

Biotech Career Ladder – Biotech Job Positions & Salary Details

The absence of visibility and clarity in career path leads to frustration & demotivation due to which job seekers don't even try to get a job their desired field. If you browse through the internet I bet nobody tells you about the career ladder that exists in the biotech sector and how you can progress. Thanks to organizations which have maintained an organizational structure or career ladder for employees to see a structured sequence of job positions through which they can progress to attain the peak of their career.

Today we will be giving you a brief idea on how a Biotech career ladder looks like once you get into a Company specifically the research & development sector and how you can sail through it successfully.

A career ladder is like a roadmap which motivates you and gives a direction to your career. Of course, one must never work in an organization with a sole goal of reaching a top-level position but should focus on an overall individual growth.

Each Biotech MNC or Research Institute has its own structured sequence of job positions. We have compiled data from leading Biotech & Pharma giants focusing on:

1. Description about Entry Level Position for M.Sc. Candidates
2. Educational Qualification required to jump to the next level
3. Experience Required for Promotion to a higher post
4. Average salary one can get at each position
5. Work Description at each level.
6. Tips on How you can Climb up the career ladder in a short duration.

Basically, here you will see the categorical order of positions, from the lowest to the highest, along with their individual responsibilities and compensation. You can use this career ladder to determine the requirements for moving to the next stage of each position.

Biotech Career Ladder



1. Junior Research Assistant

A Junior Research assistant an entry level position to start within the biotech industry. Most of the Biotech companies prefer hiring Freshers for this post who are well versed in hands-on lab techniques and have some amount of experience in the form of an internship during studies.

Job Responsibilities: Your responsibilities for this position include performing routine laboratory support work, assisting with research, maintaining a safe working environment, and managing data records. This can vary with the company based on the kind of project you have been hired for.

Educational Requirement: Freshers with M.sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences.

If You have are a CSIR NET / GATE / DBT / ICMR qualified candidate, it will be an add on.

Average Salary: Rs 22,000/- – Rs 30,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: Up to 2 Years

Growth Hacks: This will basically be a learning stage for you. Do not consider this only as a job if you want to make a strong career in the R&D sector. Be open to learning throughout by grabbing as much knowledge as you can, especially time management skills. Since it will be your first job you are bound to face a lot of distractions, some people often tend to quit, but hold on its just the beginning, do not jump to conclusions, be calm and composed and sail through the process smoothly.

A Junior Research Assistant or a postgraduate can be promoted to this level after a considerable amount of experience in the required field. This profile is apt for a Ph.D. Freshers, who are seeking to get into the research industry.

Job Responsibilities: A Senior Research Associate is responsible for conducting a series of tests and experiments to prepare solutions for a research problem. This position still requires you to report to the primary investigator, but you will have more independence in terms of analyzing data and writing reports. The workloads of a first-level research associate are normally lesser than higher-level research associates.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences With at least 1-2 years of prior experience.
- Freshers with PhD degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences

Average Salary: Rs 30,000/- pm – Rs 42,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: Up to 3 Years

Growth Hacks: If you have been working as a Junior Research Assistant in a company for a duration of 1-2 years with good work output quality, you can easily climb up to this level, it's all a matter of perseverance & quality work. If you are applying for this post in a different company minimum of 2 years of quality experience will be considered by the employer.

3. Assistant Research Associate

Aside from performing various complex tests and experiments, the Assistant Research Associate is responsible for overseeing different operations within the laboratory. In this position, you will be working closely with the principal investigator and will be able to send precise directions to other members of the research team.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 2-3 years of prior experience.
- Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 1-2 years of prior experience.

Average Salary: Rs 35,000/- pm to Rs 55,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: 3-4 Years

Growth Hacks: Leading Biotech companies & Premier Research Institutes in India and abroad frequently hire for this position, as multiple R&D operations are carried out at a single point in time. Thus, it is important to keep a lookout for such vacancies if you are looking for a job change and you have the requisite experience to apply for this post.

4. Associate Scientist

The Associate Scientist perform in close coordination with the Junior level research associates and is responsible for overseeing Research & laboratory operations within the department. This position requires you to still work with the principal investigator with additional obligation to develop protocols,

complete in-depth research, and direct people within the team. Other duties include monitoring the progress of different research projects and coordinating information with other research associates. You'll be also in charge of modifying protocols that will contribute significantly to the research product.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 2-5 years of prior experience.
- Ph.D degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 1-3 years of prior experience.
- Candidates with a Postdoctoral Degree can gain a direct entry.

Average Salary: Rs 45,000/-pm to Rs 70,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: Up to 4 Years

Growth Hacks: To reach this level of your research career in a short duration a Ph.D. degree is a must. As per a survey, those who have a clear career plan after post graduation can only reach Up to this level. A Ph.D. degree from a prestigious institute in a trending research topic can be a key to your success.

5. Research Scientist

Almost every biotech & life science professional who are willing to make a career in research wants to be a research scientist, not knowing the fact that it requires a well-lit background in ground research. Job responsibilities of a research scientist is very crucial. A hardworking researcher cannot become a research scientist but only a smart researcher can. Job roles range from formulating, planning & conducting experiments, preparing research proposals

& funding applications, supervising the junior staff. Basically, it acts as a bridge in between the entry-level researchers and the highly experienced lead scientists.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 3-6 years of prior experience.
- Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 2-4 years of prior experience.
- Postdoctoral Degree with at least 1-3 year of experience.

Average Salary: Rs 60,000/-pm to Rs 1,00,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: 4-6 Years

Growth Hacks: I know, I know by the figures stated above it looks a long journey to reach this position and most of you are planning to skip the plan of getting into research already but trust me it will be worth it. Once you reach this level there is no looking back. This will be your ticket towards a fulfilling research career both in terms of financial stability & Job security.

5. Lead Scientists

The most crucial job role of the lead scientist is to routinely manage large & multi-technique R&D projects. Navigation of the regulatory framework & providing technical leadership to meet desired R&D Projects objectives is also a key role. A lead scientist is looked upon like a role model by fellow junior-level

researchers upon whose guidance the entire R&D house operation runs smoothly.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 4-7 years of prior experience.
- Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 3-6 years of prior experience.
- Postdoctoral Degree with 2-5 year of experience.

Average Salary: Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 1,70,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: 5-7 Years

Growth Hacks: Once you are at this level you definitely do not need a growth hack, as you are here for your hard work, smart work, talent & most importantly your unshakable determination. Nobody can stop you now.

6. Principal Scientist

Job responsibilities of a principal scientist may vary with the work profile & the company, but the prime role remains the same that is to coordinate the actions of all the teams, to train new generation researchers, to compile performance reviews and to act as a source of knowledge in the laboratory. They may end up working more than full time with a combination of both lab & desk work just to ensure the targets are met. Quick decision making, analytical thinking, and commitment is what defines a principal scientist.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 6-9 years of prior experience.
- Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 4-8 years of prior experience.
- Postdoctoral Degree with 3-6 year of experience.

Average Salary: Rs 2,20,000 to Rs 5,00,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: 5-10 Years

7. Chief Scientist

Chief Scientist is the one of the highest position in R&D Sector. Being a chief scientist you're part of the policy and decision-making board of the company. It requires you to develop a budget, manage different departments within the company, and coordinate with various research members across all departments. Other duties include exercising supervision and control over various research departments within the company, providing ongoing support for the company employees, and implementing rules and regulations for the clinical and commercial production activities.

Educational Requirement:

- M.Sc degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 10-15 years of prior experience.

- Ph.D. degree in Biotechnology / Biochemistry / Microbiology / Chemistry / Food Technology / Life Sciences (other subjects as per company requirement) With at least 8-10 years of prior experience.
- Postdoctoral Degree with 4-8 year of experience.

Average Salary: Rs 6,00,000 to Rs 10,00,000/- pm

Job Duration at this Position: 6-10 Years