



Maynooth University Ollscoil Má Nuad

Department of Biology Research Assistant

FamilySleeps; Disruption of Circadian Rhythms in Families
(Specified Purpose)

The Role

Maynooth University is committed to a strategy in which the primary University goals of excellent research and scholarship and outstanding education are interlinked and equally valued.

The Family Genomics Research Group in the Department of Biology, Maynooth University invites applications for a Research Assistant to join our “FamilySleeps” research project, funded by a European Research Council Starting Investigator Award to Dr Lorna Lopez.

FamilySleeps is the first study to investigate circadian rhythms in autism in context of the genetic, environmental and social synchrony of the family. FamilySleeps brings together a team of scientific and clinical researchers, with public patient involvement (PPI) experts, to work on the underlying biological basis of disrupted circadian rhythms in the family context.

The research assistant will join a multidisciplinary research team of geneticists, chronobiologists, psychiatrists, and PPI specialists investigating circadian rhythms in families. The successful candidate will have primary role in the recruitment of families, including families with neurodevelopmental conditions.

The research assistant will be offered career development and training opportunities in clinical recruitment, the genetics of neurodevelopmental conditions, assessment of circadian rhythms, data analysis, scientific writing, project management, IT, all depending on their individual interests and career aspirations. Candidates considering career change or interested in pursuing future research studies will be supported.

Principal Duties

Research, administrative and other duties:

This will include:



- Working under the supervision of principal investigator Dr Lorna M. Lopez with researchers in the Department of Biology and The Kathleen Lonsdale Institute for Human Health Research, Maynooth University and with collaborators in Department of Psychiatry, Trinity College Dublin
- Establishing and maintaining contact with the families throughout their involvement in *FamilySleeps*;
- Communicating information between the families in *FamilySleeps* and the research team;
- Coordinating the collection of biological samples, questionnaire data, sensor data and genetic data over a period of 12 months;
- Contribution to research progress reports and ethics applications;
- Contribution to weekly meetings of the Family Genomics research team;
- Assisting with data analysis;
- Assisting with research reports and publications;
- Actively assisting and contributing to the writing of reports and academic papers for publication;
- Undertaking relevant training and development;
- Carrying out additional duties as may reasonably be required within the general scope and level of the post.

The ideal candidate will have:

Essential:

- An undergraduate degree in a science or health-related discipline;
- Candidates must demonstrate an interest in and commitment to research in the health sciences;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including liaising with collaborators and families;
- Experience of dealing with people in a clinical or clinical research setting or experience in customer service.
- Experience managing large datasets and personal information in line with GDPR;
- Excellent research, analytical and oral and written communication skills to contribute to research outputs including papers and presentation;

Desirable:

- Experience with clinical research recruitment;
- Experience with public patient involvement in research;
- Interest in furthering their knowledge/learning more about genetics, circadian rhythms, and neurodevelopmental processes.

Faculty and Research Institutes

The Faculty of Science and Engineering comprises the Departments of Biology, Computer Science, Chemistry, Experimental Physics, Mathematical Physics, Mathematics and Statistics, Psychology and Electronic Engineering. The University has also developed a number of interdisciplinary Institutes to support excellent research and to build research capacity across disciplines, including the Institute of Immunology and the Kathleen Lonsdale Institute for Human Health Research.

Kathleen Lonsdale Institute for Human Health Research



The Kathleen Lonsdale Institute for Human Health Research at Maynooth University, takes a uniquely integrated approach to address some of the major health problems of today, including obesity and antimicrobial resistance, as well as researching many chronic inflammatory diseases like Crohn's and ulcerative colitis. The primary objective of the institute is to study key determinants of human health from childhood to adulthood, through to old age. Researchers at the institute explore how environmental, psychological, behavioural and biological factors affect health. The Institute consists of 43 research groups featuring over 100 researchers from disciplines such as Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, Computer Science as well researchers from other Maynooth University departments. While most of the groups focus on the biology of diseases and treatment, researchers also examine the various factors across the life course that determines health.

Department

The Department of Biology has a full-time academic staff of 30. It provides teaching in multiple degree programmes to almost 1,100 students, ranging from undergraduate to doctoral level. The Department of Biology offers well-established BSc Honours degree programmes in Biology, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, and Biotechnology and an award-winning taught MSc programme in Immunology and Global Health. It has a strong tradition in PhD education and currently directs a number of structured PhD programmes. The Department of Biology has a strong international reputation in research and has prioritised the following two research themes for strategic development and investment: 1. Immunology and Microbiology, 2. Science underpinning sustainable exploitation of crop plants. Both themes are strongly supported by state-of-the-art approaches and research in Genomics, Proteomics and Chemical Biology.

The University

Maynooth University is a very distinctive university, a collegial institution focused on science and engineering, humanities, and social sciences, and equally committed to research, teaching and community engagement. Located in Ireland's only university town, its distinctive features and character owe much to its unique history and heritage. It provides a high-quality educational experience to over 15,000 students on a campus with 18th century roots and 21st century dynamism.

The strategic trajectory and accomplishments of Maynooth University, in the 25 years since its establishment as an autonomous public university, are exceptional, and a source of great pride to the university community, staff, students and alumni. Maynooth University in 2024 ranked in the top 90 global Times Higher Education (THE) Young University rankings, placing 86th in the world. Maynooth University's growing global reputation is based on the originality, quality, importance and impact of its research and scholarship, commitment to teaching and learning, the quality of academic programmes, and its leadership in widening participation in higher education. The sources of success are the dedication of its staff and the energy and engagement of its students.

Maynooth University is a place of lively contrasts – a modern institution, dynamic, rapidly-growing, research-led and engaged, yet grounded in historic academic strengths and scholarly traditions. With over 15,000 students Maynooth offers a range of programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level in the humanities, science and engineering and social sciences, including business, law and education. The University also offers a range of international programmes and partnerships.

Maynooth's unique collegial culture fosters an interdisciplinary approach to research, which its world-class academics bring to bear in tackling some of the most fundamental challenges facing society today. The University's research institutes and centres consolidate and deliver this impact as vibrant communities of learning, discovery and creation. Research at Maynooth also is very much central to its teaching and the University prides itself on placing equal value on its research and teaching missions.

Maynooth University's Values



Our values define who we are, what we believe in and how we act as a community. They underpin our future success and guide our expectations of ourselves and each other. Our values apply to everyone in the University community:

- Integrity
- Collegiality
- Responsibility
- Freedom of expression
- Ambition

Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028

The University's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028 builds on our rich academic history and strong foundations to set out an ambitious and forward-looking path for the future of our University. This roadmap underscores our commitment to adapt to a changing world while staying true to our values. Our vision is to be a university of excellence, opportunity and impact, having a significant stake in all three. For more information about Maynooth University's future direction, please visit: <https://strategy.maynoothuniversity.ie/>

Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023 - 2028

Tógann Plean Straitéiseach na hOllscoile 2023 - 2028 ar ár stair acadúil shaibhir agus ar ár mbunchlocha láidre chun conair uailmhianach agus cheannródaíoch a leagadh amach do thodhchaí ár nOllscoile. Soiléiríonn an treochlár seo ár dtiomantas do dhul i dtaithe ar dhomhan atá ag síorathrú agus ár ngníomhaíochtaí a chur in oiriúint dó, agus san am céanna a bheith dílis dár luachanna Ollscoile. Is í an fhís atá againn a bheith mar ollscoil feabhais, deiseanna agus tionchair, agus lámh láidir a bheith againn i ngach ceann de na trí ghné seo.

Léigh anseo le haghaidh breis eolais faoi thodhchaí Ollscoil Mhá Nuad: <https://strategy.maynoothuniversity.ie/?lang=ga>

Our Strategic Plan sets out an ambition to be an excellent place to learn and work, and an inclusive community where students and staff can flourish and make a distinctive contribution to the national system of higher education and the public good. Achieving this requires staff to have a strong sense of connection to the University and support from colleagues. We recognise that our people are our greatest resource and actively seeks to attract, develop, and retain a talented workforce by creating a positive and welcoming University environment. As well as offering a competitive salary, access to a public sector pension scheme, and annual leave allowance, the University also provides other facilities and benefits including, but not limited to:

- Family-friendly leave schemes
- Tax Saver travel scheme and Cycle to Work scheme
- On-campus crèche
- On-campus restaurants and coffee shops
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Health and Well-Being programmes
- Education support opportunities
- Continuous Professional Development opportunities, including leadership programmes, mentoring, Aurora programme.
- Study and Exam leave
- Sports facilities and gym



To learn more about being part of the Maynooth University team, please visit our website at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/come-work-with-us>

Selection and Appointment

- Only shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview.
- Appointments will be approved by the President based on the report of the selection board;
- It is anticipated that interviews will be held in October 2025
- The appointment is expected to be effective as soon as possible thereafter.

Equality and Diversity

Maynooth University actively works to ensure equality, celebrate the diversity of our community, and promote inclusion. To learn more about our commitment to Equality and Diversity, please read the Maynooth University [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) / [Polasaí Comhionannais agus Éagsúlachta](#), our policy on the [Employment of People with Disabilities](#), and our [Gender Equality Action Plan 2023-2026](#). We aim to reflect the diversity of the community we serve and welcome applications from all individuals across our society.

Terms and Conditions

Tenure	<p>This is a full time, temporary post for a specified purpose, anticipated to be 8 months duration.</p> <p>Project end date is anticipated to be 31/05/2026.</p>
Location	The place of work is the campus of Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
Salary	<p>Research Assistant Level 1 (2025): €33,292 p.a (1 point)</p> <p>Appointments will be made in accordance with public sector pay provisions.</p>
Hours of work	<p>A 37-hour working week is in operation in respect of full-time positions (pro-rated for part-time positions).</p> <p>This can be reviewed or adjusted from time to time through national agreements.</p>
Annual Leave	<p>Annual leave and public holidays are provided for in the University policy: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/annual-leave-policy</p> <p>Annual leave will be allocated on a pro-rata basis for part-time and temporary positions.</p>
University policies and schemes	<p>Employees of the University will be subject to the terms of the University policies and schemes, available on the University website at:</p> <p>https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies</p> <p>https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies</p>
Pension	<p>This is a pensionable post. Employees of the University will enter into a public sector pension scheme, and as such, applicants must ensure they are eligible to become a member of a public sector pension scheme for the duration of the appointment. Details of the public sector pension schemes are available at: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/pension-information</p>
Eligibility	<p>Applications from non-EEA citizens are welcomed. Applicants should note that eligibility is determined by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Further information regarding eligibility is available at: https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/what-we-do/workplace-and-skills/employment-permits/employment-permit-eligibility/</p> <p>Non-EEA applicants are responsible for ensuring they can secure a visa to travel to Ireland. Any offer of employment is conditional on applicants securing the appropriate employment permissions.</p> <p>Former Irish Public Service employees - Certain Restrictions on Eligibility</p> <p>Eligibility of applicants formerly employed by an Irish Public Sector body, and who availed of an Irish Public Service Redundancy or Incentivised Retirement Scheme under the Schemes below, may be affected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) • Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010) • Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (Circular Letter LG(P) 06/2013) <p>Applicants should ensure that they are eligible to be re-engaged in the Irish Public Service under the terms of such Schemes. Applicants should address queries with their former Irish Public Sector employer.</p>
Garda vetting	Garda vetting or clearance may be required by the University.
Medical	The University may require a medical examination as a condition of employment.

Data Protection Law

Applications to the University will be treated in accordance with the University Data Protection Policies. For information on the University's Data Protection Policies and Privacy Notice, please see our website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection>

Application Procedure

Closing Date:

23:30hrs (local Irish time) on **Tuesday, 7th of October 2025**.

Please note all applications must be made via our **Online Recruitment Portal** at the following link:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/vacancies>

Please apply with your CV and a cover letter.

Applications must be submitted by the closing date and time specified above. Any applications which are still in progress at the closing time on the specified closing date will be cancelled automatically by the system. Late applications will not be accepted.

Maynooth University is an equal opportunities employer

The position is subject to the Statutes of the University

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