

PhD Position in Avian Virology

A PhD position is available commencing January or May 2020 in the laboratory of Dr. Leonardo Susta, Department of Pathobiology, at the University of Guelph. The project focuses on determining the pathogenesis of avian bornaviruses, specifically *aquatic bird bornavirus* (ABBV-1) or *parrot bornavirus* (PaBV) in avian species. The project offers the opportunity to: 1) Investigate the susceptibility of different waterfowl and gallinaceous species to infection, and to develop an animal model to study ABBV-1 or PaBV pathogenesis, 2) Evaluate what variables influence susceptibility to infection, such as route of inoculation, age, or immune status, 3) Develop a recombinant vaccine for ABBV-1 or PaBV.

Avian bornaviruses (ABVs) are emerging pathogens that have been recently detected in an increasing number of avian species. Given the broad host range of ABVs, transmission and establishment of these viruses in poultry species is a possible threat. Assessing the host restriction and pathogenesis of ABVs for poultry species is essential to identify and prioritize the threat that these viruses may pose to the poultry industry.

The program will offer the candidate opportunities to become familiar with classic and molecular virology, pathogenesis animal experiments, histopathology, RT-qPCR, and vaccination studies. The ideal candidate will be a motivated and ambitious team member, with a strong interest for viral pathogenesis and molecular virology, and will be joining a growing lab with two research assistant, one DVSc and one PhD student working on avian diseases. Selection of the successful candidate is based on a combination of academic criteria, relevant interest and experience, referees' evaluations, and an assessment of the candidate's career goals and motivation. Previous experience with pathogenesis animal experiments, cloning, or RT-qPCR is preferred.

Stipend for the student depends on successful adjudication of scholarships. Funding can be obtained through the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC scholarships / fellowships), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS), and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) HQP scholarship, among others. Please contact Jessie Beer (contact information below) for details.

Review of applications will begin immediately, and continue until the position is filled.

Additional information regarding admission requirements and the application process can be found at: <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca>

Further inquiries can be directed to Mrs. Jessie Beer, Graduate Program Assistant, OVC Graduate Program Services, Stewart Building, Population Medicine, Room 2509, 519-824-4120 Ext. 54725; e-mail (pathgrad@uoguelph.ca).

Research inquiries should be directed to Dr. Leonardo Susta (lsusta@uoguelph.ca).