University of St Andrews | FOUNDED 1413



School of Psychology and Neuroscience

Research Technician



Introduction

Founded in 1413, the University of St Andrews is Scotland's first university and one of the oldest in the English-speaking world. With more than 600 years of academic excellence, we are proud of our reputation as a world-class centre for learning, teaching, and research.

We are a research-intensive university where creativity, collaboration, and critical inquiry are at the heart of everything we do. Whether you are joining us in an academic, professional, or support role, you will be part of a team committed to delivering outstanding education and making a meaningful contribution to society.

We have been named the UK's best university in The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2027. It is the third time in six years the university has secured the top spot in the UK's longest-running university league table.

For those looking to be part of a university with deep-rooted heritage, a global outlook, and a forward-thinking approach, we invite you to consider joining our community at the University of St Andrews.

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES
GOOD UNIVERSITY GUIDE 2027
1 RANKED FIRST IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



School / Unit

The School of Psychology and Neuroscience comprises approximately 40 academic staff, 30 administrative, technical and research staff, and more than 60 research post-graduate students.

Research in the School includes everything from from cellular neuroscience to social psychology.

There are 4 general research groupings: Cellular and Behavioural Neuroscience, Perception, Cognition, and Action, Origins of Mind, and Social and Group Processes (https://www.st andrews.ac.uk/psychology neuroscience/research/research-groups/).

There are also several inter-disciplinary institutes and centres, including the Institute of Behavioural and Neural Sciences (IBANS), and Centre for Biodiversity (CBD).

The Pulver lab studies how animals with relatively small nervous systems solve the big challenges of controlling movement over and through complex and changing terrestrial environments and ecosystems. We work with fruit flies, flour beetles and freshwater aquatic invertebrates. Work in the lab encompasses everything from genetics to anatomy, to cellular physiology, as well as ethology, computational neuroscience, and biomechanics. We have multiple UK and international collaborators and place an emphasis on helping researchers find career paths that fit with their particular interests.



School / Unit

The School holds an Athena Swan gold award (Nov 2024) and the Pulver lab holds a gold level accreditation through the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF). We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, as well as promoting sustainability in research.

Motor control networks have evolved to flexibly generate many rhythmic outputs from limited numbers of neurons. This ensures flexibility but also poses problems, because the more outputs a network can generate, the higher the chances of conflicts emerging that are maladaptive for movement. Resolving internal conflicts amongst rhythmic motor control programs is therefore a crucial computational challenge faced by motor systems; however, the mechanisms by which these conflicts are resolved is not well understood. This project aims to address this gap by leveraging the unique advantages of the *Drosophila* larval locomotor system. Work will involve live imaging of neural activity, electrophysiology, and computational modelling of neural networks. In parallel, the project will also involve activities aimed at promoting sustainability in research.



Job description

Reporting to: Stefan Pulver

Location: St Andrews

Job Family: Technical & Experimental

Working Hours: 36.25 hours per week

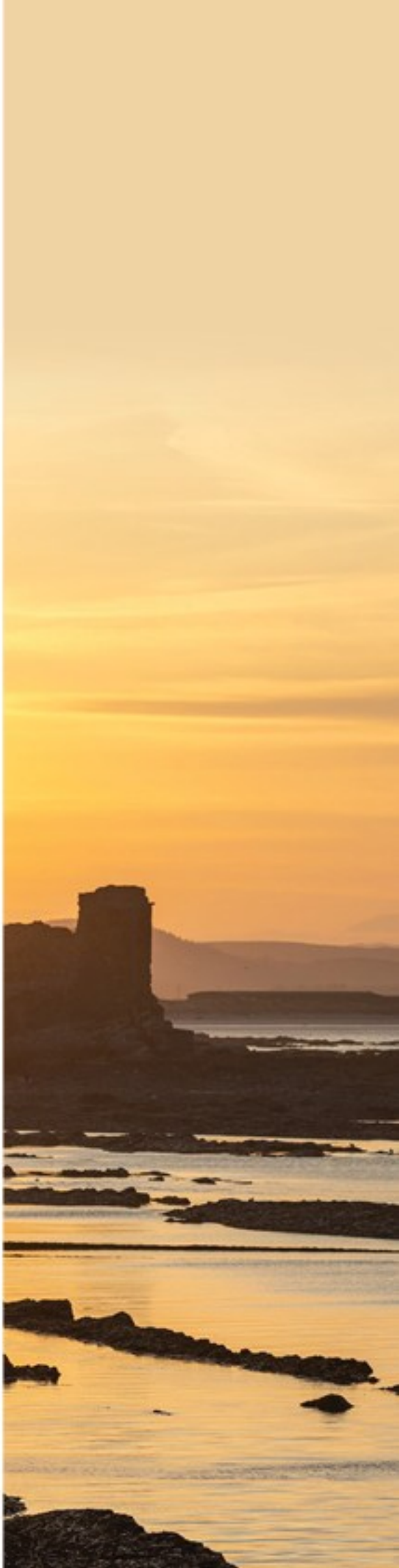
Grade / Salary Range: Grade 5 / £32,722 - £33,662 pa

Reference Number: TG1376RS

Start Date: 1 February 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter

Interview Date: TBC

Duration of post: 30 months with possible extension to 36 months

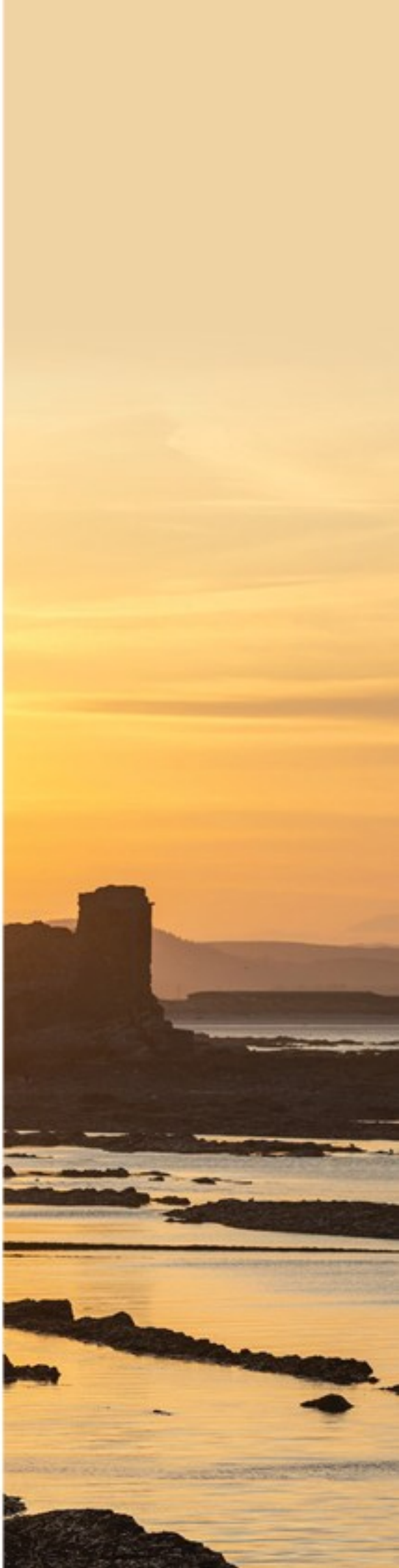


Main purpose of the role

The primary role will be to support research associated with the project, including execution and analysis of physiology experiments, micro-dissections, and contributing to the maintenance, organization, and day-to-day running of the research laboratory and animal colonies. The post-holder will also work to promote sustainable operation of the laboratory.

The successful applicant will have (or be close to completion of) an undergraduate or masters degree in neuroscience, zoology, biology, or a related discipline. Previous experience in a research laboratory environment is essential. The post is available for 30 months in the first instance with the possibility of extending to 36 months, starting as soon as possible.

For outstanding candidates interested in pursuing a research career, there may also be opportunities to contribute to additional projects within the lab.



Key responsibilities

Support research and contributing to the maintenance, organization, and day-to-day running of the research laboratory and animal colonies. The post-holder will also work to promote sustainable operation of the laboratory.

1. Support research activities within the project to meet deadlines and deliverables

2. Conduct and analyse physiology experiments under supervision of Project Lead

3. Contribute to the maintenance, organization, and day-to-day running of the research laboratory and animal colonies.

4. Understand and contribute to presentations of a specialist or highly technical nature to the team and, where applicable, the funding body/sponsor through presentations, discussions and progress reports.

5. Contribute to the writing up of research work for publication in peer-reviewed journals (as contributing co-author).

6. Develop basic knowledge in the research area to deal with problems affecting the achievement of research objectives and deadlines, devising solutions to unexpected challenges in collaboration with the PI.

7. Proactively engage with other members of the research group and engage with the research environment within the School.

8. Ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements including equality and diversity, data protection, copyright and licensing, security, financial, health and safety and other University policies, procedures and codes as appropriate.

Person specification

Essential Criteria – requirements without which a candidate would not be able to undertake the full remit of the role. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the short-listing stage.

Desirable Criteria – requirements which would be useful for the candidate to hold. When short listing, these criteria will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of assessment (i.e application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
Education & qualifications (technical, professional, academic, qualifications and training required)	Hold or be close to completion of an undergraduate or masters degree in neuroscience or related discipline		Interview
Experience & knowledge (examples of specific experience and knowledge sought)	Experience working in research laboratory environment Experience of applying relevant analytical skills, techniques and methods	Experience with: Animal husbandry *Drosophila* neurophysiology and neurogenetics Promoting sustainable research practice	

Person specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of assessment (i.e application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
Competencies & skills (e.g. effective communication skills, initiative, flexibility, leadership etc)	Effective communicator (orally and in writing) Collegiality/willingness to work in a collaborative environment. Ability to work under supervision but also be proactive in identifying and resolving issues Administrative and IT skills appropriate for the efficient and effective delivery of research. Well developed time management skills with the ability to meet deadlines	Presentation skills including ability to communicate complex, theoretical and technical material in an engaging and intelligible way to a range of audiences including non-specialists.	Interview

Benefits

St Andrews offers more than just a place to work—it is a place to belong. We value collegiality, inclusion, and wellbeing, and we are committed to creating a workplace where staff can thrive and perform at their best.

In addition to the salary on offer for this position, there are a wide range of benefits for staff working at the University of St Andrews. The package for the **Research Technician** includes:

- Financial contribution to relocation (subject to eligibility)
- Membership of the USS Pension Scheme with a generous employer contribution of 14.5%
- A hybrid working environment, including partial homeworking where appropriate and a range of family friendly policies, supporting work-life balance
- Staff discount scheme for local and national goods and services
- Free staff parking, employee Carshare and Cycle to Work Schemes and subsidised local bus travel
- Subsidised sports membership, reduced tuition fees on degree programmes for staff, access to training and development opportunities including LinkedIn Learning, access to library facilities, salary sacrifice scheme
- 34 Days Annual Leave plus 5 Public Holidays.



How to apply

We are committed to creating an accessible, fair and inclusive recruitment process for all candidates. If you require reasonable adjustments or accommodations during the application or interview process then please let us know and we will be happy to discuss support with you.

We encourage applicants to apply online at www.vacancies.st-andrews.ac.uk/welcome

If you have difficulties in completing the online application form, then please call +44 (0)1334 461990 or contact vacancies@st-andrews.ac.uk to discuss available support.

Applications should consist of the online application form only. Please do not upload CVs or covering letters.

For all applications, please quote ref: **TG1376RS**



Equality, diversity & inclusion

At St Andrews, we see diversity as a strength and value the rich variety of backgrounds, identities and experiences of our staff, students and alumni. We are committed to making the University a beacon of inclusivity and creating an environment in where everyone can flourish and realise their potential.

“We will achieve this through an approach that empowers our whole community and involves a determined shift in culture. Inclusivity will inform all of our policies and practices.”
The Principal, Professor Sally Mapstone

Diverse is a core theme of the University Strategy, and alongside our People Strategy, outlines a number of actions we are taking to create an inclusive culture. Our objectives include raising awareness of diversity events, initiatives and support, strengthening support for staff networks, creating more opportunities for employees to engage in consultations and discussions, offering a diverse range of rewarding career pathways and ensuring a working environment which supports positive working practices and behaviours.

We commit to providing a high-quality staff experience which enables all our staff to contribute, thrive, and perform at their best. By joining us at the University of St Andrews, you are joining a community which values difference, being your authentic self, and where you can play an active role in ensuring an inclusive environment for all.



St Andrews

A modern location surrounded with ancient history, St Andrews is a dynamic and friendly town found on the east coast of Scotland. Situated in the Kingdom of Fife, St Andrews has easy links to nearby commuter towns and transport links (including airports) to the nearby cities of Dundee (13 miles) and Edinburgh (c. 1 hour by train).

Beyond the lecture halls and labs, St Andrews is home to stunning, unspoilt beaches and fresh sea air. Take a peaceful stroll or an energising walk with friends along the iconic two-mile stretch of the West Sands. If you prefer the water, ride the waves at the East Sands or try sailing, sea kayaking and windsurfing. For breathtaking views, a walk to the end of the stone pier is an experience not to be missed.

St Andrews and the surrounding area is home to a wide range of restaurants and shops, while boasting an array of beautiful beaches. St Andrews is also the home of golf and there are seven local courses including the famous Old Course.

Fife is an area filled history and culture. There are nearly 5,000 listed buildings and 50 conservation areas across the Kingdom, with some historic structures dating all the way back to the 12th century. St Andrews enjoys a microclimate and is typically much drier than western parts of the country.



Further information

In accordance with the new immigration rules, it is with regret that this role does not meet the current suitability requirements set by the UKVI to enable sponsorship of migrant workers.

The University encourages all interested candidates to apply, and all applications received are assessed against the essential and desirable criteria listed in the further particulars. The successful candidate will have to demonstrate their right to work in the UK prior to commencing employment and where required, obtain the right to work in the UK without relying on University sponsorship.

Information on other visa options is available at www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa or by contacting our HR Immigration Team on hrimmigration@st-andrews.ac.uk.

You are expected to uphold a duty of care towards colleagues, students, and communities, and to actively contribute to a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. This includes responding appropriately to disclosures or reports of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence, bullying, harassment, or other concerns, in line with organisational policies, and signposting individuals to the appropriate departments



The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013532