

Position Title: Lab Manager / Aquatic Specialist (Zebrafish) – Res Professional II

Location: University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Position Type: Full-time

Open Lab Manager position for a newly established zebrafish lab

The newly established Sur lab at the University of Arizona is seeking a highly motivated Lab Manager with aquaculture experience or zebrafish husbandry experience to play a central role in building and shaping a brand-new zebrafish research facility, starting Summer 2026. The Sur Lab studies the function and communication networks of a newly discovered gut cell type called *best4+* cells, potentially altered in inflammatory bowel disease and colorectal cancer, and absent from mouse models. This is a unique opportunity for an aquatic specialist to help define facility practices, implement systems, and establish standards while working in a collaborative and fast-growing research environment.

The successful candidate will be supported by laboratory start-up funds and will serve as the primary zebrafish-focused technical expert within the lab. This role combines hands-on aquatic facility oversight with active participation in research and general lab management.

Responsibilities will include overseeing our newly renovated 350 sq ft, 3 double sided rack system and a 2 stand-alone rack quarantine system aquaculture facility, one of the first in Arizona. Responsibilities would encompass breeding and rearing of zebrafish, including genotyping and phenotyping; and assisting with experiments investigating the genetic regulation of zebrafish development, particularly the formation of the intestinal and liver cell types. The lab manager is expected to spend 30% time and effort towards zebrafish husbandry, 50% towards supporting the research ongoing in the lab and contributing to projects, and 20% toward lab management.

This position offers the opportunity to develop expertise across molecular genetics, confocal microscopy, embryo microinjection, quantitative imaging, single-cell genomics, optogenetics, and zebrafish husbandry. We are seeking curious, motivated minds who are excited to engage with primary literature, master new techniques, and contribute to discovery-driven research.

Key Responsibilities

Zebrafish Facility & Aquatic Care (30%)

- Oversee zebrafish husbandry operations in a newly established zebrafish facility
- Perform routine animal care and handling across life stages
- Monitor fish health and report concerns in coordination with veterinary staff and facility personnel
- Perform tagging, sperm cryopreservation, injections, and assist with stock management and breeding setup.
- Maintaining live small-scale rotifer and/or artemia cultures and perform one live feeding to zebrafish tanks per day.
- Responsible for all activities required for the proper care and maintenance of the animals, including routine animal husbandry.
- Receive, examine, transfer, identify, and properly house incoming zebrafish shipments according to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Help establish and refine best practices, workflows, and organizational systems for the lab's aquatic operations
- Contribute to building a sustainable, well-organized zebrafish program as it grows.

Lab Management: (20%)

- Coordinate ordering and inventory management
- Organize laboratory spaces and help maintain operational efficiency
- Assist with lab cleanups and maintaining shared equipment areas
- Help onboard new students and trainees in basic zebrafish handling practice.
- Maintaining laboratory supplies and equipment.
- Ensure compliance with safety protocols as outlined by the university.

Research Support (50%)

In addition to aquatic facility oversight, the Lab Manager will contribute directly to the laboratory's research program by assisting with experimental workflows and technical development in zebrafish biology and molecular genetics.

Research responsibilities may include:

- Assisting with zebrafish experimental procedures including embryo microinjection, transgenesis workflows, dissections, and transplantation assays
- Performing molecular and genetic analyses such as DNA extraction, PCR-based genotyping, and mutant screening
- Supporting imaging-based experiments including confocal microscopy preparation and quantitative phenotyping
- Conducting molecular and cellular assays such as in situ hybridization (including HCR), immunostaining, and
- Assisting in the development, optimization, and documentation of experimental protocols
- Supporting data organization and maintaining accurate research records
- Collaborating with students and trainees to facilitate experimental workflows and ensure reproducibility of techniques

These activities provide opportunities to contribute to ongoing research projects focused on developmental biology, intestinal physiology, and emerging cell types in zebrafish.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's or advanced degree in Biology, Aquaculture, Biomedical Sciences, or a related discipline.
- Prior experience in aquatic animal husbandry, facility management, and transgenic line creation for zebrafish, or other models.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Knowledge of regulatory standards and compliance requirements for aquatic animal research.
- A collaborative mindset with the ability to work effectively across multidisciplinary teams while also operating independently.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills to effectively engage with researchers, staff, and stakeholders.

What we provide

- A competitive compensation package, with comprehensive health and welfare benefits.
- An opportunity to broaden research experience in a collaborative environment.
- A team that believes in continuous learning and cultivates an environment of collaboration.

- Professional development opportunities through internal and external conferences and workshops.

Why This Role Is Unique

- Opportunity to help shape a brand-new zebrafish research environment from the beginning
- Significant autonomy to develop workflows and organizational structure
- Broad technical exposure spanning aquatic husbandry, molecular biology, genomics, and emerging model systems
- Direct role in supporting the launch and growth of a new research program

This position is ideal for an aquatic specialist who enjoys both hands-on animal care and active involvement in research, and who is excited by the prospect of building something new and impactful. The job involves frequent communication with members of both zebrafish laboratories and the University of Arizona Facilities/Maintenance staff.

Salary: To be determined in consultation with University of Arizona HR, commensurate with experience.

Compensation and Benefits:

Outstanding U of A benefits include health, dental, and vision insurance plans; life insurance and disability programs; paid vacation, sick leave, and holidays; U of A/ASU/NAU tuition reduction for the employee and qualified family members; retirement plans; access to U of A recreation and cultural activities; and more!

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To Apply:

Go to: <https://arizona.csod.com/ux/ats/careersite/4/home/requisition/25502?c=arizona>

- Be prepared to upload a Resume, and
- Cover Letter — The cover letter should include a brief summary of the applicant's interests and experience relevant to this position (maximum of 10 lines).