

Research Assistant Expectations

Last updated: July 2025

As a Research Assistant (RA) in the Wan Lab, your role is essential to supporting the daily operations and organization of our research environment. Below are the expectations for your conduct, responsibilities, and performance during your time in the lab:

- You are expected to be **responsible** and complete all assigned tasks in a **timely and reliable** manner.
- You should be **present and focused** during your scheduled shift (typically 4 hours/week), dedicating the full time to **lab-related tasks without distractions**.
- If you are unable to come in due to exams or personal reasons, and you can foresee the conflict, please notify Dr. Wan **at least two weeks in advance via email**.
- Make the most of your time in the lab by working **efficiently and productively**.
- Come **prepared** to begin your tasks at the start of your shift, and **track your progress** throughout.
- This is primarily an **operational and administrative support position**, not a research-intensive role. Your main responsibilities may include:
 - Lab organization, labeling, and maintenance
 - Equipment setup and relocation
 - Tracking inventory and assisting with orders and pricing
 - Cleaning shared spaces and equipment
 - Video editing for experimental documentation
 - Updating the lab website and handling reimbursement paperwork
 - Occasional simple lab tasks (e.g., preparing media or buffer aliquots)
- If you are interested in pursuing more research-focused work, a separate Research Trainee position will be posted soon.
- You are expected to be a **quick learner** and work **independently** once properly trained. Initially, I will work with you to go through various tasks. For any complex or multi-step task, it is important to **keep written notes or protocols** to help you (or others) repeat the task accurately in the future.
- Please **ask questions** when uncertain—being proactive and seeking clarity is encouraged, especially about assigned tasks.

- Some tasks may be **repetitive or tedious**—your **patience and professionalism** are appreciated.
- If you make a mistake, try to resolve it on your own first. If you're unable to fix it, come to me so we can solve the problem together as soon as possible. **It's okay to make mistakes—never pretend they didn't happen.**
- There are usually **multiple assigned tasks**, and sometimes they will be assigned sequentially. Once you finish a task, **please check in with me to confirm your next assignment.**
- As long as you finish all assigned tasks with **high quality**, you may leave early and still be paid for the full 4-hour shift.
- A **positive, can-do attitude** and **respect for your teammates and lab space** are essential.
- This is a **temporary position**, and the end date will be communicated with **at least 1–2 weeks' notice.**
- Your continued employment is subject to your **performance** and the **lab's needs**. Raises may be considered based on demonstrated **responsibility, efficiency, and reliability.**
- There will be a **sign-in notebook** to record your working hours. **Please remember to sign in each time** you work, as this is important for accurate time tracking and salary processing.

Common expectations for all lab members

- Always follow our lab values and lab handbook.
- Represent the lab with pride and show respect for others. You are now an ambassador for the lab as well as a member. How you interact with our colleagues will shape our reputation.
- Maintain and treat all lab equipment and lab space with care; if we are running low on a necessary supply, if software licenses are set to expire, if computers need updating, etc., alert me or the one who is responsible for lab ordering/management.
- Share your expertise, experience, and materials with others in the lab. There are significant rewards for being generous with your time and knowledge.