



## Job Description

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Head of Plant Genetics</b>	<b>Location - base</b>	Cambridge or East Malling
<b>Department</b>	Plant Genetics	<b>Job group</b>	Management Tier 2
		<b>Post ref.</b>	SV/A1346
<b>Reports to</b>	Director of Research	<b>Line manages</b>	Up to 8 research scientists

### 1. Department overview

The Plant Genetics Department comprises around 25 staff working in three areas: (1) cereal and broad-acre crop genetics currently focusing on resource use efficiencies and stress tolerance, (2) crop diversity focusing on germplasm development and characterisation, and (3) fruit genetics focusing on traits related to flowering, resource use and stress tolerance.

For all three areas, a central theme is to identify traits contributing to resilience to biotic/abiotic stresses, to understand the genetic control of these traits, and to provide characterised germplasms for improving crop yield and quality. Research activities are supported by expertise in population genomics, quantitative genetics, epigenetics, bioinformatics, data science, and phenotyping and genetic transformation platforms within the department as well as in other departments across NIAB.

### 2. Role purpose

The Head of Department (HoD), in addition to leading the department, provides the scientific leadership associated with their area of expertise, and manages and delivers a significant portfolio of research work. Key responsibilities include:

- (1) providing leadership for the Department and identifying grant-funded and commercial opportunities to support the research and financial delivery of the Department in alignment with NIAB's mission;
- (2) supporting senior/junior scientists in the Department to develop and secure funding;
- (3) developing proposals to secure external funding for a nationally or internationally competitive research programme in an area directly relevant to NIAB's mission; and
- (4) managing and delivering a significant portfolio of research work on time and within budget

### 3. Financial authority/responsibility

Income and expenditure in the range of £2 to 3 million per annum. Delivering activities on time and within budget.

### 4. Key relationships

**Internal:** Immediate staff, Departmental colleagues, Director of Research, Chief Executive Officer, and other Executive members.

**External:** Research collaborators at other institutes/universities. Research funders including UKRI. Representing NIAB in the areas of genetics/pre-breeding when appropriate to external organisations.

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## 5. Key tasks/responsibilities

Tasks/responsibilities	Approx % of time
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership for the Department and identify grant-funded/commercial opportunities to support the research and financial delivery of the Department in alignment with NIAB's mission.</li> <li>• Support, guide and encourage senior/junior scientists in the Department to develop and secure funding for relevant scientific areas that will promote innovative research in relevant disciplines.</li> </ul>	30
<p><b>Research funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop proposals to secure external funding for an internationally competitive research programme in an area directly relevant to NIAB's mission (the individual target is to secure high-quality external funding of &gt; £300K pa within 3 years).</li> </ul>	25
<p><b>Research management and delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and deliver a coherent and significant portfolio of research work in a specific area to generate impactful outputs for science and industry, including on time preparation of required reports to the satisfactory standard.</li> <li>• Promote NIAB by disseminating knowledge through publishing experimental results in peer-refereed journals and appropriate industry publications.</li> </ul>	25
<p><b>Outreach/translational activities</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present project outcomes at national/international scientific and/or industry meetings.</li> <li>• Participate in scholarly/commercial activities, such as serving on editorial boards of peer-review journals, in learned societies or industry organisations.</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>NIAB-wide engagement</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Executive members to develop and implement NIAB-wide initiatives</li> <li>• Lead and support large cross-department proposal development</li> <li>• Manage special NIAB research facilities.</li> </ul>	10

## 6. Working conditions

Depending on research areas, the post holder could be based at either East Malling (where the focus is fruit crops) or Cambridge (broadacre crops). The post-holder is expected to travel between the two sites regularly.

Work is split between the office, laboratory, field, and glasshouse, which varies according to the season.

Regular Visual Display Unit usage.

Manual handling – occasional handling items of up to 2kg.

Regular exposure to plant material, pathogens, pollen, bees and other insects.

Regular exposure to dust e.g., soil particles, from milled seeds.

Managed exposure to chemicals e.g., seeds treated with pesticide and fertiliser.

Regular travel (at least weekly) to NIAB sites around Cambridge and at East Malling, frequent (monthly) travel in Great Britain and occasional travel internationally.

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# Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>		
PhD or equivalent professional qualifications or experience in a discipline relevant to plants and agriculture.	x	
Post-graduate degree or equivalent professional qualifications or experience in plant genetics and genomics.		x
<b>Knowledge and skills</b>		
Exceptional verbal and written communication skills with the ability to communicate new and complex information to a broad audience and inspire others.	x	
Exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to work effectively and collaboratively with others. Able to engage with, and influence, a broad range of people.	x	
Commercially astute, able to understand the financial sustainability of the business and the operational mechanisms affecting this.	x	
Excellent organisational skills and ability to plan and prioritise amidst conflicting demands.	x	
Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.	x	
Proven track record in leadership, able to lead, motivate and develop a large team with 10+ members.	x	
<b>Experience</b>		
Extensive experience as an independent researcher, including proven experience of managing a team of 2-5 to deliver a portfolio of project activities in relevant research areas on time and within budget.	x	
Track record of securing high-quality (e.g., UKRI) external competitive funding as Principal Investigator during the last five years.	x	
At least 30 publications in peer-reviewed journals, including at least 10 first-authored and/or last authored publications.	x	
Management of research groups of 5+ individuals and securing grant income to fully support the group.	x	
Experience of research council committees.		x
Experience of committees in national/international learned societies and/or important industry organisations.		x
Decision-making editorial member of reputable peer-reviewed journals.		x
<b>Attributes</b>		
Accuracy and attention to detail.	x	
Evidence of commitment to own and team's personal development with a willingness to learn and teach new skills.	x	
Collaborative and open-minded regarding science.	x	
Innovative with the ability to think strategically and solve complex issues.	x	
<b>Other</b>		
Driving licence or access to independent means of travelling, enabling regular (e.g., at least weekly) travel to NIAB sites around Cambridge and at East Malling and frequent (monthly) travel elsewhere in Great Britain.		x