

# Life sciences hiring booms with vacancies for R&D professionals fuelling demand

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Thursday, 22 July 2021

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- Demand for R&D specialists 63% up on 2020's total
- Mid-level associates and managers in highest demand across the UK
- AstraZeneca continues to lead life sciences recruitment

Professional scientific vacancies within the UK's life sciences industry are continuing at record pace with firms posting 1,200 roles in May. Much of this growth can be attributed to hiring within contract research organisations (CROs), with 2514 vacancies recorded this year representing 74.7% of 2020's hiring total. That's according to new research from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo), the trade association for the recruitment sector.

Demand for R&D specialists 63% up on 2020's total

According to the data, provided by business intelligence specialist Vacancysoft, with CROs experiencing the fastest growth, it's perhaps unsurprising that the share of clinical scientist vacancies rose the most of all industry specialisms, up 2.4 percentage points in the first five months of 2021. However, R&D remains the dominant specialism within the UK life sciences arena, with firms publishing over 1,900 roles – representing 68.3% of last year's total hiring for these professionals.

Mid-level associates and managers in highest demand across the UK

When looking at seniority, APSCo's data reveals that over half of total scientific vacancies within the life sciences arena are for mid-level associates and managers. Their share of overall vacancies rose by two percentage points to 54% when compared to last year. Director level positions, meanwhile, have been the slowest to recover at only 41.4% of 2020's total.

With demand for the AstraZeneca Covid vaccine continuing as the UK pushes to have adults vaccinated by Freedom Day, it is perhaps no surprise that it is the leading firm for professional hiring in the UK, recording 468 vacancies so far this year.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo comments:

“With the spotlight firmly placed on the life sciences sector as the UK raced to develop a vaccination last year, it comes as no surprise that the arena is experiencing remarkable growth – particularly in

the research and development field. And as the newly earmarked Freedom Day fast approaches, with the Government racing to get two-thirds of all adults double vaccinated by this point, it is clear to see why AstraZeneca leads the companies hiring once again. As we approach the second half of the year and the UK continues to slowly emerge from the pandemic, we have no doubt that the life sciences industry -which has played such a huge part in the fight against the virus - will continue on its remarkable growth trajectory.”

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