The Newton-Abraham Visiting Professorship in the Biological, Chemical and Medical Sciences, in association with Lincoln College

The Newton-Abraham Visiting Professorship is an exciting opportunity for a highly distinguished researcher working in the medical, biological or chemical sciences or a related interdisciplinary area to spend up to 12 months in Oxford. In addition to following a programme of collaborative research, the Professor's role involves stimulating interest in and research within their field, and engagement with the wider research community at Oxford and beyond, including delivery of the prestigious Newton-Abraham Lecture. The Professor receives a salary of £82,084 per annum (at current rates) plus personal travel expenses, and will be provided with family accommodation, free of rent and local taxes. The Visiting Professor will be a Professorial Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.

A Brief History of the Professorship

The noted biochemist Sir Edward Penley Abraham worked in the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology at Oxford, where, with Ernest Chain and Howard Florey, he investigated the therapeutic potential of penicillin and played an important role in purifying it and decoding its chemical structure. E.P. Abraham subsequently worked with Guy Newton in the discovery of the antibiotic cephalosporin. The patent income from the antibiotic enabled the establishment of several charitable trusts for the support of biomedical research, including the E.P. Abraham Research Fund. The Newton Abraham Visiting Professorship was established in 1980, with a donation from the E.P. Abraham Research Fund.



The Sir William Dunn School of Pathology
(Image from www.path.ox.ac.uk/)



Arthur J. Birch
(image from rsc.anu.edu.au)

The first Newton-Abraham Visiting Professor was Professor Arthur J. Birch, FRS, then Foundation Professor of Organic Chemistry at the Australian National University in Canberra, where he had founded the Research School of Chemistry and acted as Dean for many years. He is best known for his development of the 'Birch reduction', which subsequently enabled the commercial synthesis of oral contraceptives.

The second Newton-Abraham Visiting Professor, Konrad E. Bloch of Harvard University, is the first of four Nobel Laureates to have held the Professorship. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology in 1964 jointly with Feodor Lynen for their research on the metabolism of cholesterol and fatty acids.



Konrad E. Bloch (image from www.asbmb.org)

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James Watson
(image from www.clarealumni.com)

James Watson held the Professorship for 1992-93. With Francis Crick and Maurice Wilkins, Watson was awarded the 1962 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology *"for their discoveries concerning the molecular structure of nucleic acids and its significance for information transfer in living material"*. At the time of his tenure of the Newton-Abraham Visiting Professorship he was Director of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Jean-Marie Lehn, from the Collège de France and the University of Strasbourg, held the Professorship in 1999-2000. He received the Nobel Prize in 1987 in Chemistry together with Donald Cram and Charles Pedersen "*for their development and use of molecules with structure-specific interactions of high selectivity*". He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Oxford in June 2014.



Jean-Marie Lehn (image from http://cdfa-nanohybrid.u-strasbg.fr/spip.php?article22)



Professor Richard R. Schrock (Frederick G. Keyes Professor of Chemistry at MIT) held the Professorship during 2012-13. He was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2005 with Yves Chauvin and Robert H. Grubbs for their development of the metathesis method, an organic synthesis reaction now widely used in the production of pharmaceuticals, synthetic fibres and fuels.

Richard Schrock (image from web.mit.edu/chemistry /www/faculty/ schrock.html)

A full list of Newton Abraham Visiting Professors is annexed.

The Duties of the Newton-Abraham Visiting Professor

Research and research leadership
The Newton-Abraham Visiting Professor is expected to pursue a research programme (of a collaborative and ideally inter- or multi-disciplinary nature) during their period in Oxford, and to stimulate and promote research in a subject within the field of the medical, biological and chemical sciences. The Professor will be expected to discuss their programme at Oxford with the Head of the relevant Department in advance of arrival.

The Professor will normally organize a small conference, symposium, public lecture by another prominent scientific figure, or similar event during their tenure. Funds are available to support this. Research funding may also be provided, when not available from other sources, to support the Professor's research and other associated activity.

Teaching
The Professor is not required to teach a dedicated graduate or undergraduate course during their tenure. However it is expected that the Professor will actively engage with the student body, and will offer some lectures or classes at graduate and/or undergraduate level as agreed with the Head of the host Department.

Other duties
The Professor is required to give a public lecture (the Newton-Abraham Lecture) on a topic of their own choosing. This lecture is followed by a reception and dinner with the Newton-Abraham Electors and the Professor's invited guests.

The Professor is expected to be based in Oxford for the duration of the professorship, and to make appropriate arrangements with their home institution to enable this. The professorship has traditionally been held for 12 months, though a shorter tenure may be arranged.

Professorial Fellowship at Lincoln College

The Professorship has a strong association with Lincoln College, where E.P. Abraham held a Professorial Fellowship until his retirement in 1980. Located in the heart of Oxford, Lincoln is a compact and friendly college, with a strong commitment to both teaching and research, excellent cultural and sporting facilities and a famously good kitchen. A Professorial Fellowship at Lincoln College is attached to the Visiting Professorship. This fellowship is without stipend, but carries full rights of a senior member of the college, including the right to dine communally (without charge) in the college, and membership of the Senior Common Room.


Lincoln College
(Image from theoxfordfresher.blogspot.com)

Further information about Lincoln College is available at http://www.linc.ox.ac.uk/.

Salary

The salary of the Professor (at current rates) is £82,084 per annum. Any Newton-Abraham Professor visiting for less than 1 year would be paid on a pro-rata basis. Reasonable travel expenses will be paid by the University for one round trip for the Professor and their partner and any children under 18 accompanying them to Oxford for the period of tenure.

Accommodation

The Professor is provided with a three-bedroomed detached house (with a study that can be converted to a fourth temporary bedroom) at 13A Norham Gardens. Norham Gardens is a quiet residential road in an excellent location adjacent to the University Parks and the science area, and within walking distance of the city centre, Lincoln College and local schools.



Norham Gardens (Image from www.education.ox.ac.uk)



13A Norham Gardens (photo by C. McKiernan)

The house was specially built for the Newton Abraham Professor by the Abraham Trustees and is maintained by the Bursar of Lincoln College. The bathroom and kitchen have since been refurbished. The house is very comfortable and fully furnished, and has bed linen, table linen, cutlery, crockery and kitchen utensils.

The house and contents are provided free of rent, local taxes and water rates; however the Professor will need to meet the costs of heating, lighting, telephone and all other normal expenses.

[Please note that if the period of tenure is substantially shorter than 12 months, the property may not be available for the professor's use]

Research Support

If no alternative sources of funding can be found, additional funding may be made available for research support, research expenses, or other activity associated with the professorship (such as short research visits for graduate students or post-doctoral fellows in close connection with the Professor's research project). A case setting out the need for such support and the anticipated costs would need to be made by the Professor, with the support of the Head of Department, and submitted to the Board of Electors for consideration. In the case of funds for equipment purchases, the Electors would need to consider what the equipment would be used for once the Professor left Oxford.

The Nomination Procedure

Appointments to the Newton Abraham Visiting Professorship are made by the Board of Electors. An approach by a Department to enquire about interest in the post carries no guarantee of successful appointment to the Visiting Professorship.

Should you agree for your name to be nominated by an eligible department, you will be asked to provide the following:

- a full CV including publication list
- a proposed plan of work indicating how you would interact with colleagues in your host department and the wider research community at Oxford
- the names and contact details of 3 referees who would be willing to support your application (references will only be sought if you are offered the post)
- an indication of your availability to take up the professorship during the academic years 2026-27 or 2027-28. Each period of tenure normally runs from 1 October to 30 September. The professorship has not yet been filled for 2026-27 so the electors intend to make an appointment for the remainder of that academic year, commencing as soon as is mutually convenient (e.g. subject to obtaining a visa if required). Ideally you should be available to come to Oxford for at least 6 months, but a shorter period of tenure, or multiple shorter visits within one academic year, may be considered for an exceptional candidate.

The department will then add a supporting letter of nomination outlining how your planned activities would benefit the department and the wider scientific community at Oxford.

Annexe: Newton Abraham Visiting Professors

Date	Professor	Institution	Oxford Department
1980	Arthur Birch	ANU	Organic Chemistry
1981	Konrad Bloch*	Harvard	Biochemistry
1982	Frank Gibson	ANU	Biochemistry
1983	Jeremy Knowles	Harvard	Pathology
1984	S. Jonathan Singer	UCLA	Biochemistry
1985	S. Murray Sherman	State University of New York	Human Anatomy
1986	R. Stephen Berry	Chicago	Physical Chemistry
1987	Zanvil Cohn	Rockefeller, New York	Pathology
1988	Tadao Tomita	Nagoya	Pharmacology
1989	Anders Björklund	Lund	Pharmacology
1990	Jack Strominger	Harvard	Clinical Medicine
1991	Edgar Haber	Harvard	Pharmacology
1993	James Watson*	Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory	Biochemistry
1993	Hans Winkler	Innsbruck	Pharmacology
1994	Theodore Friedmann	UCSD	Institute of Molecular Medicine
1995	Arthur Brown	Baylor College of Medicine	Physiology
1996	Beat Gähwiler	Zürich	Physiology
1997	Richard Dickerson	UCLA	Molecular Biophysics
1998	Ira Mellman	Yale	Pathology
1999	Jean-Marie Lehn*	Paris & Strasbourg	Dyson Perrins Laboratory
1999	Stuart Rice	Chicago	Physical & Theoretical Chemistry
2000	Mark Davis	Stanford	Molecular & Genetic Medicine
2001	Russell Lande	Oregon	Zoology
2002	Mark Greene	Pennsylvania	Pathology
2003	James Putney	US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences	Physiology
2004	Andrew Wright	Tufts Medical School, Boston	Paediatrics

2005	R. Alan Ezekowitz	Harvard Medical School/ Massachusetts General Hospital	Pathology
2006/2007	Peter Cresswell	Yale	Pathology
2010	A. Green	Cambridge	Sir William Dunn School of Pathology
2011	Andrew Holmes	Melbourne	Chemistry
2012	Dan Littman	Howard Hughes Medical Institute/ New York University	Sir William Dunn School of Pathology
2012	Richard Schrock*	MIT	Chemistry
2013	Christopher Miller	Brandeis	Physiology Anatomy & Genetics
2013	Piero Olliaro	World Health Organisation	Tropical Medicine
2014	Mary Carrington	Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc	Clinical Medicine
2015	Jacob Boomsma	Copenhagen	Zoology
2016	Tadgh Begley	Texas A & M	Chemistry
2017	Stephen Long	Urbana-Champaign, Illinois	Plant Sciences
2018	Paul Bottomley	Johns Hopkins	Cardiovascular Medicine
2018	Donald Bers	UC Davis	Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics
2019	Alan Garfinkel	UCLA	Computer Science
2020	vacant		
2021	Peter Seeberger	Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces, Potsdam and the Freie Universität, Berlin	Chemistry
2022	Massimo Loda	Weill Cornell	Surgical Sciences
2023	Johannes van den Anker	George Washington University and Children's National Medical Center	Paediatrics
2024	Paul Kubes	Queen's University, Calgary	Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology
2025	Hiroaki Suga	Tokyo	Chemistry

*Nobel Prize winner