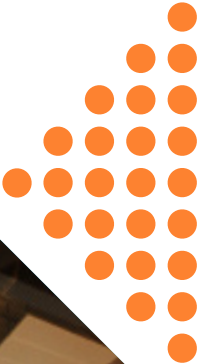
Your starting salary, which will be a set increment on the Postdoc pay scale, will be determined by your experience and contributions. Depending upon the type of Postdoc role you have applied for, the following factors will be considered:

- Years of relevant post-PhD experience
- Additional qualifications in a relevant discipline e.g. A Master's degree (or equivalent)
- Additional time spent studying for other relevant qualifications/accreditation
- Whether you possess the necessary skillset to drive a project from the outset, with minimal training
- Contributions to the generation of knowledge e.g. through your publication record (incl. published and pending) and other scientific output such as patents, conference invites, development of collaborations/consortia etc.
- Contributions to the development of individuals

- Contributions to the wider scientific community
- Contributions to broader society
- Possession of an uncommon/scarce skill set that is critical to the delivery of a specific project
- Parity against other Postdocs within the team

Your salary will be reviewed annually through the 'Annual Pay Review' process. Each year, your Supervisor assesses your performance and contributions against what they would expect from you given your experience and career stage. By recognising broad contributions, we aim to motivate and reward you throughout your role and empower you to participate in the varied opportunities that will accelerate you along their career trajectory.

Your Supervisor's assessment leads to a recommendation on whether your position on the Postdoc pay scale should be increased by 1, 2 or 3 increments, making our approach to Postdoc recognition typically more generous than what might be available elsewhere. Recommendations are moderated at the Programme level.



Employee benefits

Our employees have access to a comprehensive range of benefits and facilities including:

25 days annual leave

- Plus an extra 1 day to a maximum of 30 days for every year you work

Auto-enrolment into a Group Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

- With generous company contribution (for more information, see our Pensions page) and the option of a cash supplement to enhance your salary.

Family-friendly environment

- Options for flexible and part-time working, including compressed hours
- Carers' grant offering financial support with additional caring costs incurred as a result of attending training or conference
- Enhanced maternity leave and parental leave from day one
- An on-site workplace nursery (with salary sacrifice schemes) and a subsidised summer holiday club
- Maternity coaching for Mothers returning to the Workplace

Plus:

- Up to 10 days paid emergency carers' leave per year
- Up to two days annual paid volunteering leave
- Private healthcare scheme
- Mental Health First Aiders and free counselling sessions
- Life assurance cover from day one
- Eyecare and dental payment plans
- Access to Thrive mental fitness app
- Group income protection scheme
- Professional registration fees (1 relevant registration/year)
- Flexible-hybrid working environment*
- Concessions and discounts from our corporate perks site
- Access to a substantial number of courses and training opportunities
- Employee Referral Scheme (be rewarded for successfully recommending others join Sanger)

Learn more about our employee benefits, here: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/careers/life-at-sanger/>

All Postdocs also have access to supportive staff networks including:



Being part of the [Wellcome Genome Campus](#) you will be part of the beautiful working environment with an impressive range of benefits, services and facilities also including:

- Free bus services to and from Campus, covering various routes around Cambridge, Saffron Walden and surrounding villages, as well as local train stations.
- A car-share initiative
- Free parking
- On-site venues where you can meet, eat and socialise with colleagues
- A thriving sports and social club, providing members with subsidised access to a gym, tennis courts, sports hall, fitness classes and a vibrant social calendar of events

**Subject to nature of role (see individual job profiles for details). Our flexible-hybrid working environment is designed to support a healthy work-life balance. This means you may be able to work flexibly with a combination of working from home, and working from our Campus to allow you to focus on being productive and part of the team while enjoying the benefits of working flexibly.*

08. Postdoc Programme Benefits

Postdoc Programme benefits are generally funded through the Postdoc Programme budget, meaning there is no additional cost to Postdocs or their Supervisors.

Flexible Training Opportunities

Sanger's core Learning & Engagement Programme comprises many scientific and professional training courses, e.g. Good Research Practice, the Talented Women's Impact Programme (empowering women Postdocs to fulfil their Leadership potential), building impact and influencing others. Extensive wellbeing & mental health support, English language lessons and much more are also available. In addition, the Postdoc Committee has its own budget for flexible and responsive Postdoc-specific training throughout the year, bringing Postdocs together to learn with peers. For example:

- The 'EMBO Lab Leadership Course for Postdocs' is run in-house annually
- A 'Pathways to Independence' programme - comprising facilitated sessions exploring the challenges faced by new Group Leaders through the lens of cohort Alumni who have recently taken that career step - takes place every 2 years
- Workshops on building resilience, raising your profile and speaking confidently



The EMBO leadership course was thoroughly enjoyable, providing me with time to reflect. It was effective training to prepare me for further research leadership roles within Academia and beyond. Learning alongside other Sanger Postdocs helped provide accountability and created a network of Postdocs whom I could share progress and challenges with, which was refreshing!"

Nana-Jane Chipampe

Postdoc Fellow, Cellular Genetics Programme

Career Guidance and Support

Postdoc roles are time-limited and that time ticks away fast so we recognise the importance of helping you prepare for your next step throughout the duration of your Sanger role. The Postdoc Programme will thus offer you:

- A 'Lunch with Leaders' series, bringing leaders from broad fields to Campus to highlight career pathways available to Postdocs
- Career journey seminars from former Postdocs, working in research and non-research roles, at Sanger, and beyond
- Career management workshops and 121 career coaching
- The Sanger Accelerator Awards for Postdocs (SAAPs), which allow Postdocs to enhance their CVs by competing for, and managing, small pots of independent funding for pilot projects, building collaborations or bespoke training. Read about some of the previous winners [here](#).
- Access to the [University of Cambridge Postdoc careers service](#)

Winning a SAAP allows me to establish an exciting collaboration with experts in cancer immunology, and will help me to learn new technical skills and gain experience in managing my own research funding. The application was very similar in structure and process to other research grants, so this was a very valuable experience for me as a Postdoc. I got really useful feedback from the interview panel, which I have learnt from, and hopefully this will increase my chances of success for other grant applications in the future.”

Matt Coelho

Postdoc Fellow, Cancer, Ageing & Somatic Mutation Programme



#SangerPostdocs

Networking Opportunities

Learning how to network effectively is a key part of the Postdoc role, whether your career aspirations lie in Academia, or beyond. The Postdoc Programme will provide you with frequent opportunities to practice your communication and networking skills, foster inter-Programme connections, and immerse yourself in an open and supportive community, including:

- A Postdoc seminar series; representing an informal forum for sharing science
- Regular 'Drinks & Nibbles' events to suit all schedules, including breakfasts, lunches and evening drinks!
- Postdoc Retreats; annual 'away days' bringing Postdocs together for a fun day of focused training, careers, networking and team building activities

About the Postdoc Programme

Previously, my research has spanned the fields of biochemistry, microbiology and immunology. Now at Sanger, I will work on genome sequencing and enter the field of bioinformatics for the first time. Sanger is the perfect place when it comes to collaboration and talking to people in different fields. Like many, I find it difficult to introduce myself to new colleagues, particularly those in other Teams or Programmes. The Postdoc Programme removes a lot of the friction involved in making friends and collaborations, which may be one reason why Postdocs are such a key ingredient to the success of the Institute. At 'Drinks & Nibbles' events, I regularly enjoy sharing day-to-day experiences with other Postdocs and Postdoc Retreats are a great space to strengthen these bonds."

Ore Francis

Sanger Excellence Postdoc Fellow, Tree of Life Programme



Recognition

Our Postdoc-Supervisor Charter recognises the unique challenge Postdocs face; balancing the delivery of impactful science with participation in effective personal development, all within the constraints of a time-bound role. It aims to ensure our Postdocs, whatever their prior experience, start their roles on level footing in terms of how they should act and engage while part of the Sanger community. It aims to support you to get the most out of your time at Sanger and offers guidance on what a typical Postdoc-Supervisor relationship should entail.

We celebrate National Postdoc Appreciation Week each September with a programme that includes our annual Postdoc Awards celebrating behaviours and qualities we

value at Sanger. Postdoc contributions are also recognised through their inclusion in the annual appraisal process and annual pay review, which sees broad contributions translated into progression up the Postdoc pay scale.

Partnership with the University of Cambridge

In addition to the benefits available through Sanger, as an official partner institute to the University of Cambridge, you can also:

- Access support provided by the [University's Postdoc Careers Service](#)
- Participate in training provided by the University's '[Postdoc Academy](#)' and broader departments (e.g. Bioinformatics Training from the Department of Genetics)

- Join the [Postdocs of Cambridge society](#) and other social groups
- Apply for [affiliations with the University's colleges](#)
- Access the University's Postdoc Alumni benefits after leaving Sanger
- Apply to live in University-run accommodation (subject to availability)

Sanger operates a travel scheme to facilitate the attendance of Postdocs at University events in central Cambridge.



I applied for a Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) at Wolfson College to benefit from the social and intellectual opportunities in Cambridge. I received a lot of support from the Sanger during my application including application reviews and mock interviews which was tremendously beneficial. As a JRF, I have built networks with experts in diverse fields at Cambridge, mentored PhD students, and attended social events such as formals.”

Oumie Kuyateh

*Sanger Excellence Postdoc Fellow, Parasites & Microbes Programme
Junior Research Fellow, Wolfson College, University of Cambridge*

09. Postdoc Career Pathways

We prepare Postdocs for future leadership roles in scientific research and beyond.

At Sanger, we care as much about preparing you for your next role as we do about empowering you to deliver leading-edge research outputs in your time with us. Our Postdoc Programme enables you to prepare for a future in leadership, whether that be in Academia or elsewhere. Below you can read about how doing a Postdoc at Sanger helped some of our former Postdocs on their career journeys.

Careers beyond Sanger

Most Postdocs choose to leave Sanger at the end of their Postdoc role, moving into exciting roles across the globe, including:

- Career Development Fellowships
- Junior Group Leader/Faculty posts
- Roles in Industry, Biotech and Start-ups
- Research-enabling roles in research strategy, policy and operations
- Other Postdoc roles



My Sanger Postdoc work involved developing and patenting a new technology to synthesize personalized CRISPR libraries. This required discussions and collaborations with the technology transfer office, patent lawyers, investors, key opinion leaders and pharma companies. Participating in the Wellcome Genome Campus Start-up School was especially helpful in getting early feedback on the commercial potential of the technology. I learnt that teamwork and collaboration across disciplines is a prerequisite for successfully completing any project and I continue to have the same perspective in my current role.”

Ashutosh Trehan

Senior Scientist, AstraZeneca
Former Postdoc in Scientific Operations

My time at Sanger, both the science and other opportunities offered, gave me the confidence to make a career choice outside academia. I was introduced to microbiome research during my Postdoc and became passionate about it. There is nowhere better than Sanger to do research in a field that heavily relies on sequencing. Among the growing number of Postdoc activities, Start-up School had a pivotal influence on my leap of faith choice of joining a very early-stage Start-up to help build the science and everything else.”

Junyan Liu

Microbial Science Manager, iCarbonX (China)





Surprisingly, the most useful skillsets were not only in-depth knowledge of the methods I used during Postdoc, but the overall understanding of the field and exposure to the cutting-edge high-throughput initiatives that are unavoidable at Sanger. I also enjoyed the supportive environment for childcare - the availability of Carers' support meant that I could travel to conferences with a baby and babysitter, or hire extra support when either parent was travelling. That really helped me to have it all – a career and large family.

Overall, the experience at Sanger and EMBL-EBI was excellent preparation for my future career with exposure to high-throughput methods & mind-sets, and full support for having a family.”

Elo Madisson

Director, Owkin, Former EBI-Sanger Postdoc (ESPOD) in Human Genetics and Cellular Genetics Programmes



As a Sanger Postdoc, I had the opportunity to learn and become an expert in cutting-edge genomics and bioinformatics, approaches that I have taken forward to my independent research career. The brilliant researchers who I worked with have become my close friends and ongoing collaborators.”

Kylie James

*Laboratory Head, Garvan Institute of Medical Research
Former Postdoc in Cellular Genetics Programme*



Being a Sanger Postdoc was an amazing experience. I was able to work with outstanding scientists in world-class facilities to further my research in ways that would not have been possible anywhere else. The Talented Women's Impact Programme and Start-up School were invaluable training opportunities and helped forge my decision to work in a biotech start-up after completing my post.”

Lizzie Coker

*Data Scientist - AstraZeneca
Former Postdoc in Cancer, Ageing & Somatic Mutation Programme*



My Sanger Postdoc was crucial to my career, it provided me with support to create my own independent line of research, with leadership skills through courses as the ‘Talented Women’s Impact Programme’ and ‘Pathways to Independence Programme’ and with a scientific network that has imprinted my research for life.”

María A Duque-Correa

*Sir Henry Dale Fellow and Group Leader,
Wellcome-MRC Cambridge Stem Cell Institute
Former Postdoc in Parasites & Microbes
Programme*



During my time as a Sanger Postdoc, I was fortunate to be immersed in a vibrant research environment that nurtured my scientific growth and prepared me for my career journey. The state-of-the-art facilities and abundant resources provided a solid foundation for conducting cutting-edge research. Additionally, the scale and scope of the research projects I worked on allowed me to gain invaluable experience in handling large datasets and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams.

Overall, my experience was transformative, equipping me with the skills and knowledge essential for success in my scientific career.”

Nikos Panousis

*Scientific Investigator, GSK
Former Postdoc in Human Genetics Programme*



My time as a Sanger Postdoc was a period of growth - publishing high-impact papers, diving deep into fascinating science, and being amongst the brightest people. In addition, training on, for example, leadership has been very useful for starting my lab now. The science, training and people at Sanger have all been vital in preparing me for my current role.”

Rik Lindeboom

*Group Leader, Netherlands Cancer Institute
Former Postdoc in Cellular Genetics Programme*

Careers within Sanger

Some Postdocs enjoy the scale of the science they get to do, or value working life on the Wellcome Genome Campus, so much that they seek opportunities to stay at Sanger. Former Postdocs have applied for, or been retained/promoted into, the following roles:

- Career Development Fellows
- Group Leader roles
- Staff Scientist roles
- Informatician/Data Scientist roles
- Research-enabling roles in project management or research strategy, policy and operations



My time as a Sanger Postdoc gave me the opportunity and space to build my confidence in leading and driving my research and projects while engaging with diverse stakeholders and collaborators. This helped me identify my best skills and what aspects of my work most motivated me. The opportunities on Campus allowed me to then move into strategic research management and build my career beyond active research.”

Alice Mann

*Head of Academic Programmes @ Sanger
Former Postdoc in Human Genetics Programme*



During my Postdoc at Sanger, I worked on the fantastic Deciphering Developmental Disorders study, one of the earliest large-scale sequencing studies of rare disease patients, which has had a huge impact on clinical genetics in the UK and the field more generally. I was lucky enough to get a Junior Research Fellowship from St John’s College, which gave me flexibility to work with several different groups. I benefited hugely from the scientific and personal mentorship of Jeff Barrett, Matt Hurles and also Richard Durbin. My time as a Postdoc at Sanger was a formative experience that put me in a strong position to apply for my current role as Faculty at Sanger.”

Hilary Martin

*Group Leader-1 @ Sanger
Former Postdoc in Human Genetics Programme*





I came to Sanger in 2018 to transition from a wet lab scientist into a computational scientist and to conduct world leading research. I could not have chosen a better place to do my Postdoc - there is a fantastic collaborative environment and lots of support and training opportunities.

In 2022, I was able to progress my career by transitioning into a Senior Staff Scientist role and I hope to stay at Sanger to continue my research!"

Sarah Moody

Senior Staff Scientist @ Sanger
Former Postdoc in Cancer, Ageing & Somatic Mutation Programme



My time as a Sanger Postdoc was truly exceptional and has prepared me immensely for my career journey. The support and guidance I received from the Group, Programme and Postdoc Committee were invaluable. Access to world-class facilities and resources, coupled with the opportunity to attend numerous training programs (including those offered by the University of Cambridge), allowed me to broaden my knowledge and skill set. Moreover, these experiences opened my eyes to a wide range of career options. I decided to continue working at Sanger because of the incredible opportunity presented by OpenTargets, where I can further develop myself in the field of drug discovery and contribute to improving the lives of others."

Sunay Usluer

Staff Scientist @ Sanger
Former Janet Thornton Postdoc in Human Genetics Programme



My Sanger Postdoc provided me with both scientific freedom and support to tackle bold and ambitious research questions that would have been difficult to do elsewhere. As a result, I was competitive for and eventually awarded a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship to transition to independence and start my own research group."

Steve Doyle

UKRI Future Leaders Fellow and Career Development Fellow @ Sanger
Former Postdoc in Parasites & Microbes Programme

Life at Sanger

10. Our Research Environment

We believe that excellent research requires a strong research environment and culture which values integrity and respect, creates the scientists and technicians of the future and maximises the impact of our research. We strive to ensure the work we deliver reflects the four fundamental pillars that underpin our Good Research Practice (GRP) guidelines:

1. Research ethics, integrity and reporting
2. Respect, ethical behaviour and professional standards
3. Training, mentoring and leadership
4. Research visibility and impact

The pillars are consistent with the broader expectations placed on all staff, to demonstrate honesty, integrity and respect and support staff development, and create an environment where views, from concerns to new ideas, will be actively listened to and acted upon. We work to ensure our research staff receive the support, training and development required to become excellent researchers and that we are able to provide the global scientific leadership we aspire to.

Learn more information about our GRP guidelines here:
<https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/research-policies/good-research-practice/>

#SangerPostdocs

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our global reputation for excellence is strengthened by our commitment to developing and maintaining a positive, fair and healthy working environment. Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Programme is about valuing our people and supporting them to be their best. We foster an inclusive culture where all can thrive and diversity is celebrated and our Postdoc community brings great diversity to Sanger, helped by schemes such as our:

- [Janet Thornton Fellowship](#) for Postdocs returning to research after a career break
- [Sanger Excellence Fellowship](#) for Postdocs of Black British heritage

Our progressive policies support Postdocs to achieve a positive work life balance. The innovative and flexible approach within our Postdoc model, additionally includes the following benefits:

- Extending contracts for Postdocs who have taken maternity leave by up to an additional 12 months to support the transition back to research
- Access to a flexible returners' grant scheme or a Research Support Scheme to support Postdocs to return to productivity after extended leave. Read more about our Support Scheme [here](#).

More broadly, an ambitious programme of EDI activity drives organisational culture change, empowers our leadership and ensures that equity and inclusion principles are embedded across all of our processes – from recruitment, promotion and reward, to accessing career development opportunities. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their background. We acknowledge that people from certain backgrounds are under-represented and we are committed to doing what we can to correct this.

Our commitment to being a fully inclusive workplace is currently recognised through an [Athena SWAN Silver award](#). We are also Stonewall Diversity Champions, supporting LGBT+ inclusion, and are working towards the principles within the Race at Work Charter and Disability Confident scheme. Our broader Wellcome Genome Campus-wide EDI initiatives include our LGBT+, Race Equity, Neurodiversity and Parent & Carers' Staff Engagement Networks, which bring people together, raise awareness, provide specific and relevant support and development opportunities and are safe spaces for people to be themselves.

Learn more about our EDI activity here: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/equality-in-science/>



12. Unrivalled Operational Teams and Facilities

The high-throughput, large-scale biological research that can be undertaken at the Institute is a central defining characteristic distinguishing our science from that of most research institutes and universities. All Postdocs can leverage the following resources to deliver their science and occasionally, Postdoc roles are also available within these teams.

Scientific Operations

Cellular Operations - provides a fundamental core resource function at the Sanger Institute by supporting the delivery of cellular biology at scale. Their cutting edge services and facilities include: cellular derivation and screening, organoid generation and differentiation, gene editing, flow cytometry analysis and sorting, spatial genomics and sample management and archiving.

Sequencing Operations - deliver a wide range of services to generate genomic and transcriptome data for whole-genomes, exome or targeted regions on DNA and RNA, or from single-cells and in situ tissue sections across a range of short and long read sequencing technologies. Faculty programme samples can enter Sequencing Operations at different stages with sample extraction, preparation, library construction and walk up sequencing all available as entry points.

Gene Editing and Cellular Research

- develop novel cutting-edge CRISPR screening techniques such as saturation mutagenesis, base editing, dual guide libraries and CRISPRa/i and couple these to complex phenotypic readouts such as single cell transcriptomics, spatial genomics or phenotypic assays of cellular function. We also work with and develop human cellular systems and differentiation protocols of human induced pluripotent stem cells (hiPSCs) in both 2D and 3D to better model human disease states in vitro.

Sequencing Research & Development - is a cutting edge team responsible for keeping up to date with emerging sequencing related technologies and automation for the testing, optimisation, design and implementation of solutions for the generation of high quality and robust genomic datasets. We are a hub for the integration of new sequencing applications into the institute via engagement and partnership with programmes, and we influence technology providers to develop products and technologies that meet our needs.

Genomic Surveillance Unit

The Genomic Surveillance Unit (GSU) combines two previously separate initiatives – Sanger’s [COVID-19 genomic surveillance](#) initiative and the [MalariaGEN resource centre](#) – into a single entity. The GSU is a delivery

unit rather than a research programme, working with global partners to implement systems for genomic surveillance of pathogenic microbes and their vectors – a vital component in the public health toolkit for fighting infectious diseases. As well as generating large scale genomic data, and helping others to do the same, the GSU designs and implements end-to-end pipelines. It also develops, runs, supports and maintains open products that enable the genomic surveillance needs of its partners to be met.

Read more about the GSU here:

<https://www.sanger.ac.uk/collaboration/genomic-surveillance-unit/>

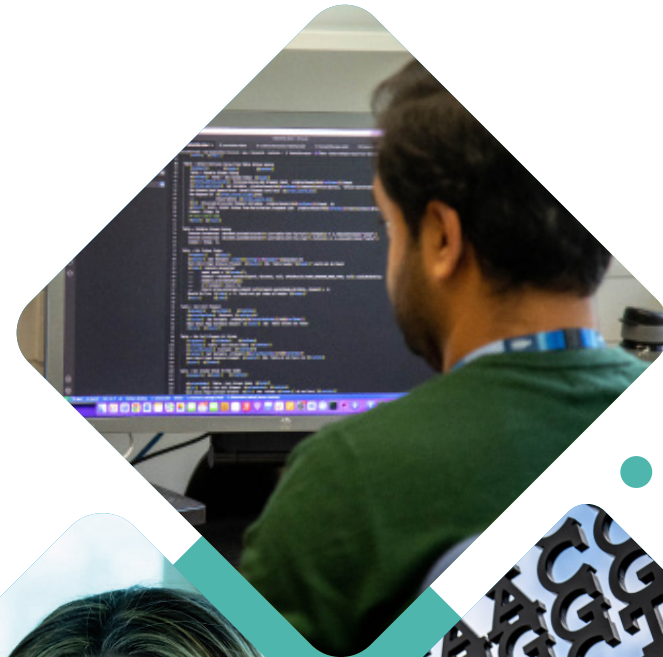
Informatics & Digital Solutions

Informatics and Digital Solutions (IDS) is an organisational entity delivering information and communications technology and coordinating our core informatics capability. IDS focus on the proactive management of research data, investment in informatics, transparent and active partnering with our scientists, and an agile approach to delivery and change with a clear emphasis on support and investment in our people.

Science at Sanger is driven by its five Scientific Programmes and supported by its Scientific Operations Teams. Additionally, Sanger participates in other initiatives in

the wider bioscience sector including Open Targets and Health Data Research-UK (HDR-UK). The critical importance of informatics to support these science projects places a number of key demands on Sanger's informatics needs:

- Scale – Large-scale, high-throughput efficient informatics workflows are required to support all scientific programmes to operate at scale
- Agility – the scientific programmes are pushing the boundaries of science, and require support in rapidly developing, adopting and scaling-up new techniques and pipelines
- Resilience – for high-volume work, the scientific programmes need robust, maintainable and cost-effective informatics capabilities, especially for high-throughput pipelines



13. Our Ecosystem

Contributing to broader institutional activities is both encouraged and recognised as an essential part of preparing yourself for future leadership roles. We are privileged to work collaboratively with and be supported by our extended organisation and strategic partners, many of whom are committed to enhance the Postdoc experience through additional opportunities and training. Opportunities include translational activities, public engagement and outreach, data and resource generation for the wider community, delivering training and/or teaching and engaging in networking activity to grow collaborations and raise your profile.

The Wellcome Genome Campus

Sanger is located on the wider Wellcome Genome Campus (WGC), which sits at the interface of research and industry, translating science into tangible societal benefits. Collectively, the institutes and organisations on the WGC:

- Undertake genome and biodata research
- Provide bioinformatics resources for the global scientific community
- Deliver vital training in genomics and biodata to scientists and clinicians.

A significant and ambitious expansion of the WGC is currently in progress, expanding what the Campus has to offer by providing new facilities and delivering opportunities for new activities, research and commercial endeavours. The development includes plans for new private homes within the Campus to support the retention of talent and sustain/enrich the community. The expanded WGC will be a place where anyone, from scientists and students to members of the public, can come to learn about genomic and biodata science and explore its applications and implications.

Read more about the WGC here:

<https://www.wellcomegenomecampus.org/>

Genomic Innovation

Sanger's Genomic Innovation Team encompasses Entrepreneurship and Technology Translation sub-teams that drive our strategy to achieve impact with Sanger science by building on the innovative capabilities of our people, delivering benefits to society by engaging with businesses and creating commercial opportunities. The Team includes expertise in all aspects of technology identification, assessment, protection, development, and commercialisation. They help researchers, including Postdocs, to translate their work towards a product or service that enables healthcare benefit by:

- Conducting thorough technology evaluations and market research
- Protecting their ideas through filing patents if appropriate
- Assisting with development plans and funding
- Undertaking extensive business development activities
- Structuring and negotiating collaboration, evaluation, license and spin-out agreements
- Managing established development partnerships

The Team also helps develop a unique and vibrant ecosystem to establish and grow innovative genomics and biodata businesses, which includes managing the WGC's [Biodata Innovation Centre](#) – a home for innovative genomics and biodata businesses and individuals that complement the unique research and innovation of the Campus Institutes. Additionally, the Team provides opportunities for Postdocs including:

The Translation Committee Fund

This Fund enables the further development of projects proposing to apply Sanger research to solve real-world problems. It is often the first step to providing a proof of concept, or

validation of a new idea that has the potential to deliver new technologies, products or services.

Learn more about Translation Committee funding here:

<https://sangerinstitute.blog/2022/11/09/sequencing-anything-anytime-anywhere/>

Startup School

This is an online lean entrepreneurship learning programme for early-stage genomic and biodata innovations arising from Campus science. It leverages innovators and mentors from the local Cambridge ecosystem and is delivered in a highly supportive environment.

Learn more about Startup School here: <http://bit.ly/408FLmN>

Learn more about innovation at Sanger here: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/innovation/innovation-at-the-sanger-institute/>

Wellcome Connecting Science

Wellcome Connecting Science (WCS) is Sanger's associated learning and engagement programme connecting researchers, health professionals, and the wider public, and creating opportunities and spaces to explore genomic science and its impact on people. WCS inspires new thinking, sparks conversation, supports learning and measures attitudes.



Startup School is really well designed to teach both wet and dry lab scientists to think about their science from a commercial angle. Anyone interested in translating their research into a product should definitely sign up for this course.

Anyone curious about the business of science will get a good introduction to the process of entrepreneurship. It will not guarantee that you will be successful in your business idea, but it will give you the tools to maximize your chances of success.”

Ujjwal Banerjee

Postdoc Fellow, Cancer, Ageing & Somatic Mutation Programm

The ‘Engagement and Society’ sub-team uses expertise in research and engagement methods to understand and engage with a diverse range of communities, learners, educators, and researchers to explore how genomic science impacts all of our lives. They facilitate opportunities for Postdocs to:

- Participate in engagement events for school and community groups
- Share and deliver ideas about how the Campus can engage with public audiences (for example, helping researchers develop games and podcasts)
- Engage in patient/public involvement; hearing from people with lived experience to help inform research
- Undertake social science research projects

The ‘Learning and Training’ sub-team offers training for Postdocs to build their formal teaching and facilitation skills, as well as opportunities to deliver scientific training and courses to researchers around the globe.

Learn more about WCS here: <https://www.wellcomeconnectingscience.org/>

Partnership with EMBL-European Bioinformatics Institute

Sanger has a long-standing partnership with EMBL-European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI), which is co-located on the Wellcome Genome Campus. We have a shared vision of the importance of large biological data, and the openness of its provision, for the future of biomedical science. We collaborate extensively on data analysis, with many shared research projects and shared engagement opportunities, training activities and people. The partnership enables both organisations to deliver their goals, with the data generation mission of Sanger complementing the data distribution mission of EMBL-EBI.

As a Sanger Postdoc, you may build collaborative links with EMBL-EBI through your research project. Further, EMBL-EBI Postdocs are often welcomed to Sanger's Postdoc Programme activities to nurture the unique partnership. Some Postdocs can be formally co-located at both Institutes through the [EMBL-EBI-Sanger Postdoctoral Fellowship \(ESPOD\) Scheme](#), which offers projects that combine experimental (wet-lab) and computational (dry-lab) approaches.

Learn more about EMBL-EBI here:
<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/>

Open Targets

Open Targets, a consortium of the Sanger Institute, EMBL-EBI and pharmaceutical

companies founded in 2014, is dedicated to identifying and validating new therapeutic targets through genome variation based approaches. It addresses a key challenge in drug development: that almost 90% of all drug discovery efforts fail during clinical trials. Major drivers for this are a lack of efficacy or poor safety profiles due to a lack of understanding of the biological target the drug is acting upon. Open Targets addresses this by combining the expertise of two scientific worlds to create a critical mass of knowledge and data that does not exist in any one organisation.

Approximately 20% of Postdoc roles based within Sanger are funded through the Open Targets Programme, this will be noted in the job advert. You can also apply for funding from Open Targets during your Postdoc role, enabling you to explore translational avenues for your work, build connections with industry and recruit staff (e.g. research assistants) to help advance your ideas.

Learn more about Open Targets here:
<https://www.opentargets.org/>

Cambridge as a STEM Research & Innovation hub

Cambridge is a life science cluster with a powerful innovation ecosystem. It hosts over 600 life sciences and healthcare companies, with a total turnover of £7bn and over 22,000 highly skilled professionals. In the past 50+ years, this cluster, often referred to as 'Silicon Fen' has inspired and attracted world-leading

companies to set up operations in and around Cambridge amongst an outstanding line up of companies; Amazon, Apple and AstraZeneca.

There are opportunities offered through the University of Cambridge and across the broader local landscape to encourage Postdocs to engage with a breadth of networking events, learning or even accelerator programmes. The result is an incredible environment in which to base yourself as a Postdoc, including many local job opportunities on completion of your Postdoc role.

Learn more about local opportunities by visiting the following websites:

The Cambridge Network:
<https://www.cambridgenetwork.co.uk/>

The Cambridge AI Club for Biomedicine:
<https://www.milner.cam.ac.uk/ai-club/>

SynBio Postdocs Network:
<http://www.synbio.cam.ac.uk/postdocs>

Cambridge Academy of Therapeutic Sciences:
<http://www.ats.cam.ac.uk/>

Connexn:
<https://becovalent.co.uk/#/>

14. Recruitment processes

Who are we looking for

In assessing the best qualified applicants for each type of Postdoc role, we will focus on scientific achievement, relevant skills (or the motivation to learn) and experience, leadership potential and personal suitability in line with the six behaviours in our [Behavioural Competency Framework](#).

We positively encourage applications from candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity status. In considering candidates for a Postdoc position, if an absence, career break, or a change in discipline that may have impacted on scientific outputs, this will also be taken into consideration.

There are 2 types of Postdoc Role at Sanger determined by role requirements and business need:

Postdoctoral Fellow

About:

The Postdoc Fellow role is a junior-level research position and training role. It is typically held by individuals who have completed, or are about to complete, their doctoral degree. It may also appeal to those who are looking to discipline-hop and upskill after obtaining research experience in other fields.

Salary:

£38,000 - £49,157, subject to skills and experience

Role purpose and primary objective:

To carry out original research within a defined area appropriate to the Principal Investigator's (PI) broader research programme. The Postdoc is also expected to publish excellent research outputs, mentor junior researchers, contribute their specific expertise to other ongoing projects within the Group, Programme or Institute, and receive training in research and professional skills from a variety of sources.

The post aims to prepare the Postdoc for a leadership role in scientific research, or disciplines outside of research.

Senior Postdoctoral Fellow

About:

The Senior Postdoctoral Fellow role is a mid-level research position and training post. It is typically held by individuals who have completed their doctoral degree and gained significant relevant research experience in their field. This role is suited to those working towards developing an independent research programme in academia or industry, or seeking to develop specialised skills following a previous period of postdoctoral research.

Salary:

£43,650
£49,157, subject to skills & experience

Role purpose and primary objective:

To carry out increasingly independent and original research, within a defined area, that is both appropriate to the Principal Investigator's (PI) broader research programme but that also demonstrates the Senior Postdoc's growing research niche, as well as nurturing collaborations that are relevant to both the project and their career goals.

The Senior Postdoc is also expected to publish excellent research outputs, mentor junior researchers, contribute their specific expertise to other ongoing

projects within the Group, Programme or Institute, and receive training in research and professional skills from a variety of sources.

The post aims to prepare the Senior Postdoc for a leadership role in scientific research but it is not an internal “tenure-track” post for a Group Leader role at Sanger.

All Postdoc roles are time-limited, representing stepping-stones towards long term careers. As outlined in Sanger’s Postdoc Model, no Postdoc is therefore likely to be more than 8 years post-PhD on completion of their role (with reasonable provision for parental leave, career breaks and other mitigating circumstances taken into account).

Reasonable adjustments

We are committed to creating an environment where everyone can fulfil their potential and thrive. We welcome and encourage applications from all parts of the community. If you require reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process, please contact the recruitment team via recruit@sanger.ac.uk

The Recruitment Process

For further details on our recruitment process, please visit: <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/careers/contact-details-application-process-and-how-find-us/>

Relocation and visa support

Every year the Wellcome Sanger Institute supports dozens of overseas researchers from across the globe to visit the WGC to collaborate, share insights and undertake ground-breaking scientific research. 65-70% of our Postdocs come from outside of the UK and we are proud to offer a reliable in-house service, which provides expert advice and guidance to support you throughout your journey with us. Our visa support ensures that you secure an immigration status that will allow you to fulfil your role as a Postdoc within the Institute; and is considerate to you and your family’s circumstances and long-term goals as you build your home in the UK.

We reimburse immigration costs (visa fees and immigration health surcharge) for incoming researchers, and we can offer loans to support visa costs for dependents. If you are relocating from >75 miles beyond the Wellcome Genome Campus, then you may also be eligible for a relocation allowance that can help you recover some of the costs associated with moving (further conditions apply).

Learn more about our relocation and visa support here:

<https://www.sanger.ac.uk/about/careers/global-mobility-and-immigration-service/>

Contract Length

Postdocs are employed on fixed-term training contracts, which are typically 3 years in length. Our Postdoc Model permits Postdoc contracts to be extended up to a maximum of 5 years, through a 3 + 1 + 1 year approach, subject to budget and the needs of the project.



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