

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:	Microbiology Laboratory Scientist Mentor, Timor-Leste
DIVISION / SECTION:	Global and Tropical Health
SUPERVISOR:	Laboratory Lead
CLASSIFICATION LEVEL:	General Staff Level 8
STATUS (FTE):	Full Time
NO. OF POSITIONS REPORTING DIRECTLY:	0
NO. OF POSITIONS REPORTING INDIRECTLY:	3
PROVISIONS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to obtain National Police Clearance and hold a Working With Children Clearance (Ochre card) - Ability to obtain working rights in Timor-Leste.

ABOUT MENZIES:

As one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians, and a leader in global and tropical research into life-threatening illnesses, Menzies School of Health Research continues to translate its research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

The Menzies Global and Tropical Health (GTH) Division is committed to dealing with key areas of public health concern that impact on the health and wellbeing of people and communities across northern Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. With a focus on translational research we shape our research program through close collaboration with a diverse range of healthcare providers, policy makers and researchers, to target priority health issues. Our aim is to find meaningful and relevant ways to improve the health of people in our region.

Menzies has an office in Dili, Timor-Leste with around 40 Timorese and expatriate staff employed in country. The STRONG TL project (Surveillance, Training, Research Opportunities and National Guidelines for improving communicable disease control in Timor-Leste) and Fleming Fund project are two of Menzies' major projects currently in progress in Timor-Leste.

THE PROJECTS:

The STRONG TL project includes work across clinical, surveillance, and laboratory areas to support Timor-Leste's ability to detect and respond to communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

The Fleming Fund Country Grant for Timor-Leste (Fleming Fund project) is a One Health project across human and animal health, with a focus on strengthening antimicrobial resistance (AMR), antimicrobial use (AMU) surveillance systems, and antimicrobial consumption (AMC) data capture in both the human and animal health sectors.

Both projects share aims of health system and laboratory strengthening, and involve mentoring, working alongside, and building the capacity of staff within the clinical, surveillance and laboratory areas.

SUMMARY OF POSITION:

The Microbiology Laboratory Scientist Mentor will contribute to capacity building with a One Health approach in the National Health Laboratory (NHL) and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL).

The Microbiology Laboratory Scientist Mentor will contribute to capacity building within the bacteriology department of the National Health Laboratory (NHL) with a focus on microbiological techniques for organism identification, Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AST) and reporting. The role will contribute to teaching and giving technical advice for laboratory activities relevant to strengthening the AMR and AMU surveillance system in the human health sector, including familiarization with recently installed equipment and new tests. There has been recent refurbishment of the laboratory to meet PC2 standard, the introduction of an electronic laboratory information management system, a Phoenix and a MALDI-TOF. The role will work to strengthen quality and biosafety within the NHL and contribute to the STRONG TL project's objectives of improving communicable disease control in Timor-Leste.

The Microbiology Laboratory Scientist Mentor will also contribute to capacity building of microbiology laboratory scientists from the VDL to strengthen the One Health collaboration between human health and animal health. The focus in the VDL is on providing on-the-job mentoring to Timorese scientists as the lab commences basic microbiological testing: supporting the set up of sample flow, sample processing, microbiological diagnostic testing and biobanking. The aim is for staff to become confident in basic identification and AST for priority organisms, with appropriate quality assurance and awareness of biosafety.

The position will be based full time in Dili, Timor Leste.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Support development of capacity within the NHL and VDL for laboratory diagnostics, AMR testing, quality assurance and AMR surveillance.
2. Provide mentoring for laboratory staff at NHL and VDL, with a focus on quality assured basic microbiological testing: microscopy, culture, identification and AST.
3. Assist NHL staff with coordination of routine internal and external quality assurance (EQA) activities and development / revision of standard operating procedures (SOPs).
4. Support laboratory scientist staff with the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and processes for linked electronic reporting for clinical and surveillance purposes.
5. Work together with the Laboratory Lead, and Infectious Disease Mentor to strengthen the collaboration between hospital clinicians and microbiology laboratory scientists.
6. Work together with the NHL and VDL biosafety officers to implement policies and procedures that will lead to improved biosafety in both laboratory sites.
7. Strengthen One Health collaboration between NHL and VDL by working across both sites and supporting opportunities for co-operation and joint learning.
8. Contribute to approved Menzies research projects associated with the Fleming Fund and STRONG TL projects, based in NHL and VDL.
9. Assist the laboratory lead with reporting requirements for funders, collaborators, and internal Menzies purposes as required.
10. Any other tasks as reasonably required by the supervisor or project leads.
11. An understanding and awareness of relevant Workplace Health and Safety as well as Equal Opportunity principles and legislation along with a commitment to maintaining a healthy and safe workplace for all Menzies staff, students, volunteers and visitors.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Essential:

1. Postgraduate qualification(s) or progress towards postgraduate qualification(s) in a relevant field.
2. Extensive relevant management experience in medical laboratory and / or veterinary laboratory science; or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.
3. Proven experience working as a Medical Scientist in a diagnostic laboratory with experience in microscopy, bacterial culture, basic bench testing for organism identification, antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) and using MALDI-TOF and VITEK or PHOENIX for identification and AST.
4. Demonstrated ability to lead quality assurance and biosafety improvements in a medical laboratory.
5. Experience teaching, training and supervising medical laboratory scientists.
6. Expertise in tropical diseases, health systems strengthening and capacity development in low-resource settings.
7. Ability to correspond with stakeholders, manage sensitive issues and maintain confidentiality.
8. Strong communication skills and demonstrated ability to be patient, flexible and pragmatic, especially in a cross-cultural setting.
9. Initiative, good judgement and strong problem-solving skills with demonstrated ability to work under broad direction as part of a multidisciplinary team.
10. Willingness to engage across human and animal health sectors with a One Health approach to capacity building.

Desirable:

1. Verbal or written knowledge of Tetum, Bahasa Indonesian, Spanish or Portuguese language is an advantage.

Approved by: Menzies Human Resources

Date: 22 April 2021