

# Lab Expectations

**Abdullah Lab, IMMEI, University Hospital Bonn**

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## Purpose

This document outlines the **shared expectations** for all members of the Abdullah Lab.

Its purpose is to: - Provide clarity on how the lab functions day to day - Set common standards for conduct, communication, and responsibility - Support a professional, respectful, and productive research environment

These expectations apply to **all lab members**, including PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, technicians, and visiting researchers.

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## General principles

The Abdullah Lab values: - Scientific integrity and reproducibility - Mutual respect and professionalism - Open communication - Shared responsibility for the lab environment

Expectations are framed to support independence while ensuring that work remains transparent, collaborative, and reproducible.

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## **Professional conduct**

Lab members are expected to:

- Treat colleagues with respect at all times
- Communicate constructively, even in disagreement
- Be reliable and follow through on agreed tasks
- Contribute positively to the lab environment

Discriminatory, dismissive, or unprofessional behaviour is not acceptable.

Concerns should be raised early, either directly or via a supervisor, before issues escalate.

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## **Scientific integrity and documentation**

All work conducted in the lab must meet high standards of scientific integrity.

Expectations include:

- Experiments are planned thoughtfully and documented clearly
- Data are recorded contemporaneously and accurately
- Deviations from protocols are noted
- Data and reagents are traceable

Lab members must follow the lab's **Data Management and Reproducibility Standards**, including:

- Use of experiment IDs
- Consistent file and folder naming
- Appropriate data storage
- Clear reagent labelling

Both **paper and electronic lab notebooks are acceptable**, provided records are complete, legible, and up to date.

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## **Communication norms**

### **Day-to-day communication**

- **Mattermost** is the primary platform for day-to-day lab communication
- Use Mattermost for quick questions, coordination, and updates
- Email should be used for formal communication, external contacts, or administrative matters

## **Meetings**

- PhD students are expected to have **regular supervisor meetings**, typically **weekly or biweekly**, as agreed with their supervisor
- Lab members should come prepared to meetings with:
  - Key updates
  - Questions or points requiring input
  - Relevant figures or data when appropriate

Meeting frequency and format may evolve over time and should be revisited as projects progress.

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## **Ownership and responsibility**

Lab members are expected to take ownership of their work.

This includes responsibility for:

- Experimental planning and execution
- Proper documentation and data storage
- Maintenance of personal reagents and samples
- Cleaning up after experiments
- Following up on results and action items

Asking for help is encouraged, particularly when blocked or uncertain.

Waiting too long to raise issues can slow progress and create avoidable problems.

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## **Shared resources and lab citizenship**

The lab relies on shared resources, including equipment, reagents, and space.

Expectations include:

- Leaving shared equipment clean and ready for the next user
- Returning reagents and consumables to their correct location
- Clearly labelling personal materials
- Reporting broken equipment, low stock, or safety issues promptly

Good lab citizenship is essential for a functional and supportive environment.

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## **Safety and compliance**

All lab members must:

- Follow applicable safety regulations and institutional requirements
- Complete required inductions (e.g. S2, iFET) before performing relevant work
- Adhere to animal facility rules when applicable

If unsure about safety or compliance, lab members are expected to **pause work and ask**.

No experiment is urgent enough to justify unsafe practices.

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## **Expectations around supervision**

Supervision is a shared responsibility.

Supervisors commit to:

- Regular meetings and availability for discussion
- Clear communication of priorities and expectations
- Constructive feedback on data and progress
- Support in training, troubleshooting, and career development
- Guidance on publications, presentations, and PhD milestones

Lab members are encouraged to communicate openly about challenges, workload, and progress.

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## **Raising issues and resolving problems**

If issues arise (scientific, organisational, or interpersonal): - Raise them early - Where possible, discuss directly with the relevant person - If needed, involve a supervisor or senior lab member

The goal is resolution, not blame.

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## **Scope and limitations**

This document: - Describes **how the lab operates** - Sets shared expectations and norms

It does **not**: - Replace institutional policies - Override safety regulations - Define employment contracts

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## **Notes**

These expectations are intended to evolve with the lab.

Suggestions for improvement or clarification are welcome and should be raised so this document remains accurate and useful.