

Position Description

Date: September 2026 **Ref:** 2084

Position | Tūranga: Internship - Enabling Microalgae-Bacteria Consortia for Food Production Systems

Responsible to Tō kaiwhakahaere:	Science Team Leader, Gale Brightwell and Senior Scientist, Delphine Rapp
Group Tari:	Smart Foods and Bioproducts
Function Wāhanga:	Smart Foods and Bioproducts
Team Tīma:	Food System Integrity
Location Wāhi:	Palmerston North
Employment Type Momo Mahi:	Fixed Term – 12 weeks
Korn Ferry Grade Taumata Korn Ferry:	12

Organisational context

The Bioeconomy Science Institute Maiangi Taiao is New Zealand's newest public research organisation, formed through the merger of AgResearch, Plant & Food Research, Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, Scion, and the New Zealand Food Innovation Network. Our purpose is to drive innovation and commercial outcomes in the bioeconomy, using research and technology to support enduring economic growth and resilience, a healthy environment and beneficial social outcomes for New Zealand. We pursue opportunities to lift innovation, commercial outcomes, and adoption of advanced technology to drive economic growth across New Zealand. Through world-leading science, we drive innovation across agriculture, horticulture, forestry, aquaculture, biotechnology, and manufacturing. We protect and enhance ecosystems, strengthen biosecurity and climate resilience, and develop cutting-edge bio-based products and technologies.

We honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi and embed te ao Māori throughout our transformation journey. As we come together, we are committed to learning and growing together through inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsiveness ways of working. All roles contribute, in ways relevant to their work, to giving effect to our Te Tiriti commitments through partnership, participation, protection and equity.

Role purpose | Te Take o te Tūranga

Contribute to research investigating the co-culture of microalgae and lactic acid bacteria to support the development of innovative food production systems. Working alongside experienced researchers, the intern will undertake laboratory-based cultivation, biomass preparation, microbial analysis, and data collection activities to help improve the yield and quality of fermentation products for novel food applications. This role provides an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in microbiology, biotechnology, and food systems research within a professional scientific environment.

Accountabilities | Ngā whakaritenga

- Carry out laboratory-scale cultivation of bacterial and microalgal strains, including media preparation, inoculation, monitoring growth conditions, and maintaining accurate experimental records
- Prepare, harvest, and process co-culture biomass, undertaking microbial enumeration and lipid concentration assays to evaluate experimental outcomes.
- Assist with troubleshooting experimental challenges and contribute to the development and optimisation of laboratory protocols and methodologies.
- Analyse experimental data, prepare reports and presentations, and support project activities such as consumables management and collaboration with research partners.

About you | Ō Pūmanawa

We are seeking a motivated student who:

- Is currently studying towards a tertiary qualification in biotechnology, microbiology, food science, biochemistry, biological sciences, or a related discipline.
- Has an interest in microbiology, fermentation, food systems, and applied laboratory research.
- Demonstrates strong attention to detail, analytical skills, and the ability to accurately collect, record, and interpret scientific data.
- Is a proactive team player with strong communication skills, a willingness to learn, and a commitment to working safely in a laboratory environment.

Information And Records Management | Te Whakahaere | Ngā Mōhiotanga Me Ngā Putu Raraunga

- Ensure that information and records are maintained, created, and disposed of in compliance with relevant statutory, regulatory, and Institute policy requirements, documenting business transactions and activities securely and following established policies and procedures.

Health, Safety, And Wellbeing | Hauora, Haumaru Me Te Oranga

- Contribute to a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture by taking reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others; complying with legislative requirements, organisational policies and standard operating procedures; reporting hazards, incidents, near misses, and safety observations; and promoting psychological wellbeing through open communication and the early recognition of stress, fatigue, and mental health concerns.

Organisational objectives | Ngā Whāinga Tōpūtanga Katoa

- Actively develops and applies the cultural capability relevant to their role and contributes to giving effect to the organisation's Te Tiriti o Waitangi Framework
- Ensures that all information created or received during your work is managed as per the Institute's Information Management policy. This includes naming, storing, classifying, and ensuring it is available to other employees.

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- Actively participates in the Bioeconomy Science Institute Maiangi Taiao performance process, including setting objectives and having a robust development plan. Proactively and constructively contributes to performance conversations and personal development.
 - Takes responsibility to understand and apply Institute policy, processes, systems, and procedures daily.
 - Commits to accurate and timely information sharing and recordkeeping as per set organisational standards.
 - The accountabilities set out above are not exhaustive. Therefore, it may be necessary for you to undertake other reasonable accountabilities as required, which are within your abilities.