



## PhD Studentship in Molecular Immunology (interferons in health and disease)

The Laboratory of Interferon Research (led by **Prof. Dr. Benjamin G. Hale**) at the Institute of Medical Virology is seeking to recruit a highly-motivated PhD student with an excellent background in molecular biology, biomedicine or immunology. The student will join a multidisciplinary group focused on understanding the molecular biology of human interferons in health and disease. Specifically, the student will contribute to cutting-edge projects on human interferon system deficiencies (including those caused by autoantibodies) that are associated with increased susceptibility to severe viral diseases, such as COVID-19 or influenza. The group has an established and internationally-recognized track-record of work in this area, and has particular interests in understanding how these interferon deficiencies develop, their virological and immunological consequences, and how their pathogenic effects may be overcome by new molecular therapies. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review recent examples of the laboratory's published work on this topic for background on current interests:

- Busnadiego, Abela *et al*, PLoS Biol, 2022: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3001709>
- Fernbach, Mair *et al*, J Exp Med, 2024: <https://doi.org/10.1084/jem.20240365>
- Groen *et al*, J Exp Med, 2025: <https://doi.org/10.1084/jem.20242039>
- Groen *et al*, J Hum Immun, 2026: <https://doi.org/10.70962/jhi.20250268>
- Groen & Hale, Curr Opin Virol, 2026: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.coviro.2026.101511>
- Full laboratory publication list, including on other topics: <https://tinyurl.com/BGHale>

### Your profile:

- Recent (or soon to be awarded) Master's degree in the field of Life Sciences (e.g. Molecular Biology, Virology, Immunology, Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Biomedicine).
- Previous relevant laboratory research experience in Life Sciences.
- Motivation and commitment to furthering molecular immunology research.
- Ability to work constructively and effectively, both independently and as part of a team.

### What we offer:

- Fully-funded gross annual salary within the Swiss National Science Foundation range (currently CHF 50,000 – CHF 55,000).
- Enrollment within the Life Science Zurich Graduate School of the ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich, and participation in the Microbiology and Immunology PhD program.
- A welcoming, friendly and stimulating Institute with groups interested in HIV virology and vaccinology, influenza and respiratory virology, molecular immunology, and clinical disease.
- A dynamic, interdisciplinary and internationally-recognized research environment that is well-funded and has strong connections between fundamental molecular sciences and clinical/translational practices.
- Modern, state-of-the-art, molecular virology and immunology laboratories (including a Biosafety Level 3 laboratory), and appropriate technical skills training.
- Access to high-quality core research facilities of the ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich for functional genomics, proteomics and microscopy.
- High-quality supervision and mentoring, with typical PhD completion times of 4-5 years, and a track-record of graduate destinations in academia, industry, pharma, and public health.
- Opportunities to present research work at national and international conferences.

**All applications must be made directly to the Life Science Zurich Graduate School** of the ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich: <https://www.lifescience-graduateschool.uzh.ch/en.html>. Please select Microbiology and Immunology (MIM) as the primary PhD program during the formal application, and express your specific scientific motivations to join this laboratory clearly when describing your future research interests. **Applications e-mailed to the laboratory will not be processed.** Deadline for applications: **1<sup>st</sup> May 2026**. Starting date negotiable between late 2026/early 2027.