



Christina Basford

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Tell us about your current role and organisation

I currently lead a team of scientists in the Cell and Gene Therapy (CGT) unit at GSK, a science-led, global healthcare company. In CGT we are working on a number of personalised cancer medicines where we take the patients own immune cells and modify them *ex vivo* so that they are able to attack and kill cancer cells. My team focuses on cell characterisation, so it is our job to understand the biology of the immune cells we use and how our manufacturing processes may impact their function or phenotype. We use an array of methods including flow cytometry, proteomics and RNA sequencing in order to do that. We are always looking for new technology or approaches that could expand our understanding or advance our manufacturing process. This will help to improve the medicine, reduce cost of goods and reach a greater number of patients.

How did you move from academia to your current role?

After my PhD I decided I wanted to have an adventure and looked for post doc opportunities abroad. After much research and deliberation, I ended up in Toronto which was a great place to be, both professionally and personally. Towards the end of my contract I started to look for jobs back in Europe, as by this time I had a role at GSK, advertised on Nature jobs, and was selected for interview. Unfortunately, I was not successful, it much thought as I assumed it was just something they say to everyone. Fast forward twelve months and I was back living in the UK (after my husband moved back) and I was successful in getting a role at GSK.



What are the best things about working in your role?