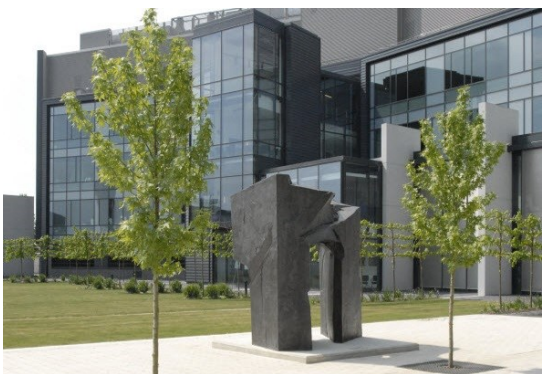
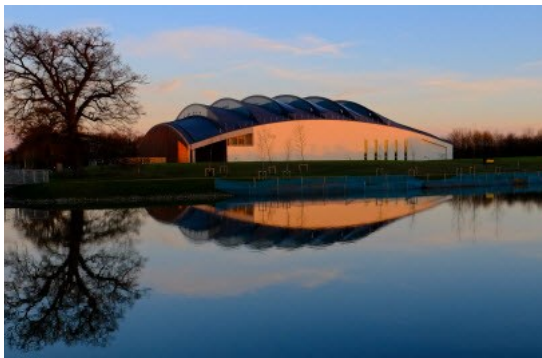


Assistant Professor

Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER),
Institute for Technology and Humanity

Closing Date: Sunday 29 September 2024

Job Reference: GO42485



Assistant Professor

Salary:

£45,585—£57,696

Contract:

Fixed term—4 years

Location:

Central Cambridge

Department:

Institute for Technology
and Humanity - The
Centre for the Study of
Existential Risk (CSER)

Working pattern:

Full-time

Role Overview

The Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER) seeks to appoint two Assistant Professors. The posts will lead the world's first full-time postgraduate course in Existential Risk Studies, an MPhil in Global Risk and Resilience, with the first intake planned for October 2025. CSER produces world-leading research on risks that could lead to human extinction or civilisational collapse. It is also a hub for academics, technologists and policymakers, where the team is expected to work across theoretical and practical specialisms and to generate impact outside academia. The new MPhil will help define best research practices and credential new cohorts of researchers and practitioners. It will build a larger and more impactful community, taking this emerging field into new sectors and geographies.

The two role holders will be hired with complementary backgrounds, with the aim of covering a range of skills and subject matter expertise including:

Skills and methodologies:

- Analytical, ethical, and economic frameworks for risk identification and assessment
- Systems modelling and complexity science
- Participatory methods such as scenario exercises and horizon scanning
- Policy design, co-creation, and evaluation for risk mitigation

Specialist subject areas:

- Future technological developments with transformative potential (AI, biotech, or geoengineering)
- Global systems breakdown (climate change and biosphere disintegration, biosecurity, or food security)
- Natural global scale disasters (asteroids, volcanic supereruptions, or space weather)
- International security (nuclear, geopolitics, and/or international diplomacy)

Given this is a new MPhil, there will also be emphasis on a proven ability to design and manage postgraduate courses.

The successful candidate will be based at CSER in Cambridge. Contingent on their specialist research areas and home disciplines, they may also have a reporting line to one of the University's other Faculties or Departments.

Assistant Professor

We expect the role holders to develop the MPhil's curriculum and deliver the majority of the teaching, and coordinate marking, supervising and other aspects of the course, together with a Postgraduate Co-ordinator and Teaching Associate. Colleagues from CSER and other departments are available to support teaching on specialist topics and elective modules. CSER is based in the Institute for Technology and Humanity (ITH), home to two existing postgraduate programmes and another new MPhil set up alongside this one. This wider community will provide guidance to the role holders and offer opportunities for shared projects.

The appointee will be expected to have the potential to develop and publish high-level research and publish in appropriate journals, and to ensure their research has impact through engagement with other stakeholders. They will also be expected to pursue external funding, primarily as a principal investigator on interdisciplinary and collaborative grants. The post holder will be expected also to contribute to the successful running of CSER in the short and long term.

More information about CSER and our research can be found at <https://www.cser.ac.uk/>.



Key Responsibilities

Post-holders will be expected to:

Teaching

- Co-lead design of the MPhil's curriculum
- Prepare and deliver core and relevant specialist MPhil modules
- Supervise and examine MPhil students
- Provide guidance and advice to students, and respond to student feedback
- Take an active role in recruiting applicants to the MPhil
- Contribute to other educational programmes

Research

- Conduct and publish original research of international reach and significance
- Pursue funding and establish interdisciplinary and collaborative research programmes

Administration

- Contribute to CSER administration, including recruitment, communication and financial planning
- Advise and mentor research colleagues
- Maintain leadership within own discipline, including attending conferences and peer review
- Develop and maintain networks with academic, civil society and policy communities
- Contribute to ITH's educational strategy in the short and long term

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Education		
Educated to PhD level (or clear evidence that completion is imminent) in a relevant discipline.	✓	
Research and Teaching		
Evidence of flexibility and range in teaching at an undergraduate and/or postgraduate level	✓	
Evidence of experience of course or curriculum development	✓	
Aptitude for organising teaching	✓	
Commitment to take a leading role in the supervision of students	✓	
Evidence of broad and interdisciplinary research interests	✓	
Potential to engage in research of international significance and a developing portfolio of research publications, appropriate to career stage.	✓	
Evidence of clear plans for future research	✓	
Experience of designing and delivering research projects	✓	
Experience of fundraising efforts		✓
Experience leading collaborative research projects		✓
Leadership experience and achievements		
Ability and enthusiasm to take a leadership role in a team and engage with a range of stakeholders	✓	
Ability to play an effective role in the life and work of ITH and willingness to contribute equitably to administrative tasks	✓	
Experience of, and/or aptitude for organising and participating in collaborative teaching and research in an interdisciplinary environment	✓	
Evidence of ability to take an inclusive approach towards teaching and working with (or supporting) colleagues	✓	
Experience of strategy development or senior management		✓
Experience of engaging with communities of experts	✓	
Existing networks across relevant academic, industry, civil society and policy communities		✓
Additional requirements		
Enthusiasm to work on impact-driven research with the goal of understanding and mitigating global catastrophic risk	✓	

The institute for Technology and Humanity

The Institute is home to three University Research Centres: [The Centre for the Study of Existential Risk](#), the [Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence](#) and [the Centre for Human-inspired AI](#). By integrating cross-centre strengths, facilitating synergies, and catalysing new collaborations, the Institute combines the arts, humanities and social sciences alongside the natural, health and technical sciences in order to address the great issues of our time.

More information is available at: www.ith.cam.ac.uk.

Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER)

The Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER) is an interdisciplinary research centre within the University of Cambridge dedicated to the study and mitigation of risks that could lead to human extinction or civilisational collapse. We study existential risks, develop collaborative strategies to reduce them, and foster a global community of academics, technologists and policy-makers working to safeguard humanity.

More information is available at www.cser.ac.uk



The School of Arts and Humanities



The School of Arts and Humanities is one of six schools in the University and it is currently comprised of:

- Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
- Faculty of Architecture and History of Art
- Faculty of Classics
- Faculty of Divinity
- Faculty of English
- Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics
- Faculty of Music
- Faculty of Philosophy
- Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
- University of Cambridge Language Centre
- Institute for Technology and Humanity

Combined, these institutions have a total annual budget in excess of £45million, 700 staff and 3,500 students. The School has recently agreed a new strategic plan, which sets out its overarching vision and objectives.

Vision

The Strategic Vision of the School of Arts and Humanities is to retain its position in the world top five. We see this not as a simple metric but as a challenge for which we must foster a culture and practice of openness: to countries and traditions around the globe, to major themes, to new ways of teaching, to diversity in our student intake and staff recruitment, to inclusiveness in our career development, and to the breaking down of structures that prevent us achieving the ambitious goals we set ourselves.

Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation

Appointment will be made on a fixed-term basis for 4 years. Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period which will be set dependant on the length of tenure.

Hours of Work and Working

Pattern The appointment is full-time working Monday—Friday.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a defined benefits pension scheme. If you are already a member of the NHS Pension scheme, you may be eligible to continue in the scheme and should contact the Pensions section of the University. For further information please visit: www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk

Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 41 days inclusive of public holidays. For new part-time employees, annual leave will be pro rata'd based on days worked.

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.

Equality and Diversity

We particularly encourage women and /or candidates from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background to apply for this vacancy as they are currently under-represented at this level within our University.

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 Schools HR team who are responsible for recruitment to this position on sahhr@admin.cam.ac.uk

The University

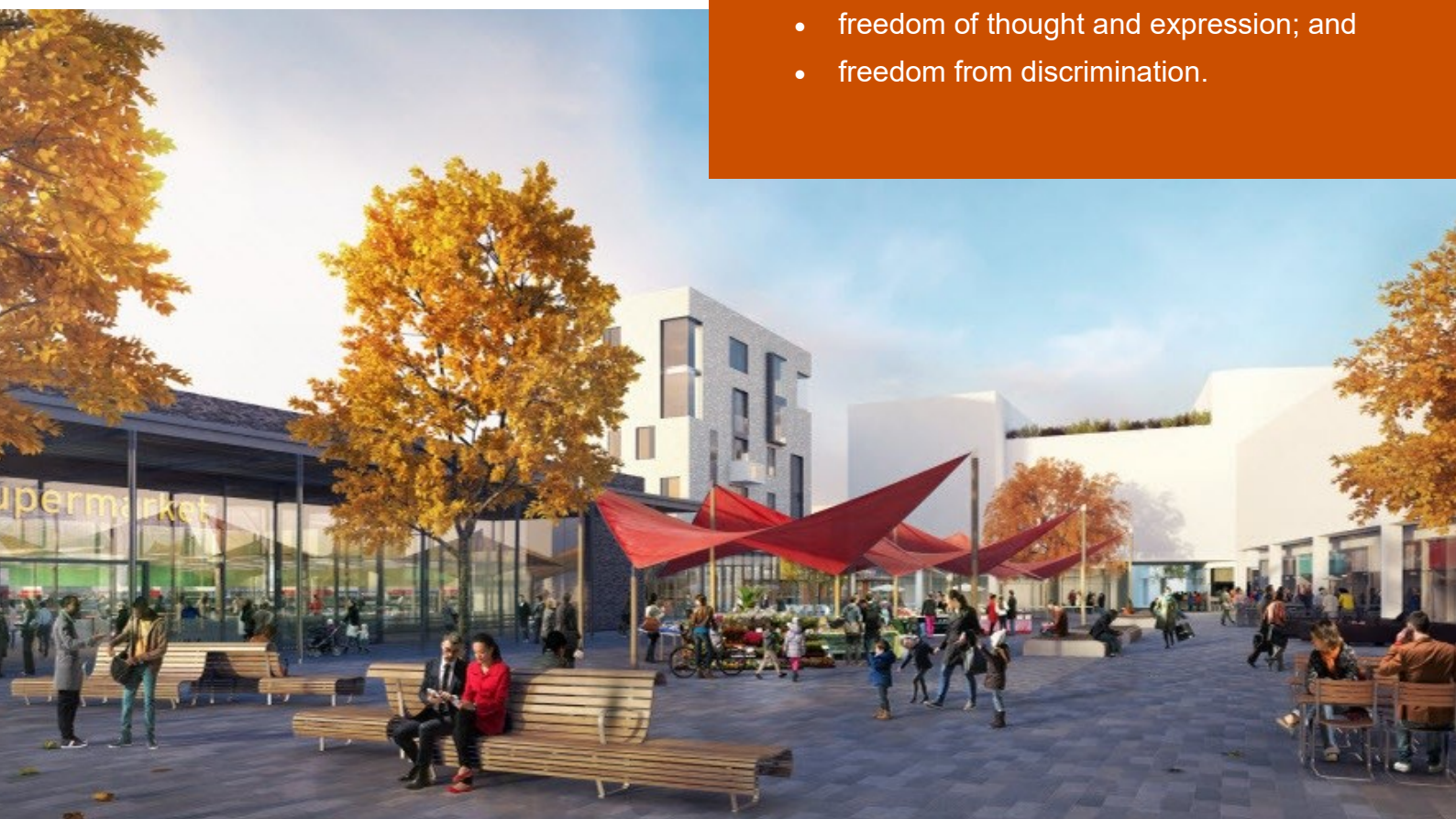
The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates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

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of world-leading 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 academic and commercial growth at both the West Cambridge Innovation District, and the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. Eddington, in North West Cambridge, is a mixed-use development including key worker housing for staff, a community centre and a new primary school, managed by the University. Through these projects, the University is 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 £2 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £500 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 undergraduate students, provide student accommodation and pastoral support and deliver small group teaching for undergraduates.

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

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.

“Cambridge graduates and researchers have made – and continue to make – a colossal contribution to human knowledge and the understanding of the world around us. Their work touches on the lives and livelihoods of everyone from patients diagnosed with life-threatening diseases, to residents of areas critically affected by climate change, to children growing up in conflict zones. It has a lasting impact on our society, our economy and our culture: the world is truly a better place thanks to their efforts.”

Stephen Toope, Vice Chancellor 2019



Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 23,000 students and over 16,000 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.

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'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.



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 groups, including the Women's Staff Network, Race Equality Network and LGBT+ Staff Network. More details are available here: <http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter award, with a framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's silver Athena swan award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting gender equality.

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.

You can find a wide-range of high street shops and 3 shopping centres, with independent alternatives at the historic market and nestled within the passageways in the city centre. You will find a cinema, bowling alley, a nightclub and various live performances at the Cambridge Leisure Park, with further entertainment options at the Corn Exchange, Arts Theatre and the ADC Theatre. Further information can be found on the [Visit Cambridge](#) website.

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.



Relocation Support

The University recognises the importance of helping individuals to move and settle into a new area. We provide support and guidance to those relocating internationally or domestically to take up a post at the University of Cambridge, liaising with other University offices and selected partners to ensure comprehensive relocation support is available. This includes: accommodation, childcare, schools, banking, immigration and transport. If you would like further information, please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/RelocationService/>. The Shared Equity Scheme and the Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses Scheme provide financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the costs of relocating to Cambridge. For staff who require a Skilled Worker Visa, Global Talent Visa or Settlement (known as indefinite leave to remain) to take up employment with the University, we offer an interest free [visa loan scheme](#) for current and prospective staff (and their dependants), to help meeting the cost of obtaining a visa.

Accommodation Service

The University Accommodation Service helps staff, students and visiting scholars who are affiliated to the University in their search for suitable accommodation in Cambridge. The dedicated accommodation team can provide access to a wide range of University-owned furnished and unfurnished properties, and has a database of private sector accommodation available for short and long-term lets. For further information and to register with this free service please visit <https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/>

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.

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.



CAMbens employee benefits

The University offers employees a wide range of competitive benefits, known as CAMbens. CAMbens offers something for everyone across a range of categories, including:

- Financial Benefits, including shopping discounts (both local and national) and a Payroll Giving scheme;
- Relocation and Accommodation Benefits, including relocation assistance and interest-free Rental Deposit Loans;
- Travel Benefits, including Cycle to Work, discounts on train season tickets and interest-free Travel to Work loans;
- Family Friendly and Lifestyle Benefits, including support with childcare and family friendly policies;
- Health and Wellbeing Benefits, including a University Staff Counselling Service, discounts at the University Sports Centre, and other local gyms, and healthcare schemes.



What Cambridge can offer

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 paid emergency leave for parents and carers.

Other family-friendly support includes:

Our highly regarded workplace nurseries, a childcare salary exchange scheme and a high quality holiday Playscheme may be available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities (subject to demand and qualifying criteria). Further childcare information can be found here: <https://www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

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 Postdoc Academy supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. Further details are available here: <https://www.postdocacademy.cam.ac.uk/>

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. The University delivers The Festival of Wellbeing annually, which is a programme of stimulating talks and activities, which aim to promote wellbeing and good mental and physical health. The University also hosts the [Cambridge Festival](#), which is a great opportunity to get your first taste of public engagement, through volunteering, supporting hands-on activities or proposing a talk.

Development opportunities

We support new employees to settle in through various activities as well as supporting their professional and career development on an ongoing basis. Our Personal and Professional Development (PPD) team provide development opportunities for all University employees, including face-to-face sessions, online learning modules and webinars. All employees also have unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning to support their development. Both new and existing employees can undertake funded Apprenticeships, which lead to a range of vocational and professional qualifications. 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. A range of University training providers also offer specialist learning and development in their own areas e.g. teaching and learning, digital literacy, finance, health and wellbeing, safety.



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.

Conversations about flexible working are encouraged at the University of Cambridge. Please feel free to discuss flexibility prior to applying (using the contact information below) or at interview if your application is successful.

In order for your application to be considered, please upload the following documents:

- Covering letter
- Curriculum vitae, including publications
- ONE article- or chapter-length writing sample (max 10,000 words)

Applicants must provide the names and contact details of **three referees** who are familiar with their work in the relevant field. Please ensure that your three referees submit their references directly to references@csah.cam.ac.uk before the closing date.

Inquiries about the role may be addressed to Matthew Connelly at recruitment@cser.cam.ac.uk. For questions about the process, please contact the Schools HR Team on sahhr@admin.cam.ac.uk.

The closing date is midnight (BST) on Sunday 29 September 2024 and interviews are planned for early November, subject to change.



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE