

PhD studentship (Full-time)

Institution	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China
School	School of Science
Supervisors	Principal supervisor: Dr. Weiwei Dai (XJTLU) Co-supervisor: Professor Zhiliang Lu (XJTLU) Co-supervisor: Professor Michael Schmid (UoL) Co-supervisor: Dr. Hejia Qiu (XJTLU)
Application Deadline	Open until the position is filled
Funding Availability	Funded PhD project (world-wide students)
Project Title	Investigating the Novel Roles and Molecular Mechanisms of Hepatic Glutamine Synthetase in Suppressing Liver Tumor Progression
Contact	Please email Weiwei.Dai@xjtlu.edu.cn with a subject line of the PhD project title. The principal supervisor's profile is linked here: https://scholar.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/persons/WeiweiDai https://connect.xjtlu.edu.cn/group/dai-lab-bio-department

Requirements:

A Master's degree with Merit and a Bachelor's degree with first-class or upper second-class honors are required for PhD admissions. Exceptional candidates holding only a Bachelor's degree may be considered on an individual basis in certain disciplines. Previous research experience or publications related to cancer metabolism and/or immunology are preferred, though not required.

Evidence of good spoken and written English is essential. The candidate should have an IELTS (or equivalent) score of 6.5 or above, if the first language is not English. This position is open to all qualified candidates irrespective of nationality.

Degree:

The student will be awarded a PhD degree from the University of Liverpool (UK) upon successful completion of the program.

Funding:

The PhD studentship is available for three years subject to satisfactory progress by the student. The award covers tuition fees for three years (currently equivalent to RMB 99,000 per annum). It also provides up to RMB 16,500 to allow participation at international conferences during the period of the award. The scholarship holders are expected to conduct the majority of their

research at XJTLU in Suzhou, China. However, they may apply for a short-term research visit to the University of Liverpool if the project requires it.

Project Description:

We recently demonstrated that liver-specific glutamine synthetase (GS) knockout promotes liver tumor growth in β -catenin-mutated liver cancer models by promoting nonessential amino acid synthesis and stimulating mTORC1 activation. We plan to further: 1) investigate the regulatory mechanisms of GS regulation in liver tumor microenvironment (TME); 2) explore whether the tumor suppressor role of hepatic GS also exists in various non- β -Catenin-mutation mouse models, including TP53-induced liver cancer models; 3) investigate the involvement of CD8 T cells in GS ablation and over-expression-mediated tumor progression. We expect to demonstrate hepatic GS as a novel tumor suppressor via alleviating ammonia accumulation in TME, thereby suppressing cancer cell proliferation and restoring immune cell function. Targeting hepatic GS represents an effective strategy to inhibit tumor growth, enhance the efficacy of immune-therapeutics, and improve clinical outcomes for liver cancer patients.

For more information about doctoral scholarship and PhD program at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU), please visit

<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/doctoral/entry-requirement-phd>

<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/doctoral/postgraduate-research-scholarships>

How to Apply:

Interested applicants are advised to email Weiwei.Dai@xjtlu.edu.cn the following documents for initial review and assessment (please put the project title in the subject line).

- CV
- Two formal reference letters
- Personal statement outlining your interest in the position
- Certificates of English language qualifications (IELTS or equivalent)
- Full academic transcripts in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- Verified certificates of education qualifications in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- PDF copy of Master Degree dissertation (or an equivalent writing sample) and examiners reports available