Master of Science (MSc) by Research Studentship in the Functional genomics of ankylosing spondylitis

**Supervisors:** Professor Julian Knight and Professor Paul Bowness, University of Oxford; Professor Matt Brown, Queensland University of Technology

**Funded by:** Arthritis Research UK

**Project duration:** 2 years

**Scientific summary:** Applications are invited for a funded research studentship to undertake a Master of Science (MSc) by Research in the Functional Genomics of Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) at the University of Oxford, with the research to be conducted over two years in Australia and the UK.

We seek a highly motivated, proactive individual who will benefit from an exceptional research opportunity. For the first year, you will be based in Professor Matt Brown’s lab at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane Australia (http://staff.qut.edu.au/staff/brownm20/) with the second year at the University of Oxford working under the supervision of Professor Julian Knight (http://www.well.ox.ac.uk/julian-knight-group) and Professor Paul Bowness (https://www.ndorms.ox.ac.uk/team/paul-bowness). You will carry out research to generate a body of work to submit for a Masters by Research. This will require you to undertake laboratory work investigating the functional genomics of ankylosing spondylitis and the impact of genetic variation together with bioinformatic analysis. The research builds on the success of recent genome-wide association studies of this disease (IGAS Consortium 2013 *Nature Genetics* 45, 730-738), approaches to resolve regulatory variants modulating immune function (Fairfax et al 2014 *Science* 343: 1246949), and improved understanding of the immunological basis of disease and potential therapy (Hammittsch 2015 *PNAS* 112, 10768-73). We aim to fine-map disease associations and establish function for associated genetic variants in a disease context. We propose to characterise the functional alleles driving differences between patients and controls, their mechanism of action and biological consequences in terms of gene regulation, cellular function and disease, helping to enable novel therapeutic insights. You will work as part of a team and be expected to manage your time effectively, prioritising your workload and keep detailed, accurate and comprehensible records of your work. You will be expected to produce work of a high quality, to participate in laboratory meetings and in public engagement activities.

**Person specification:** Applications are invited from candidates who hold or expect to obtain a First or Upper Second Class Honours Degree in genetics, biochemistry, molecular biology or related field.

**Value of the award:** The studentship covers the full cost of UK/EU tuition fees for the MSc at the University of Oxford. There is a generous stipend of £14,553 per annum, which is tax-free.

**Application process:** If you consider that you meet the person specification please email your application to Sibel Ruc, HR Officer at sibel.ruc@well.ox.ac.uk. Your application should consist of an up to date CV and supporting statement, which describes why in your opinion you would be the best candidate for the Masters by Research Studentship. You should also provide full details of two referees and indicate whether they can be contacted at this stage.

**Closing date:** Applications are to be received by 12:00, noon on Wednesday 11th October 2017.