

<b><u>Information on Postgraduate Research Scholarship - VCS-FES-03-22</u></b>			
<b>Faculty:</b>	Faculty of Engineering and Science	<b>Department:</b>	School of Science
<b>Lead Supervisor:</b>	Prof. Saak V. Ovsepien		
<b>Project Title:</b>	Neurobiological Mechanisms and Functional Correlates of Postpartum Depression		
<b>Project Description:</b>	<p><b>Project description</b> Pregnancy entails changes in fundamental biological processes in women, facilitating fetal development and delivery. Despite well recognized psychoactive effects of pregnancy hormones, little is known about how their parturition-related changes impact maternal mental health. Hormone replacement studies suggest psycho-stabilizing effects of gonad hormones, with their decline after parturition linked to postpartum depression. This VC Scholarship seeks to investigate the neurobiological mechanisms of postpartum depression to determine molecular and functional correlates using electrophysiological recordings, cellular imaging, and molecular biology in neuronal cultures and brain organoids. It seeks to determine the impact of parturition-related hormonal changes on synaptic transmission and plasticity, which might contribute to postpartum blues and depression. This is a collaborative project involving basic, translational and clinical neuroscience research, to improve understanding of postpartum depression and facilitate its diagnosis and therapeutic interventions.</p> <p><b>The candidate</b> The applicant should have a strong interest in the neurobiology of mental health and diseases with work experience in light microscopy, electrophysiology, molecular biology and tissue culture. The VC Scholar will be supervised by Prof. Saak V. Ovsepien and work with a team of researchers and students.</p> <p><b>The laboratory</b> The research will be carried out within the School of Science, with access to hybrid imaging - electrophysiology setup, fluorescence confocal imaging laboratories, molecular biology facilities and tissue culture suit.</p>		
<b>Duration:</b>	3 years, Full-Time Study		
<p><b>Bursary available (subject to satisfactory performance):</b> Year 1: £17,668 (FT) or pro-rata (PT) Year 2: In line with UKRI rate Year 3: In line with UKRI rate</p> <p>In addition, the successful candidate will receive a contribution to tuition fees equivalent to the university's Home rate, currently £4,596 (FT) or pro-rata (PT), for the duration of their scholarship. International applicants will need to pay the remainder tuition fee for the duration of their scholarship.</p> <p>This fee is subject to an annual increase.</p>			

<b>Person Specification of Essential (E) or Desirable (D) requirements:</b>
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<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>E or D</b>
<b>Education and Training:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Class or 2<sup>nd</sup> class, First Division (Upper Second Class) honours degree or a taught MSc with a minimum average of 60% in all areas of assessment (UK or UK equivalent) in neuroscience, molecular biology and biotechnology</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For those whose first language is not English and/or if from a country where English is not the main spoken language (as recognised by the UKBA), a language proficiency score of at least IELTS 6.5 (in all elements of the test) or an equivalent UK VISA and Immigration secure English Language Test is required. Unless the degree above was taught in English <b>and</b> obtained in a English-speaking country, e.g. UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, etc, as recognised by the UKBA.</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<b>Experience &amp; Skills:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience in undertaking neuroscience – cell biology research (e.g. undergraduate or taught master’s dissertation) is essential.</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background in neuroscience, molecular imaging, electrophysiology, and/or general biology.</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in neuronal physiology, neurobiology of mental health and brain disorders, and biomarkers.</li> </ul>	<b>D</b>
<b>Personal Attributes:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the nature of scientific research, personal discipline/motivation, ambition and can-do attitude, diligence, punctuality and ability to work as a part of a team.</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to, under guidance, complete independent work successfully</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This scholarship may require Academic Technology Approval for the successful candidate if from outside of the EU/EEA</li> </ul>	<b>E</b>
<b>Closing date for applications:</b>	<b>midnight UTC on 31/10/2022</b>
<b>For further information contact:</b>	<b>s.v.ovsepian@gre.ac.uk</b>

**Making an application:**

**Before submitting your application, you are encouraged to liaise with Prof. Saak V. Ovsepián on the details above (s.v.ovsepián@gre.ac.uk)**

Please read this information before making an application. Information on the application process is available at: <https://www.gre.ac.uk/research/study/apply/application-process>. Applications need to be made online via this link. **No other form of application will be considered.**

All applications **must include** the following information to be considered.

- **Scholarship Reference Number (VCS-FES-03-22)**– included in the personal statement section together with your personal statement as to why you are applying for this Scholarship
- **a CV including 2 referees and phone number \***
- **academic qualification certificates/transcripts and IELTS/English Language certificate if you are an international applicant or if English is not your first language or you are from a country where English is not the majority spoken language as defined by the UK Border Agency \***

*\*upload to the qualification section of the application form. Attachments must be a PDF format.*