

Water and Ice Laboratories Team Leader

Reports to:	Laboratories & Workshops Manager	Position Status:	Permanent
Business Unit:	GNS	Location:	Gracefield
Department:	Laboratories & Workshops	Date:	August 2025
Direct Reports:	6-7	Budget & Delegated Authority:	TBD
Group:	Science & Commercial Operations	Career Step:	Senior Technician 2 / 7
Job Family:	Research, Lab & Field Technology	Career Path:	Specialist

Purpose

The Team Leader is responsible for both managing and developing team members to perform effectively, in addition to performing tasks in their own area of expertise. The balance between leadership and specialty work is flexible and may change throughout the year. This role manages our Water Dating Laboratory, Noble Gas Facility and Palynology Laboratories and will oversee compliance of hazardous substances and laboratory legislation for our Avalon facilities.

Position Priorities and Responsibilities

Team Management

- Ensure individual work plans/goals are created to deliver on the work programme, provide clear expectations of performance and work together to manage workload. Work with team members to understand workloads for current and future opportunities, ensuring alignment with the institute's strategic direction.
- Identify team members' development needs and support individual growth. Provide timely, clear and constructive feedback in areas of good performance and areas for improvement. Act as both a coach and mentor for new staff.
- Manage and review the performance of direct reports including those who are not meeting expectations through a performance improvement plan. Address staffing performance issues or disputes promptly, escalating to the Department Manager if necessary. Ensure any individuals not meeting expectations are managed through a performance improvement plan.
- Work with the Department Manager to address resourcing gaps. Oversee the recruitment process as needed.
- Foster new scientific ideas (if applicable) and talent within the team, identifying opportunities to grow these ideas. Identify team purpose and work with aligning team members goals accordingly.
- Approve expenditure, travel and work in accordance with the delegated and financial authorities policy.

- Contribute to department planning and report regularly to the Department Manager. Represent the team and provide advice to scientific leadership groups as required. Demonstrate a commitment to self-development and maintain a growth mindset, seeking feedback and new learning opportunities to continually improve leadership skills.
- Facilitate effective communication to and within the team, within the department and across departments. Manage team culture and behaviour. Where required resolving conflict and facilitating communication and collaboration within the team.

Laboratory Management

- Manage the efficient and effective operation and delivery of the laboratories by ensuring that works tasks and priorities are well-understood and fairly distributed across the team.
- Ensure scientists and clients receive timely and exceptional results/products by monitoring progress and workloads and ensuring staff adhere to best practice and quality control and quality assurance protocols.
- Ensure the laboratory complies with all relevant legislation and guidelines, e.g. the Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances 2017) Act and the Biosecurity Act.
- Work collaboratively with the Lead Scientist assigned to the laboratory and other scientists using the facility to ensure a strong scientific basis for the laboratory/workshop and the work produced there.
- Work with other Laboratory Managers within the Laboratories and Workshops Department to improve common administration or sample processing procedures and apply best practices, where applicable.
- Work with the Department Manager and Lead Scientists to prepare capital expenditure proposals as required and monitor spending within your team to stay within planned budgets.
- Ensure all laboratory/workshop equipment is maintained in good, working conditions and serviced as required.
- Ensure a strong customer service culture within the laboratory team and across the organisation by providing quality service and advice to all customers.

Collective Leadership

- Provide direction and guidance to the team in line with GNS Science's strategic direction and actively contribute to collaboration clusters to develop successful proposals or bids to ensure pipeline of future work
- Coordinate and lead project governance and ensure project reporting to PMO according to the delegation agreed with the Department manager.
- Contribute to embedding Vision Mātauranga across GNS Science, enhancing understanding of Te Ao Māori and Tikanga Māori.
- Engage in Department Management Team meetings, support senior management decisions, and stay aware of significant internal and external issues impacting GNS Science.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with stakeholders to secure opportunities, achieve results, and enhance GNS Science's reputation.

Health and Safety

- Responsible for Health Safety & Wellbeing of their team: leading safety conversations, reviewing the team's critical risk activities and demonstrating awareness and concern for the team's work

activities.

- Drive a proactive health, safety, and wellbeing (HS&W) culture within the team by promoting best practices, encouraging open communication, and supporting continuous improvement initiatives.
- Ensure team members understand and implement HS&W responsibilities relevant to their roles, providing guidance, training, and resources as needed.
- Support incident investigations within the team, ensuring timely response, appropriate support for affected workers, and effective implementation of corrective actions.

Leadership Expectations

A Leader at GNS empowers and enables themselves and their people for success, equipping them to support the delivery of our goals and foster a strong culture. This looks like:

- **Being accountable and taking responsibility**
Role modelling, taking ownership, and delivering results are essential for leaders at GNS, as they inspire trust, accountability, and performance within teams while fostering a culture of responsibility and ensuring goals are achieved with integrity and excellence.
- **Behaviours we expect**
Demonstrating emotional intelligence, team empowerment, and a growth mindset is crucial for fostering collaboration, building a positive culture, and continuous improvement within teams, enabling them to thrive and achieve their full potential.
- **Leadership capabilities we need**
Leaders need strong capabilities in effective communication, change leadership, and business acumen to navigate complexities, drive transformation, and align with organisational goals.

Responsibilities of all Employees

- Comply with all relevant Business Unit policies, procedures and frameworks, and act in line with the relevant Business Unit values.
- Contribute to our healthy and safe workplace by following Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) expectations outlined in and integrated into our operational practices and HSW Frameworks, including undertaking HSW training and participating in health monitoring programmes relevant to your work.
- Work effectively as a team member by fostering good relationships and supporting others by providing coverage of other functions as required and ensuring workloads are evenly spread.
- Have the flexibility to adapt and develop as the company and its environment evolves.

Key Working Relationships

Internal	External
• Team Leaders within the same Department, and relevant Department Manager, Science and Commercial Operations Leadership Team (SCLT), Legal Team, Science and Commercial Operations Group staff, Māori Partnerships and Government Relations Group, Science Futures Group, Theme Leaders, Business Services Group, People and Culture Group	• Other science and research organisations, stakeholders, collaborators and customers.

Person Specification

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Minimum of a BSc in a relevant field (earth sciences, geology, chemistry, laboratory management).
- Experience in effectively leading and managing people (may be evidenced through programme or project leadership).
- 10+ years of laboratory experience in a leadership capacity.

Skills, Knowledge and Attributes

- Effective people management and relationship-building skills.
- Expertise in relevant scientific, technical, or professional areas.
- Knowledge of laboratory legislation and QA/QC practices.
- Demonstrated commitment to Health, Safety and Wellbeing and a concern for others.
- Strong collaboration and communication skills.
- Strong project management and budget management skills.
- Commitment to engaging with Māori, respecting Te Tiriti of Waitangi, and observing tikanga and kawa.
- Strong critical analysis, decision-making, and facilitation skills.
- Ability to manage and drive activities in ambiguous situations.