Palni Kundra, Dr. sc. In der Lachen 10 CH-8953 Dietikon Switzerland

Email: palnikundra@gmail.com

Tel: +41 77 993 58 99

dsm-firmenich Wurmisweg 576 CH-4303 Kaiseraugst Switzerland

August 12, 2024

Dear Members of the Hiring Committee,

I am writing with genuine excitement about the Application Scientist (Biotics) position at dsm-firmenich. My doctorate from the Laboratory of Food Biotechnology at ETH Zurich, which focused on the complex interactions between vitamins B9 and B12, human gut microbial communities, and probiotic gut microbes, has put me at the forefront of biotics research. I believe my expertise uniquely qualifies me to drive innovation in your team's groundbreaking work in dietary supplements, medical, and early life nutrition.

My research experience not only fits perfectly with the key responsibilities outlined in the job description but also shows my passion for pushing the boundaries of nutritional science:

- 1. **Solution development:** My doctoral research explored the effects of dietary and gut-microbially produced vitamins B9 and B12 on complex gut microbiota and individual gut microbes. This work has given me valuable insights for developing cutting-edge solutions in prebiotics, probiotics, and postbiotics. For instance, I discovered how different vitamin B12 forms uniquely affect certain bacteria in the gut, boosting propionate production and potentially improving overall health. I am excited to turn this knowledge into real products that could transform dietary supplements, nutrition, and health.
- 2. Prototype development: During my Ph.D., I gained extensive experience in designing and carrying out complex experimental protocols. My work with batch fermentations to study human gut microbial communities and single gut microbes as well as with their inactivated preparations (postbiotics) showcases my versatility in handling various biotics formats, a skill crucial for innovative product development.
- 3. Stability studies and data analysis: My research required careful attention to detail in setting up and coordinating stability studies for various vitamin forms and doses. I have become proficient in analyzing complex data sets, from metagenomic data to metabolite profiles, using advanced techniques such as HPLC-RI and UHPLC-DAD. For example, I developed a method to measure different vitamin B12 forms produced by gut bacteria using UHPLC-MS/UV. This experience will be valuable in making data-driven decisions in product development and ensuring the stability and effectiveness of biotics formulations.
- 4. GMP laboratory maintenance: My background in food science, combined with thorough laboratory experience at ETH Zurich and industrial internships at Markfed Canneries and Verka Milk plant, has taught me the importance of maintaining high standards and following safety protocols. I am familiar with environmental monitoring practices and careful data recording, which are essential for maintaining GMP standards in biotics production.
- 5. **Documentation, reporting, and external collaboration:** I have a strong track record in writing detailed scientific reports, preparing research findings for publication, and presenting at international conferences. This demonstrates my ability to communicate complex scientific ideas clearly and effectively. During my

Ph.D., I worked with researchers across different fields and institutions. This experience has improved my ability to work effectively across organizational boundaries and foster a collaborative environment that drives innovation - skills I am keen to bring to your team

My doctoral research has led to several impactful publications that demonstrate my expertise in biotics and nutrition science. These include studies on how different vitamin B12 analogues from gut microbes and diet distinctly impact commensal propionate-producing bacteria in the human gut, enhancing propionate production and potentially improving overall health (*Frontiers in Nutrition*, 2024); how healthy adult gut microbiota can sustain its own vitamin B12 requirement in an in vitro batch fermentation model (*Frontiers in Nutrition*, 2022); and a review exploring the role of dietary micronutrients on gut microbial dysbiosis and modulation in inflammatory bowel disease (*Molecular Nutrition & Food Research*, 2021). Additionally, my recent work (submitted to *BMC Microbiology*, 2024) investigates the effect of microbially-produced vitamin B9 on the growth and metabolism of a butyrate producing beneficial gut bacteria, opening new avenues to produce live biotherapeutics.

While the position requires a master's degree, my Ph.D. in gut microbial biotechnology offers advanced expertise valuable to this role. My educational background - a Bachelor's in Food Science and Technology, a Master's in Food Science, and a doctorate - provides a solid foundation in food science, nutrition, and gut microbiology and biotics, along with strong analytical and critical thinking skills.

Additionally, my language skills, including fluency in English and intermediate German (B1 spoken), will help me communicate effectively in the Swiss work environment and with international colleagues.

I am truly excited about dsm-firmenich's commitment to advancing biotic and nutrition science. I am eager to bring my expertise, dedication, and collaborative spirit to your team, working to develop groundbreaking solutions that positively impact human health across all life stages.

Thank you for considering my application. I am available for interviews on August 19th and 20th and can start immediately. I look forward to the possibility of discussing how I can contribute to dsm-firmenich's continued success and leadership in nutrition science.

Sincerely,

Palni Kundra

P.S. I would like to mention that I am also applying for the "Pharma & Biological Model Lead" role within dsm-firmenich. My strong interest in both roles comes from my expertise and passion for innovative research in biotics to improve nutrition and health. I believe my skills and experience could be valuable in either position, and I am excited about the prospect of contributing to dsm-firmenich's mission in whichever role best fits the company's needs.

PALNI KUNDRA

Biotechnology, Food Science, Nutrition, Vitamins, Microbiome, Biotics



PERSONAL STATEMENT

Driven by scientific curiosity and a commitment to improving human health through nutrition, I bring my Ph.D. expertise in gut microbial biotechnology from ETH Zurich to the Application Scientist role at dsm-firmenich. My research on vitamin B9 and B12 interactions with gut microbiota has positioned me at the forefront of biotics innovation. With a multidisciplinary background from renowned universities spanning food science, microbiology, and biotechnology, I excel in prototype development, conducting complex biological studies on pre-, pro-, and postbiotics, and translating scientific concepts into clear, actionable insights. I am passionate about developing innovative nutritional solutions that make a real-world impact. I am motivated to collaborate with dsm-firmenich's team to create and deliver next-generation biotic products.



KEY COMPETENCIES

- Possess in-depth knowledge across various scientific disciplines, including food science, microbiology, nutrition, gastroenterology, probiotics, biotechnology and biology.
- Proficient in translating complex scientific concepts into clear, engaging content, as well as translating scientific findings into actionable next steps.
- Proficient in designing, implementing, and executing research projects, encompassing laboratory techniques, statistics and bioinformatics.
- Proven ability to collaborate effectively with internal and external teams.

EDUCATION ETH Zurich

Doctorate (PhD, Dr. sc.)
♥ Zurich, Switzerland

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Christophe Lacroix

2016 McGill University

| Masters of Science (M.Sc.)

Supervisor: Prof. Jennifer Ronholm
CGPA: 3.87/ 4

ers of Science (M.Sc.) • Montréal, Canada

Bachelor of Food Science and Technology
Advisor: Prof. Bhartendu Singla
CGPA: 8.7/ 10 (Gold medalist)

Guru Nanak Dev University

Amritsar, India



WORK AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Sep 2018 | Jun 2023

2023

2011

2015

Scientific Assistant

ETH Zurich

• Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Christophe Lacroix

Zurich, Switzerland

- Completed a multi-year research project investigating the modulatory potential of dietary and gut-microbially produced vitamin B9 and B12 on the complex gut microbiota, as well as on single next generation probiotic gut microbes.
- Led the planning and execution of laboratory experiments, developed experimental and analytical methods (UHPLC-UV/MS), and analyzed metagenomic and other data types.
- Completed project deliverables by preparing research findings for publication in scientific journals.
- Presented research findings at scientific conferences, effectively communicating complex scientific concepts to diverse audiences.
- Mentored Bachelor's and Master's students throughout their thesis projects, and facilitated a semester laboratory course, enhancing hands-on learning experiences.



AWARDS AND MEDALS

Gold medal (Bachelor Studies) University topper 2015

Poster presentation award
Second prize, Green tea ice cream
Presented at science exhibition
2015

COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

Bioinformatics skills: metagenomic data analysis Programming: R, Bash Version control: git Project management: GitHub

LANGUAGES

English (Native, C1)
German (Written A2, spoken B1)
Hindi (Native)
Punjabi (Native)

CONTACT INFO

MORE INFO

D 0000-0002-8999-6451

in palnikundra
Palni Kundra

R⁶ Palni_Kundra

pkundra

May-Sep 2017

Graduate research project

McGill University

Montréal, Canada

- Supervisor: Prof. Jennifer Ronholm
- Conducted whole-genome SNP-based analysis to identify changes under laboratory conditions in major foodborne pathogens responsible for global outbreaks.
- Provided support for preparing the manuscript for publication.

Jan-Feb 2015

Student research assistant

Guru Nanak Dev University

Amritsar, India

- · Supervisor: Prof. Pankaj Gupta
- Developed an innovative food product Green tea ice cream.
- · Performed sensory and organoleptic evaluation.
- · Presented the product at scientific conference.

Jul 2014

Student research assistant

Guru Nanak Dev University

Amritsar, India

Mar 2015

· Supervisor: Prof. Bhartendu Singla

• Developed various innovative soy-based food products to enhance gluten-free product.

May-Jun 2013

Research internship

Indian Council of Agricultural Research

Q Ludhiana, India

- · Supervisor: Dr. Pranita Jaiswal
- Applied a non-destructive quality control approach to a develop spectrophotometeric method for the detection of Soy-milk adulteration in cow milk.
- · Performed spectrophotometer analysis.

Jun 2013 & Jul 2014

Industrial internship

Markfed Canneries

Jalandhar, India

• Performed microbiological testing and applied quality control assurance techniques.

Jun-Jul 2013

Industrial internship

Verka Milk plant

Jalandhar, India

• Performed microbiological testing and applied quality control assurance techniques.



SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed Publications

Palni Kundra, Anna Greppi, Monica Duppenthaler, Serafina Plüss, Benoit Pugin, Christophe Lacroix, Annelies Geirnaert. Vitamin B12 analogues from gut microbes and diet differentially impact commensal propionate producers of the human gut. **2024**. *Frontiers in Nutrition*. **3**: 10.3389/fnut.2024.1360199

Palni Kundra, Annelies Geirnaert, Benoit Pugin, Paola Morales Martinez, Christophe Lacroix, Anna Greppi. Healthy adult gut microbiota sustains its own vitamin B12 requirement in an in vitro batch fermentation model. 2022. Frontiers in Nutrition. 2: 10.3389/fnut.2022.1070155

Palni Kundra, Carole Rachmühl, Christophe Lacroix, Annelies Geirnaert. Role of dietary micronutrients on gut microbial dysbiosis and modulation in inflammatory bowel disease. 2021. *Molecular Nutrition & Food Research.* ©: 10.1002/mnfr.201901271

Nicholas Petronella, **Palni Kundra**, Olivia Auclair, Karine Hébert, Mary Rao, Kyle Kingsley, Katrien De Bruyne, Swapan Banerjee, Alexander Gill, Franco Pagotto, Sandeep Tamber, Jennifer Ronholm. Changes detected in the genome sequences of Escherichia coli, Listeria monocytogenes, Vibrio parahaemolyticus, and Salmonella enterica after serial subculturing. **2019**. *Canadian Journal of Microbiology*. **3**: 10.1139/cjm-2019-0235

Palni Kundra, Annelies Geirnaert, Benoit Pugin, Serafina Plüss, Susanna Kariluoto, Christophe Lacroix, Anna Greppi. Effect of microbially-produced vitamin B9 on the growth and metabolism of human gut microbes. **2024**. submitted to *BMC microbiology*.



Jun 2023

Doctor of Sciences

Palni Kundra, 2023. Dr. sc. Thesis. The effect of exogenous and endogenous vitamin B9 and B12 on microbial growth and metabolism in the human gut. @: 10.3929/ethz-b-000641198

Jan 2018

Master of Science

Palni Kundra, 2018. M.Sc. Research project. Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms in major food-borne pathogens.



RENTORING ...

Master projects at ETH Zurich

Monica Duppenthaler Vitamin B9 and B12 driven trophic interactions in the human gut. Master in Food Science. Jul 2021 - Jan 2022 (Thesis)

Janik Mutter Vitamin B9 production and cross feeding among human gut microbial strains. Master in Biology. Mar 2021 - Jul 2021 (Research project)

Bachelor thesis projects at ETH Zurich

Sabina Galli B-vitamin bio-factory in the gut: In-vitro vitamin B9 production and utilization by human gut microbes. Bachelor in Food Science. Jul 2022 - Oct 2022

Sara De Crescenzo In-vitro Vitamin B12 Production by Human Gut Bacteria. Bachelor in Food Science. Jul 2021 - Oct 2021

Giuliano Menegon B-vitamin sharing: In-silico and in-vitro study to determine B9 and B12 cross-feeding between human gut microbial strains. Bachelor in Food Science. Jun 2020 - Nov 2020

Lucie Kuhn Give them vitamins: Impact of B9 and B12 on the acetate and butyrate production on human gut microbes. Bachelor in Food Science. Nov 2019 - Feb 2020

Blandine Genet Give them vitamins: Impact of B9 and B12 on the butyrate and propionate production on human gut microbes. Bachelor in Food Science. Jun 2019 - Sep 2019

♣ TEACHING

2019 2022

Sep 2021

Jul 2021

Feb 2015 752-5004-00L: Food Biotechnology Laboratory Course

♥ Zurich, Switzerland

Main responsible for cheese practical (2019 & 2020) and sour dough bread practical (2021 & 2022).



ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Human Gut Microbial Strains Produce Vitamin B12

Denmark 6th International Vitamin Conference

In-Vitro Vitamin B12 Production by Human Gut Microbial Strains

ANAEROBE 2021: THE MICROBIOTA AND BEYOND Online

Development of soy-based product and their organoleptic evaluation Advances in agricultural Science & biotechnology, DAV College Jalandhar

India

"Green tea ice cream" Science exhibition, DAV College Jalandhar

India

Oral & Poster

Semester course

Poster

Poster

Jan 2015

♣ WORKSHOPS/ COURSES (NOT ON TRANSCRIPTS) **PMDA Summer School** 2023 Basel, Switzerland Roche Predictive modelling and data analytics summer school to solve problems in drug discovery and development. Project Management for research – for doctoral students 2022 ♀ Zurich, Switzerland ETH Zurich Project risk management, project management. Scientific poster design 2021 ♀ Zurich, Switzerland University of Zurich content structure, typography do's and don'ts, design principles, design grids, design tools, image editing, perception, color theory. Energy and stress management: How to perform in the storm 2021 University of Zurich Zurich. Switzerland Energy management, understand obstacles and overcome them, achieve targeted change. Time and self management for PhD Candidates 2021 ETH Zurich ♥ Zurich, Switzerland Assess habits, values, goals, energy, and time management techniques. Leadership skills for PhD Candidates 2021 Zurich. Switzerland University of Zurich Management, leadership, needs analysis, behavior, destructive leadership, and case studies. **Statistics for Experimental Research** 2020 ♀ Zurich, Switzerland ETH Zurich Experimental designs, statistical analyses using R, report analyses and results in a scientifically appropriate manner. Mass spectrometry-based metabolomics - from theory to practice 2018 ♥ Zurich, Switzerland Functional Genomics Center of University and ETH Zurich Metabolomics overview, and data analysis and interpretation. Introduction to genomic analysis 2017 Compute Canada & University of British Columbia (Online) Canada UNIX programming, alignment, Variant calling and annotation, data visualization, and RNA-Seq including statistical analysis. 36th Post-harvest technology - short course 2014 University of California, Davis Davis, USA Advanced Crops handling and harvesting systems.

DIE EIDGENÖSSISCHE TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZÜRICH





Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich verleiht

Palni Kundra

Master of Science, McGill University geboren am 30. November 1991

den Titel

DOKTORIN DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

aufgrund der Doktorarbeit

THE EFFECT OF EXOGENOUS AND ENDOGENOUS VITAMIN B9 AND B12 ON MICROBIAL GROWTH AND METABOLISM IN THE HUMAN GUT

Leiter der Doktorarbeit: Prof. em. Dr. Christophe Lacroix

und der mündlichen Prüfung vom 21. Juni 2023

Zürich, 27. November 2023

Der Rektor

Die Vorsteherin des Departements Gesundheitswissenschaften und Technologie

Prof. Dr. Günther Dissertori Prof. Dr. Laura Nyström



McGILL UNIVERSITY MONTREAL

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS MAY COME, GREETING: WE, THE GOVERNORS, PRINCIPAL, AND FELLOWS OF McGILL UNIVERSITY TESTIFY THAT

Palni Kundra

HAVING DILIGENTLY COMPLETED THE REQUIRED COURSE OF STUDY AND PERFORMED
THE PRESCRIBED EXERCISES HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF SCIENCE

WITH ALL THE HONOURS, PRIVILEGES, AND PREROGATIVES PERTAINING TO THAT DEGREE, IN WITNESS WHEREOF WE HAVE AFFIXED OUR SIGNATURES AND HAVE CAUSED THE SEAL OF THE UNIVERSITY TO BE ATTACHED HERETO. GIVEN IN CONVOCATION THIS 6TH DAY OF JUNE IN THE YEAR 2018.

Dalbautogla

REGISTRAR



Ridaul A. Divon

Suzanu Patier

CHANCELLOR

PRINCIPAL



ਗੁੰਡ ਨਾਂਜਕ ਦੇਵ ਧੁੰਨਵਿਰਸਿਟੀ





ਬੈਚੁਲਰ ਆਫ ਫੂਡ ਸਾਇੰਸ ਐੱਡ ਟੈਕਨੋਲੋਜੀ (ਆਨਰਜ਼)

ਰੋਲ ਨੰ.]92015036408 Roll No.]

ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਨੰ : 2011.ਜੇ/ਏ.37

Regd. No. : 2011 J/A.37

ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ

ਪਲਨੀ ਕੁੰਦਰਾ

ਪੁੱਤਰ/ਪੁੱਤਰੀ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ

ਕਿਰਨ ਕਿਸ਼ੋਰ ਕੁੰਦਰਾ

ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ੀਮਤੀ

ਦਿਵਿਆ ਕੁੰਦਰਾ

ते

ਵਿਚ ਹੋਈ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਖਿਆ

ਡੀ.ਏ.ਵੀ.ਕਾਲਜ, ਜਲੰਧਰ ਪਹਿਲੀ (ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਤਾ ਸਹਿਤ)

ਡਿਵੀਜ਼ਨ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ

ਤੋਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਚਿਤ ਕੋਰਸ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ, 2015 ਬੈਚਲਰ ਆਫ ਫੂਡ ਸਾਇੰਸ ਐਂਡ ਟੈਕਨੌਲੋਜੀ (ਆਨਰਜ਼)

ਦੀ ਡਿਗਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ।

Guru Nanak Dev University

and Mrs.	This is to certify that DIVYA KUNDRA	f food Science Palni kundra	& TCCHAOLOGY son/daughter of Mr.	L独伊男母组织的) KIRAN KISHORE KUNDRA
		and of the	CAN COLLECT TALANDHAR	OHAR
	the prescribed course of study and passed the requisite Examination, held in		APRIL, 2015	has been admitted to the Degree of
BACHELO	OR OF FOOD SCIENCE & TEC	HNOLOGY (HONOURS) and been	n placed inFirst	Division (with Distinction).
		ਯੂਨੀਵਰੀਸਟੀ ਸੀਲ ਅਧੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿਤ ਕ		
		Giben under the seal of the Unit	bersity.	

ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਇੰਚਾਰਜ (ਪ੍ਰੀਖਿਆਵਾਂ)

Professor Incharge (Exams.)

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ Amritsar June 17, 2015 ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ

Registrar

ਵਾਈਸ-ਚਾਂਸਲਰ

Vice-Chancellor

ਚਾਂਸਲਰ

Chancellor



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich Institute of Food, Nutrition and Health Department of Health Sciences and Technology

ETH Zurich

Prof. Dr. Christophe Lacroix

Head, Laboratory of Food Biotechnology

ETH Zentrum LFV C 20

Schmelzbergstrasse 7

CH-8092 Zürich, Switzerland

Phone +41 44 632 48 67 Fax +41 44-632 14 03 christophe.lacroix@hest.ethz.ch www.fbt.ethz.ch

Zurich, 20 July 2023 LC

Letter of reference

Palni Kundra, born on November 30, 1991 and a citizen of Indien, was 100.00 % employed by ETH Zurich as doctoral student from September 1, 2018 until June 30, 2023. About 30,000 people from more than 120 countries study, carry out research and work at ETH Zurich.

Ms Palni Kundra's duties and responsibilities in this capacity primarily comprised:

- working on her own thesis in the specialist field of Food Biotechnology on the subject of modulation effects of B-vitamins on the human gut microbiota
- publishing her research results in the form of papers, conference papers, articles for books
- publishing her research results in the form of papers in recognised specialist journals
- presenting papers at academic conferences
- supervising students writing semester papers and/or Master theses
- guiding Bachelor students during exercise and practical sessions
- supervising Master students during practical work in the laboratory/institute/field

Palni Kundra possessed proven expertise and extensive experience in her area of responsibility. She successfully applied herself to new duties and used the acquired knowledge with good results. The effort she put into her work was in proportion to the achieved outcome, and she met the requirements. With her rational and precise approach to her work, she always delivered a good performance. Her good command of languages was of great value for the communication in her work environment.

Palni Kundra showed initiative and complete commitment. Under challenging conditions, she remained calm and assured, adapting to changing circumstances with ease. Perceptive in evaluating the scope and impact of her actions, she was careful when weighing up the related risks and opportunities. In the decision-making process she exercised autonomy blended with a great deal of expertise. When arranging the deployment of staff, she was good at doing so according to need and objective. It was important to her to align her outlook and her actions with the goals of Food Biotechnology.

Letter of reference

Palni Kundra immediately conveyed key information to the relevant recipients, and chose the appropriate moment to involve management when the situation demanded it. In terms of verbal and writing skills, she displayed tremendous adroitness when tailoring her communications to her addressees. Moreover, she was adept at presenting her own ideas in a convincing manner. She took on board other opinions and constructive criticism; she listened to what was said and was tuned in to the needs of her conversational partners. She supported and encouraged collaboration within the team and was highly adept at reconciling differing views. Management, staff and students alike appreciated her greatly and held her in high esteem.

Palni Kundra left us on expiry of her fixed-term employment contract. We thank her for her contribution and wish her every success going forward.

Christophe Lacroix

CLacroix

Cynthia Kümin