

Herbarium Collections Manager

Department of Plant Sciences

Closing date: 10 January 2025

Job Reference : PD44252



Herbarium Collections Manager

Salary:

£34,866-£45,163

Contract:

Fixed term until 31 July
2029

Location:

Department:

Plant Sciences

Responsible to:

Prof Sam Brockington

Working pattern:

Full time

The herbarium collections comprise 1.1 million specimens of vascular plants, bryophytes, algae and fungi are held; an 8,000 photographic slide collection; with associated 6,000+ book collection and archives (co-managed by the University Library). The Collections Manager takes day-to-day responsibility for maintaining, organising and operating the University Herbarium, its collections and services. The Collections Manager will be point of contact for all visitors to the Herbarium, including researchers and members of the public, facilitating use of the collections for research, teaching and outreach purposes. They will respond to and manage requests for loans and samples of Herbarium materials in a timely fashion. They will support fundraising, assist in writing grant applications to trusts and foundations, and in developing relationships with potential donors (with the support of CUDAR and the Department of Plant Sciences). The Collections Manager will directly line manage the Collections and Digitisation Assistant, any specialist staff on fixed-term projects, and a team of regular volunteers. The post reports to the Academic lead for the Herbarium.

Key Responsibilities

Collection management: Operational responsibility for all day-to-day collections management, including accessioning and de-accessioning, arrangement and incorporation of material, use of taxonomic expertise to update names and to re-order folders, and a programme for the archival mounting of specimens. Develop and maintain a manual detailing the Cambridge specific processes of collection management. Manage funds in accordance with University regulations. Liaise with Accounts staff to monitor income/expenditure.

Collections conservation: Ensure the collection is preserved for future study, for example by maintaining programs of rotational freezing, insect prevention, and climate monitoring. Repair of mounted specimens where needed. Keep up to date with latest conservation methods, report concerns about conservation of accessions and seek support from conservationists within the University of Cambridge Museums network.

Collections digitisation: Responsible for the ongoing digitisation of the herbarium, including the maintenance and development of our BRAHMS database, and the maintenance and operation of the digital imaging suite. Support and develop the strategy and programme for digitisation, including a target-driven approach. Maintain and develop volunteer and citizen science approaches to collections digitisation.

Research & utilisation: Respond to all enquiries from the public and academics. Facilitate use of the collections for research and teaching purposes both on site and through loans, undertake collections-based research to support non-visiting researchers, assist visitors on site and respond to visitor feedback. Maintain excellent record keeping and data on all herbarium utilisation for quarterly, grant and annual reporting.

Communication & networking: Maintain and develop networks with other Herbaria nationally and internationally for the exchange of information and good practice, and organisation of loans. Maintain and develop cross-disciplinary links with other University departments and institutions, for example Cambridge University Museums, History and Philosophy of Science, Sainsbury Lab Cambridge, Department of Plant Sciences, Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Support herbarium related communication for example via physical exhibitions, social media (e.g. Twitter), maintenance of website content, google arts & culture, departmental newsletters, and blogs.

Key responsibilities continued

Training & education: Oversee the selection, induction, training and work of a team of volunteers and occasional temporary fixed-term staff working on specific projects, as required. Support undergraduate and graduate training and curricula through the provision of lectures or workshops on herbaria. Support the training of external researchers and other stakeholders in the making and taking of herbarium specimens, and the access and use of online and physical herbarium meta-data.

Strategy & fundraising: Support strategic planning for the Herbarium including the development of public-facing strategic documents. Support and contribute to the writing of grants and funding bids. Support relationships with potential donors, with advice from CUDAR, with the long-term goal of increasing posts and sustainability of the Herbarium. Advises the academic lead and Plant Sciences on inclusion of herbarium in core departmental strategic aims.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Education		
A first degree in a related discipline in natural sciences and natural history.	✓	
A postgraduate museum-based or taxonomic qualification, or equivalent experience.		✓
Experience		
Experience in the management and care of herbarium collections.	✓	
High degree of understanding and knowledge with respect to plant taxonomy and nomenclature.	✓	
Experience with digitisation, imaging, databases and online global repositories.	✓	
Experience in facilitating the utilisation of herbarium specimens by diverse researchers from both scientific and humanities fields,	✓	
Skills		
A high level of written and verbal communications skills.	✓	
Ability to work as part of a team and provide leadership.	✓	
Motivated, with proven prioritisation.	✓	

The Department of Plant Sciences



The Department of Plant Sciences at Cambridge University maintains teaching and research specialisms across a wide range of plant science disciplines (from molecular and developmental biology, through cell-signalling, biochemistry and physiology to epidemiology, ecology and ecosystem modelling) with 21 academic staff leading active research groups, 5 independent research fellows (funded by the Royal Society, EC and NERC), 3 senior research associates, 70 post-doctoral researchers and 58 support staff. Research grant income in 2020/21 was £16M, with the Department currently administering a total of 74 grants from a variety of sources, including research councils, Royal Society, charities, EU, industry and government agencies. The Department has strong links with both Cambridge University Botanic Garden and the Sainsbury Laboratory Cambridge. The Department occupies the main building on the Downing Site, which includes a Teaching Laboratory, the Plant Growth Facility and Algal Innovation Facility at the Botanic Garden, and the Crop Science Centre on Huntingdon Road.

Cambridge is one of only a few UK universities where undergraduates can study plant science separately, and often provides over half of all UK

graduates in the subject. It is essential to provide cohorts of skilled and informed plant scientists, if the impact of plant science research is to be translated into agriculture, industry, conservation and policy. There are approximately 95 postgraduate students, based in the Department and at the Sainsbury Laboratory and NIAB. Our PhD students go on to prestigious fellowships and influential scientific positions worldwide.

The Department is committed to providing a friendly, supportive and inclusive environment in which all can reach their potential, regardless of gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, age, religious belief or disability. The Department has been central to supporting women at Cambridge University. Professor Enid MacRobbie FRS, was the first female science Professor at Cambridge, and the first female Head of Plant Sciences. Alison Smith, Professor of Plant Biochemistry, became the second female Head of Department in October 2017. Department members participate in collaborations on a worldwide basis. We regularly welcome national and international visitors, including academics, researchers, students and interns.

The School of Biological Sciences

The School of the Biological Sciences is one of the six Schools that are responsible for delivering teaching and research and the administration of those activities within the University. The School delivers internationally-leading research and teaching on animal, plant and microbial science at scales that range from the atomic, molecular and cellular through whole organisms to populations and communities. The research impacts on the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries, on human and animal health and the clinic as well as in conservation, agriculture and the environment.



About the School

The School of the Biological Sciences encompasses the Faculty Board of Biology and the Faculty Board of Veterinary Medicine and is represented on the Faculty Board of Clinical Medicine. It has responsibilities across four Triposes (the Natural Sciences Tripos, the Medical Sciences Tripos, the Veterinary Sciences Tripos and the Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos).

It shares the Graduate School of Life Sciences, Graduate Committee and Medical Education Committee with the Clinical School. It has its own Degree Committee. It includes nine Departments and the Centre for Family Studies, plus five major research Institutes and an animal hospital. The School is a key player in the Cambridge Conservation Initiative as well as the majority of Cambridge Strategic Initiatives. The School is associated with the Museum of Zoology and the Botanic Garden. Key officers of the School plus details of relevant Research Ethics Committees (Human Biology, Psychology) can be found on the School's website. Various subcommittees report to the Council, as required.

Formal representation on the Council of the School (its most senior decision-making body) is outlined in Chapter 8 of the University's Statutes and Ordinances. Heads of

School Institutes, as well as Heads of Departments, are currently co-opted on to the Council, together with representatives of the three Faculty Boards. In addition, the Head of the Botanic Garden and a representative from the School of Technology attend as observers.

Most of the detailed information about research and teaching in the School is to be found on the departments' web sites. The members of the Gurdon Institute, the Sainsbury Laboratory and the Systems Biology Centre have affiliations with departments in the School. The Stem Cell Institute and Milner Institute also have affiliations within the School of Clinical Medicine.

Athena SWAN

The Athena SWAN Charter was launched in June 2005 to recognise and reward commitment to advancing the careers of women working in higher education in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).

The University of Cambridge was a founder member of Athena SWAN Charter and the University won its first award in the inaugural round of March 2006. Since then, the University has successfully renewed its Bronze Athena SWAN award in 2009 and 2012 and in 2014 achieved a Silver Athena SWAN award.

Many of the Departments in the School of Biological Sciences hold awards at Bronze or Silver level and the School continues to support the Athena SWAN process across all subjects.

Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation

This is a fixed term appointment until 31st July 2029.

Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six month probationary period.

Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are 37 hours per week. Part time hours will be considered.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a defined benefits pension scheme. For further information please visit:

www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk

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Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 41 days, inclusive of public holidays (pro rata for part time).

General information

Pre-employment checks

Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

Health declaration

Once an offer of employment has been made the successful candidate will be required to complete a work health declaration form.

Qualifications

The person specification for this position lists qualifications that are essential and/or desirable. Please note that if you are offered the post you will be asked to provide your relevant original certificates of these qualifications.

References - offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Information if you have a disability

The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the recruitment process. We will make adjustments to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability wherever it is reasonable to do so and, if successful, to assist them during their employment. Information for disabled applicants is available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/staff/disabled/>

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require, in the section provided for this purpose in the application form. This will enable us to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. However, applicants and employees may declare a disability at any time.

If you prefer to discuss any special arrangements connected with a disability, please contact the Department Administrator, Catherine Butler, who is responsible for recruitment to this position.

The University

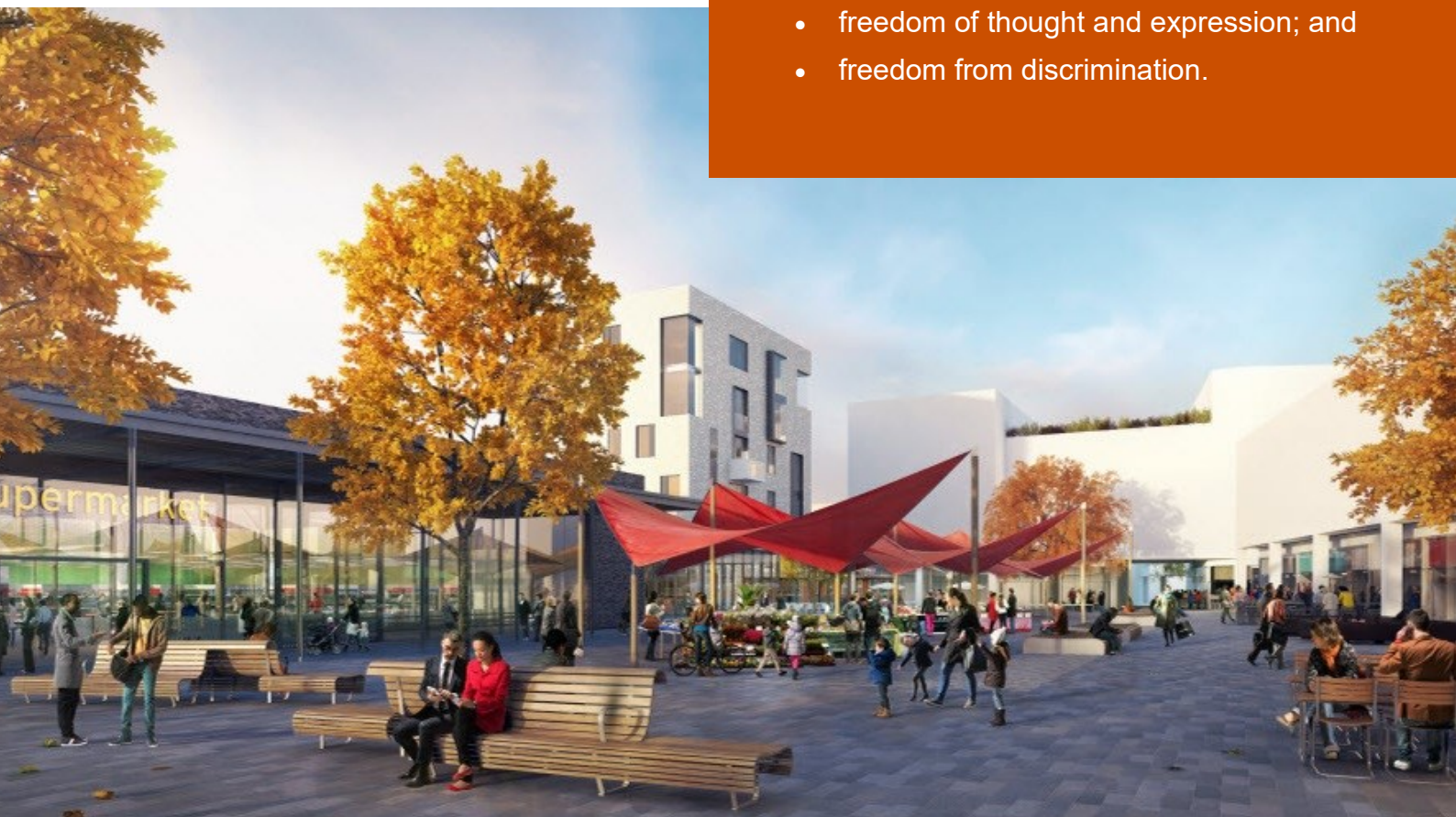
The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates have won more Nobel Prizes than any other University.

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of first-class teaching and research within a distinctive collegiate system. For eight centuries our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our principal goal is to remain one of the world's leading universities in an increasingly competitive global higher education sector. Today the University of Cambridge is at the centre of a cluster of over 4,300 businesses employing 58,000 people.

Our capital investment projects include the West Cambridge site, the North West Cambridge development and the growth of the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. The North West Cambridge development and the growth of the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. The North West Cambridge development includes the opening of a primary school – the first in the UK to be managed by a University. So we are deeply embedded in, and committed to serving, our local community. These are all conspicuous signs of a University that is not only adapting to new needs, but also anticipating the future.

Our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Our core values are:

- freedom of thought and expression; and
- freedom from discrimination.





About us

The University is one of the world's leading academic centres.

It comprises 150 faculties and departments, together with a central administration and other institutions. Our institutions, museums and collections are a world-class resource for researchers, students and members of the public representing one of the country's highest concentrations of internationally important collections.

The University has an annual income of £1.66 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £400 million per annum and continues to grow.

The Colleges and the University remain committed to admitting the best students regardless of their background and to investing considerable resources both in widening access and financial support.

The 31 Colleges are self-governing, separate legal entities which appoint their own staff. Many academic staff are invited to join a College as a Teaching Fellow, which provides a further social and intellectual dimension. The Colleges admit students, provide student accommodation and deliver small group teaching.

Our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our campaign, 'Dear World... Yours, Cambridge', will raise £2 billion to help us shape all our futures.

The University awards degrees and its faculties and departments provide lectures and seminars for students and determine the syllabi for teaching and conducting research.

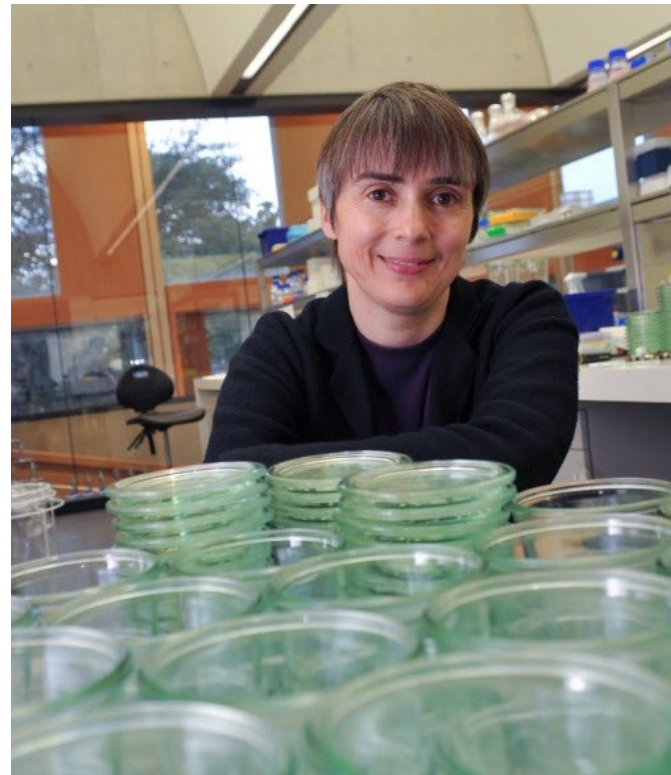
The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a new science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is now expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University key workers and community facilities. Even with our continued development, the University remains within walking or cycling distance across the campus. The University is a major partner on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and we continue to redevelop our historic city centre sites demonstrating our determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.

Our instinct for seeking out excellence and setting up enduring and mutually beneficial collaborations has led us to establish strategic partnerships across the globe. Whether it is the successful Cambridge-Africa Programme involving universities in Ghana, Uganda and elsewhere on the African continent; or the close association with the government of India to pursue new research in crop science; or the creation, with Germany's Max Planck Institutes, of a Cambridge-based centre for the study of ethics, human economy and social change – international partnerships are now an inextricable part of the University's make-up.

Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 18,000 students and over 11,000 staff from all walks of life and corners of the world.

The University continually explores strategies to attract and retain the best people. It is committed to supporting its staff to achieve their best. We are a fair, diverse and inclusive society and we believe our staff are our greatest asset. There is strong commitment to developing institutional leadership and supporting and encouraging staff development at all levels. Furthermore, the University's Athena SWAN award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women. We offer a variety of roles including academic, research, professional, managerial and support roles. We also offer extensive benefits and excellent learning opportunities within a stimulating working environment. The University has signed up to the Race Equality Charter, a notional framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.



Living in Cambridge



Cambridge is rich in cultural diversity. From beautiful University and College buildings, museums and art galleries, quaint gardens and punts on the River Cam, to a vibrant restaurant and café scene, our employees are surrounded by the wonderful features of this unique city.

If you prefer the faster pace of life, London is a 45 minute train journey away. For those travelling from overseas, Stansted Airport is just 45 minutes away and Heathrow Airport under 2 hours away.



The University is a short distance from a host of other attractions such as Ely Cathedral, Newmarket Races and various wildlife parks and stately homes. Cambridge is also within easy reach of the beautiful Broads and coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk.

Further information about attractions in and around Cambridge can be found at [Visit Cambridge](#), the official tourism website for the city.

What Cambridge can offer

We offer a comprehensive reward package to attract, motivate and retain high performing staff at all levels and in all areas of work.

The University offers a wide range of competitive benefits, from family leave entitlement, to shopping and travel discount schemes. Our generous annual leave package contributes to the positive wellbeing of our University employees. Sabbatical leave enables academics to focus on research and scholarship, whilst still maintaining their full salary. The University also has a career break scheme for academic and academic-related staff, with additional flexible working policies for all other staff.



CAMbens employee benefits

We offer a CAMbens scheme for University employees, providing access to online and in-store shopping discounts and cashback. With more than 2,000 participating retailers, employees can save money on a wide range of household expenses, from groceries and clothes, to holidays and insurance and much more. A range of local discounts are also available, helping employees to save money whilst also supporting local Cambridge businesses. CAMbens Cars and CAMbens Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes are also available, which enable employees to save money on transport costs. A 10% discount rate on the purchase of train season tickets, bulk buy tickets and an interest free travel to work loan are also available for staff of the University.

Family-friendly policies

The University recognises the importance of supporting its staff. We have a range of family-friendly policies to aid employees' work-life balance including a generous maternity, adoption and shared parental leave entitlement of 18 weeks full pay and emergency family care support via My Family Care. In addition, our highly regarded workplace nurseries, childcare vouchers, a childcare salary sacrifice scheme and a high quality holiday play scheme are available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities. The Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Group is an organisation within the University run by volunteers whose aim is to help newly arrived wives, husbands, partners and families of Visiting Scholars and members of the University to settle in Cambridge and give them an opportunity to meet local people. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. Further details are available here: <https://www.opda.cam.ac.uk/>

Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities. The encouragement of career development for all staff is one of the University's values and we put this into practice through various services and initiatives. Our Personal and Professional Development Department provides development opportunities and courses for all University employees. These include face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. Employees may also apply for financial support to undertake training that will lead to a qualification. We offer reduced staff fees for University of Cambridge graduate courses and the opportunity to attend lectures and seminars held by University departments and institutions. The CareerStart@Cam programme also supports employees in assistant staff roles who do not hold higher education qualifications to develop their skills, experience and qualifications.

What Cambridge can offer

Pay and benefits

The University salary structure includes automatic service-related pay progression in many of its grades and an annual cost of living increase. In addition to this, employees are rewarded for outstanding contribution through a number of regular pay progression schemes. The University offers attractive pensions schemes for employees, with an additional benefit of a salary exchange arrangement providing tax and national insurance savings. Payroll giving is also a simple, tax-efficient way for employees to make monthly donations to charity.

Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity networks for women, black and minority ethnic and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff. More details are available here: <http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

Relocating to Cambridge

The University Accommodation Service exists to help employees in their search for a rental home in Cambridge. A new University development at North West Cambridge called Eddington offers subsidised rented accommodation to University staff. The development consists of high quality furnished one and two bedroom apartments. For more information about the development and how to apply please visit the website:

www.nwcambridge.co.uk

The importance of helping individuals settle into a new area is also recognised by the University. The Shared Equity Scheme <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/cambens-employee-benefits/financial/shared-equity-scheme> provides financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the purchase of living accommodation, where they have to relocate to take up their appointment. Removal expenses are also available for qualifying new members of staff.

Your wellbeing

The University's Sport Centre, Counselling Services and Occupational Health are just some of the support services available to University employees to promote their physical and mental wellbeing. There are many societies in Cambridge catering for almost every taste and interest. Whether you want to take part in a sport, participate in music or drama, pursue a hobby, or join a political group, you will almost certainly find that a society exists for this purpose. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Science Festival](#) and [Cambridge Festival of Ideas](#), as well as [Open Cambridge](#) weekend, which together attract over 50,000 visitors per year. The festivals are a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.



Whether it is understanding the molecular basis of neurodegenerative diseases, or helping farmers in India increase their yield, or discovering better ways to live in large cities – I know that what we do in Cambridge affects lives, and livelihoods, the world over.

Vice Chancellor Emeritus, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, 2016

How to apply

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Cambridge jobs page www.jobs.cam.ac.uk by clicking “Apply online” in the job advert. You will need an email address to register for our online system.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:
Prof Sam Brockington on sb771@cam.ac.uk

Please ensure that you outline how you match the criteria for the post and why you are applying for this role on the online application form.

Please include details of your referees, including e-mail address and phone number, one of which should be your most recent line manager.

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact Katrina Wilson on kjw63@cam.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is 10 January 2025.