PhD Advert Template

Project title: Advanced biomaterials for future-proof pharmaceutical formulations

Project ID (optional):

Accept all year-round applications

Funding information: Self-funded students only

Project description:

While traditional, small molecule drugs continue to play a significant role due to their oral bioavailability, they also suffer from lower selectivity, frequently accompanied with side-effects. On the other hand, great progress in molecular biology has been utilising large molecule biological products called biologics (e.g. proteins and nucleic acids), as more specific, targeted and sometimes the only possible treatments, nonetheless with low oral bioavailability. To circumvent the bioavailability issues, biologics are injected, sometimes multiple times per day by trained medical staff, adding to the cost, and reducing the accessibility of the treatment. To make matters even more complicated, some treatments require a combination of both small and large molecules delivered at the same time to a target site, which is challenging due to the difference in their properties.

This project proposes to address the gap between advances in a large molecule drug discoveries and available pharmaceutical formulations fit for efficient, personalised, and cost-effective treatments. Starting from polymeric biomaterials, for example biocompatible hydrogels, mucoadhesive, injectable or implantable formulations will be developed and optimised for a long-acting disease-specific treatment. Targeted therapeutics include nucleic acids, which are shown promise in treating diseases by affecting their genetic blueprints through gene inhibition or editing, but remain a challenge for clinical translation due to their limited stability, as well as properties which obstruct efficient transition into cells. The proposed study links material design and properties, drug/s encapsulation and stability, and tuneable target-site-specific transfer. In the formulation, biomaterial construct has the role of a drug delivery system, containing and preserving required drug cargo, and releasing it at a target specific rate over several days, weeks, or even months, replacing need for daily injections.

Applicants should have a 1st or 2:1 honours degree (or equivalent) in Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biomedical Sciences, Material Science, Chemical Engineering, or a closely related discipline. During the PhD programme the student will be offered training in biomaterials synthesis, materials characterisation, drug encapsulation, drug release, drug stability and cell studies, as well as other drug specific training. Student will gain competency in Ultraviolet-Visible spectroscopy (UV-Vis), Fluorescence Spectroscopy (FS), Fourier-Transform Infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR), Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), Confocal Microscopy (CM) and other methods, required for analysis and characterisation of the formulations and their performance. The student will also have access to Postgraduate Researcher Development Programme with several hundreds of training courses to select from, based on their needs and interests. The skills the student will acquire during this PhD programme are highly transferable and suited for a prospective career in academia, R&D or industry.

Newcastle University is committed to being a fully inclusive Global University which actively recruits, supports and retains colleagues from all sectors of society. We value diversity as well as celebrate, support and thrive on the contributions of all our employees and the communities they represent. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and encourage applications from everybody, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender identity, marital status/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, as well as being open to flexible working practices.

Application enquires: [Dr Katarina Novakovic](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/engineering/staff/profile/katarinanovakovic.html), [katarina.novakovic@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:katarina.novakovic@newcastle.ac.uk)

**We will also need to link your PhD advert up to the subject keywords below so that your PhD studentship can be found on findaphd.com. Please highlight up to three relevant keywords from the lists provided below.**

**FindaPhD.com**  
You can select up to **10 subject areas**.

PhD Disciplines & Subject areas

Agriculture

agricultural sciences

agricultural technology

arable farming

livestock farming

forestry & arboriculture

other

Anthropology

biological anthropology

social anthropology

other

Architecture, Building & Planning

architecture

built environment

construction management

landscape architecture

rural planning

surveying

urban planning

other

Biological Sciences

bacteriology

behavioural biology

biochemistry

biodiversity

bioinformatics

biophysics

biotechnology

cancer biology

cell biology

developmental biology

ecology

ecotoxicology

entomology

environmental biology

evolution

genetic engineering

genetics

genomics

human genetics

immunology

marine biology

microbiology

molecular biology

molecular genetics

neuroscience

parasitology

plant biology

plant cell biology

reproductive biology

structural biology

systematic biology

virology

zoology

other

Business & Management

accounting

business

e business

education management

event management

hospitality

human resource management

management

marketing

project management

sport management

tourism

other

Chemistry

analytical chemistry

applied chemistry

computational chemistry

environmental chemistry

industrial chemistry

inorganic chemistry

organic chemistry

petrochemical chemistry

pharmaceutical chemistry

physical chemistry

polymer chemistry

structural chemistry

synthetic chemistry

other

Communication & Media Studies

broadcast media

digital media

journalism

print media

production

public relations

publishing

other

Computer Science

artificial intelligence

computer architectures

computer vision

computer graphics

cyber security

data science

human computer interaction

internet of things

machine learning

networks

quantum computing

software engineering

videogames

other

Creative Arts & Design

animation

art

crafts

creative writing

dance

design

drama

fashion

film studies

fine art

graphic design

interior design

music

music technology

photography

theatre studies

other

Economics

econometrics

financial economics

macroeconomics

microeconomics

political economics

other

Education

further education

higher education

nursery education

primary education

secondary education

special needs education

other

Engineering

acoustics engineering

aerospace engineering

atomic engineering

automotive engineering

bioengineering

biomedical engineering

chemical engineering

civil engineering

communications engineering

control systems

cybernetics

dynamics

electrical engineering

electronic engineering

energy technologies

environmental engineering

fluid mechanics

gas engineering

geotechnical engineering

integrated engineering

manufacturing engineering

marine engineering

mechanical engineering

mechanics

mechatronics

nanotechnology

offshore engineering

petroleum engineering

robotics

solid mechanics

structural engineering

structural mechanics

systems engineering

thermodynamics

other

Environmental Sciences

climate science

hydrology

marine sciences

meteorology

pollution

soil science

other

Finance

actuarial science

banking

financial management

insurance

investment

taxation

other

Food Sciences

food hygiene

food production

other

Forensic and Archaeological Sciences

archaeological science

forensic science

other

Geography

agricultural geography

cultural geography

economic geography

environmental geography

geographical information systems gis

historical geography

human geography

marine geography

physical geography

political geography

remote sensing

social geography

transport geography

urban geography

other

Geology

applied geology

geochemistry

geophysics

geoscience

geotechnology

hydrogeology

marine geology

palaeontology

seismology

volcanology

other

History & Archaeology

african history

american history

ancient history

archaeology

asian history

australasian history

british and irish history

economic history

european history

heritage studies

history

history of art

history of religions

history of science

medieval history

military history

modern history

russian history

social history

world history

other

Information Services

information security

information systems

librarianship

other

Languages, Literature & Culture

african studies

american studies

asian studies

australasian studies

chinese

danish

dutch

english language

english literature

european studies

finnish

french

german

italian

japanese

middle eastern studies

norwegian

portuguese

russian

spanish

swedish

other

Law

criminal law

commercial law

contract law

property law

other

Linguistics & Classics

ancient greek

celtic studies

classics

latin

linguistics

other

Materials Science

ceramics

glass

metallurgy

polymers

textiles

other

Mathematics

applied mathematics

applied statistics

computational mathematics

data analysis

engineering mathematics

mathematical modelling

medical statistics

operational research

probability

pure mathematics

statistics

stochastic processes

other

Medicine

anatomy

audiology

biomechanics

cardiology

complementary medicine

dentistry

endocrinology

epidemiology

neural engineering

neurology

nutrition

ophthalmology

optometry

pathology

pharmacology

pharmacy

physiology

physiotherapy

podiatry

radiology

speech science

tissue engineering

toxicology

other

Nursing & Health

adult nursing

community nursing

counselling

dental nursing

environmental health

health informatics

medical nursing

mental health nursing

midwifery

occupational health

occupational therapy

paediatric nursing

paramedical science

surgical nursing

other

Philosophy

ethics

metaphysics

philosophy of science

other

Physics

acoustics

astronomy

astrophysics

chemical physics

computational physics

electromagnetism

environmental physics

experimental physics

medical physics

nuclear physics

optical physics

particle physics

quantum mechanics

solid state physics

space science

theoretical physics

other

Politics & Government

development studies

government

international relations

politics

public policy

other

Psychology

child psychology

clinical psychology

community psychology

counselling psychology

developmental psychology

educational psychology

forensic psychology

health psychology

neuropsychology

occupational psychology

organisational psychology

psychotherapy

sport psychology

other

Sociology

criminology

disability studies

gender studies

socio economics

social work

other

Sport & Exercise Science

sport coaching

sport development

sport performance

sport technology

sport therapy

other

Theology & Religious Studies

divinity

religious studies

theology

other

Veterinary Sciences

animal welfare

veterinary dentistry

veterinary medicine

veterinary nursing

veterinary nutrition

veterinary pathology

other