

About the Position:

Ankyra Therapeutics is seeking a highly motivated and experienced Principal Scientist specializing in target biology and Pharmacology to join our small and dynamic R&D team. This role is critical in expanding our pipeline and driving the translation of innovative discoveries into therapeutic solutions. The ideal candidate will have a strong scientific background, a collaborative mindset, and the ability to thrive in a fast-paced, startup-like environment. The successful candidate will play a key role in new target validation, lead optimization, candidate selection, and IND-enabling studies, leveraging strong pharmacology and immunology expertise to advance therapeutic programs. You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your technical skills and scientific acumen as part of a cross-functional team.

Key Responsibilities

- Design, execute and strategize preclinical pharmacology studies to support lead optimization and candidate selection for one or more immune-oncology programs
- Lead data integration across immune profiling, tumor response, and biomarker assays to inform go/no-go decisions.
- Design, analyze, and interpret in vivo and in vitro studies related to immune activation, tumor microenvironment modulation, and combination therapy efficacy.
- Lead efforts to generate data packages supporting IND submissions and regulatory filings
- Guide PK/PD modeling, dose rationale, and biomarker development for clinical translation.
- Collaborate cross-functionally with discovery, CMC, clinical, regulatory and translational teams to ensure seamless progression of clinical candidates
- Serve as scientific lead for CROs and external collaborators supporting immuno-oncology pharmacology and translational studies.
- Contribute to regulatory documents including INDs, investigator brochures, and translational summaries.
- Present data to internal leadership, scientific advisory boards, and at external conferences.

Qualifications

- PhD in Immunology, Pharmacology, Cancer Biology, or related field
- 7+ years of relevant postdoctoral or industry experience in immuno-oncology drug development
- Strong understanding of immune pathways (e.g., T cell biology, checkpoint inhibitors, myeloid cell modulation) and tumor-immune interactions
- Experience designing mechanism-based pharmacology studies in immuno-oncology models
- Experience working with different therapeutic modalities
- Familiarity with biomarker discovery, flow cytometry, cytokine profiling, and translational assay development
- Scientific curiosity and attention to details are a must for this role
- Proven track record working in early-stage drug discovery programs, and contributing to IND-enabling packages
- Demonstrated ability to lead projects and mentor junior scientists
- Excellent communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with combination immunotherapy approaches
- Familiarity with single-cell omics, spatial profiling, or immune repertoire analysis
- Solid prior experience in a biotech startup or early-stage company
- Understanding of clinical trial design and translational endpoints