

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK – PR42803

Group Leader Research Fellowships at the Gurdon Institute

LETTER FROM BEN SIMONS

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest to join the Gurdon Institute as a Group Leader.

With a history dating back more than 30 years, the Gurdon Institute is internationally renowned for its research into developmental and disease biology. Its researchers have made seminal contributions to a broad range of scientific areas with relevance to stem cell biology, epigenetics, cellular reprogramming, and the treatment of human disease. Crucially, discoveries of Institute researchers have been translated to develop therapies to target cancer, neurodegenerative diseases, and other disorders, with drug compounds now used in the clinic. The nurturing, collaborative, and collegial environment has attracted talent from across the globe, providing a training arena that has launched the careers of exceptional scientists that populate Universities and Institutes world-wide.

Maintaining the ethos and vision of its founders as a crucible for innovation, the Institute has made the strategic decision to evolve its activities towards human developmental biology, establishing it as a hub of research that stands at the intersection of basic science and translation, and draws together activities across the Cambridge campus and affiliated Institutions.

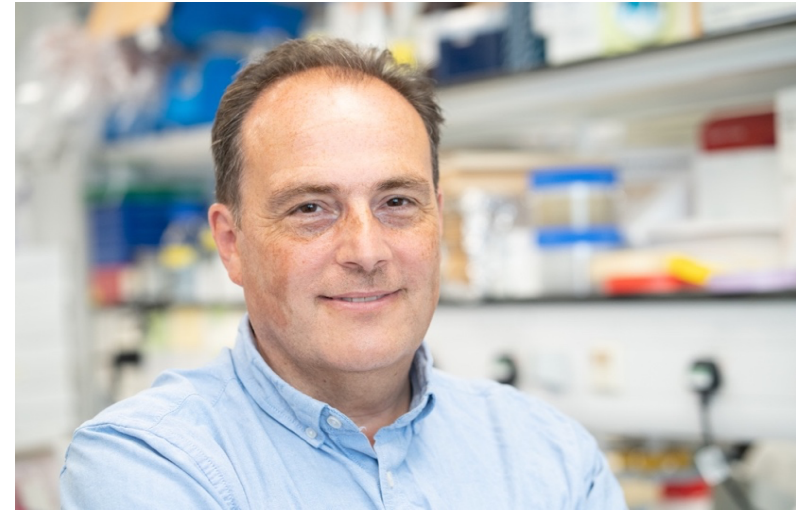
The Institute is a friendly, vibrant and exciting place to work. At capacity, the Gurdon building hosts around 300 researchers and staff, comprising 16-20 group leaders, 250 scientific staff including PhD students, and 40 support staff. The Institute is embedded in the University of Cambridge and has interactions across Cambridge's vibrant research environment, which is the largest biomedical research campus in Europe.

The University of Cambridge was founded more than eight centuries ago, and its research has had a profound impact both locally and globally. The achievements of Cambridge scientists are renowned, and the University is world-leading in science and technology. Today, the University encourages multidisciplinary collaborative research as a means of tackling the most profound challenges of our era, and continues to educate and champion brilliant minds, facilitate collaboration and catalyse world-changing ideas. Our mission at the Gurdon Institute is to continue to push the boundaries of scientific progress through world-leading research.

We look forward to receiving an application from you.

Best wishes,

Professor Ben Simons
Director, Gurdon Institute



THE GURDON INSTITUTE

With a history dating back more than 30 years, the Gurdon Institute is internationally renowned for its research into developmental and disease biology. Maintaining its ethos and vision as a crucible for scientific innovation and translation, the Institute will evolve its research towards an emphasis on human developmental biology, interpreted broadly. This includes research that impacts directly or indirectly on human embryology, tissue morphogenesis and organ development, regeneration, ageing and disease processes. Our approach will continue to combine a wide range of methodologies from the study of model organisms and 3D organ culture systems to computational methods and theoretical approaches. Our long-term aim is to establish a hub that draws together activities in human biology across the Cambridge campus, including our colleagues at the Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research and the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute, as well as affiliated Institutions including Babraham and the Sanger.

To develop this programme, we are seeking to recruit two Group Leaders with complementary interests, who are interactive, and for whom we feel that we can provide the best support to advance their career.

HOW TO JOIN US

We are seeking to recruit Group Leaders supported by career fellowships such as those provided by the Royal Society, Wellcome, ERC and UKRI. For those interested in pursuing this opportunity, please submit your CV with publications list as well as a research proposal (up to two pages including figures) to the Director (director@gurdon.cam.ac.uk) and complete the expression of interest [form](#) with a closing date for the first round of October 15th 2024.

Researchers who are already in receipt of fellowship funding and wish to relocate to the Institute should contact the Director (director@gurdon.cam.ac.uk).

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to give a research presentation and meet with Group Leaders at the Institute as well as colleagues in partnering Departments in the School. The outcome of the selection process is expected to be completed at the beginning of 2025.

On appointment, successful applicants will also become a member of a partnering Department. At present, the Gurdon Institute comprises Group Leaders from across a range of Departments including Biochemistry, Genetics, Pathology, and Physiology, Development and Neuroscience (PDN), as well as Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics.

WHAT WE CAN OFFER

On joining the Institute, successful applicants will be assigned lab space according to need, have full access to all Institute facilities as well as the School's shared technology platforms, and be supported by an exceptional team of Professional Services staff. You will also become a member of a partnering Department in the School of Biological Sciences. Researchers holding qualifying Early Career Fellowships will be enrolled on the [School's Fellowship Framework](#), which provides a platform to nurture their development as independent group leaders and a pathway towards securing a permanent faculty post. You will also have access to the network of [Research Themes](#), which provide the opportunity for wider collegiate and collaborative engagement across and beyond the School. The University of Cambridge provides access to world-class PhD programmes and is a magnet to attract outstanding postdoctoral researchers.

Research Fellowships

Research Fellowships provide start-up funding that enable exceptional postdoctoral researchers to establish their own research group and make the transition to principal investigator within a host institution in the UK. The tenure of these awards varies, but they typically provide 5 years funding or more.

The Institute welcomes applications from potential career development fellows whose work synergises with our strategic research priorities. At present, we are particularly interested in supporting applications from researchers whose work impacts directly or indirectly on the field of human developmental biology.

Potential sources of funding for Research Fellowship applications include:

- [BBSRC Discovery Fellowship](#)
- [ERC Starting Grant](#)
- [MRC Early Career Award](#)
- [Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship](#)
- [Royal Society University Research Fellowship](#)
- [Wellcome Trust Career Development Fellowship](#)
- [UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship](#)
- [British Heart Foundation](#)
- [CRUK Developmental Fellowship](#)

Please note that recruitment is a rolling process, and we are always happy to receive enquiries at any time about sponsorship for future rounds. Those interested should contact the Institute Director (director@gurdon.cam.ac.uk).

TERMS OF ARRANGEMENT

LOCATION

Central Cambridge

Wellcome Trust/Cancer Research UK Gurdon Institute,
Henry Wellcome Building of Cancer and Developmental
Biology, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge, CB2 1QN, UK.

HOURS OF WORK AND WORKING PATTERN

Full Time: There are no conditions relating to hours and times of work but you are expected to work such hours and days as are reasonably necessary for the proper performance of your duties.
Your times of work should be agreed between you and Director.

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 with us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, our HR Team hr@gurdon.cam.ac.uk shall be able to help.

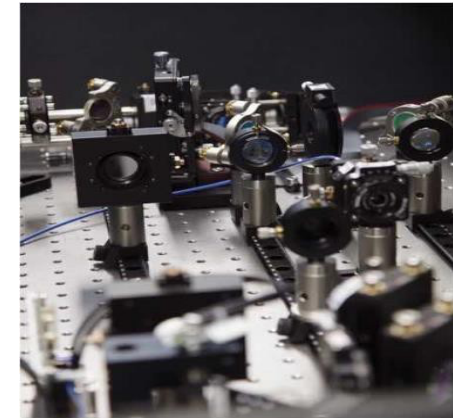
Offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references. Applicants should ensure that their referees provide references within two weeks.



HOW TO APPLY

Researchers who are already in receipt of fellowship funding and wish to relocate to the Institute should contact either the Director (director@gurdon.cam.ac.uk).

Researchers who wish to apply for a Group Leader Research Fellowship to work at the Gurdon Institute should submit their expression of interest [via this form](#) and submit an application (CV with publication list and a 2 pages Research Proposal) to the [Director](#) to discuss the process.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Own Lab:

The post holder will establish and run their own lab, leading an independent research programme to carry out research that will complement that of other groups within the Institute and be in the field of developmental biology.

Recruitment, Training, Supervision:

The post holder will recruit, train and supervise members of their group, which may include postdoctoral researchers, research assistants, technical staff and students. They will act as first-line mentor for their group members.

Funding:

The post holder will be expected to apply for funding to run his/her lab and assist lab members in making further funding applications where required. The post holder will be responsible for compliance with grant terms and conditions, including open access requirements.

Publishing and dissemination of results:

The post holder will be expected to establish a strong track record of high impact research and disseminate the results of his/her work via conferences, seminars, and other platforms.

Safety and Compliance:

The post holder will be responsible for safety within the group, including responsibility for compliance with all relevant laws (Home Office, HTA, etc).

Institute and University:

The post holder will be expected to play an active part in the Institute as a whole, contributing to both its scientific and social life, and acting as second mentor for postdocs and research assistants from other groups.

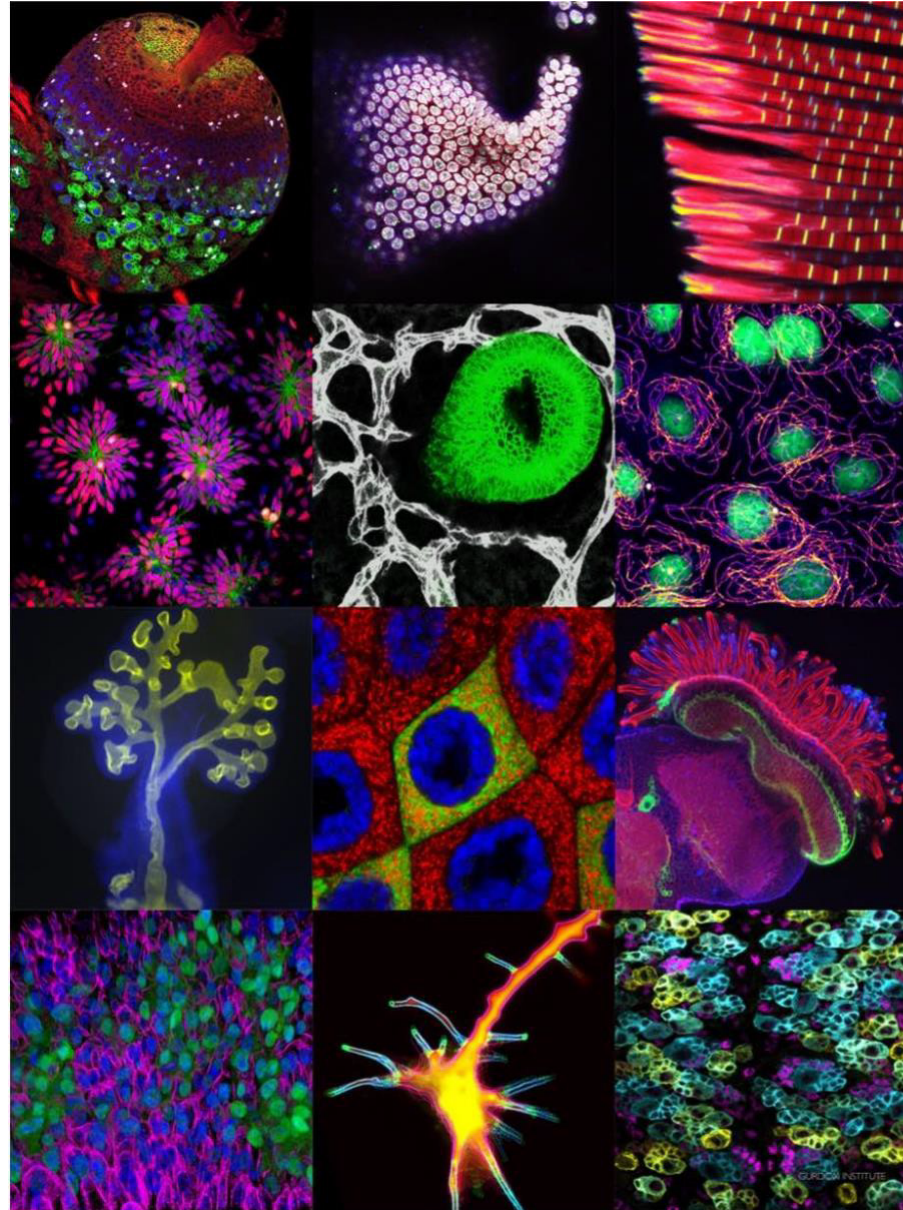
Likewise, they will be expected to contribute to a measure of teaching and administrative activities in both the School and University, chiefly through engagement with their host Department within the School.

THE INSTITUTE

Named after our co-founder, Nobel Laureate Sir John Gurdon, the Gurdon Institute has evolved into a world-leading centre for research into the biology of developmental processes and how these programmes become dysregulated in diseases such as cancer. Going forward, the Institute will place particular emphasis on expanding its research into human developmental biology, continuing to draw on a wide range of approaches and models.

At capacity, the Gurdon Institute plays host to around 240 researchers working in a modern, purpose-built, laboratory supported by a wealth of core facilities including sequencing and imaging. Current activities span a broad range of projects in the area of developmental, regenerative, and disease biology, combining *in vivo* work with *in vitro* studies and the design of 3D organ culture systems.

Currently, Institute scientists use a range of model systems such as nematode worms, fruit flies, frogs, and mammalian cells to study development and disease at the level of molecules, cells and tissues.



For an Institute whose mission is fundamental research, we have had considerable success in translation. Research conducted here has so far led to 11 spin-out companies (including KuDOS Pharmaceuticals, Abcam, Chroma Therapeutics, CellCentric, MISSION Therapeutics and Gen2 Neuro) and five candidate drugs. One of these, olaparib (Lynparza) has been approved in the UK, Europe and the USA for use against ovarian and breast cancer.

We believe that we have a responsibility to contribute to society through our Public Engagement programme. Our aim is to inspire the next generation of scientists, positively impact the public perception of fundamental research and make public engagement part of our research culture.

The Institute is an integrated part of Cambridge University and all Group Leaders are affiliated to a University Department and contribute to teaching and graduate student supervision.

The institute is committed to energy efficiency, and to minimising our environmental impact. We actively pursue equality and diversity in the workplace and renewed our Athena SWAN Bronze award in March 2018.

SCHOOL OF THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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.



Professor Anna Philpott
Head of School
School of the Biological Sciences

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).

Although developed to address the lack of female representation in these subjects, the activities that support the Charter will contribute towards a more positive working environment for all. For more information on the history and principles of the Athena SWAN Charter please visit the Athena SWAN website.

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.

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.

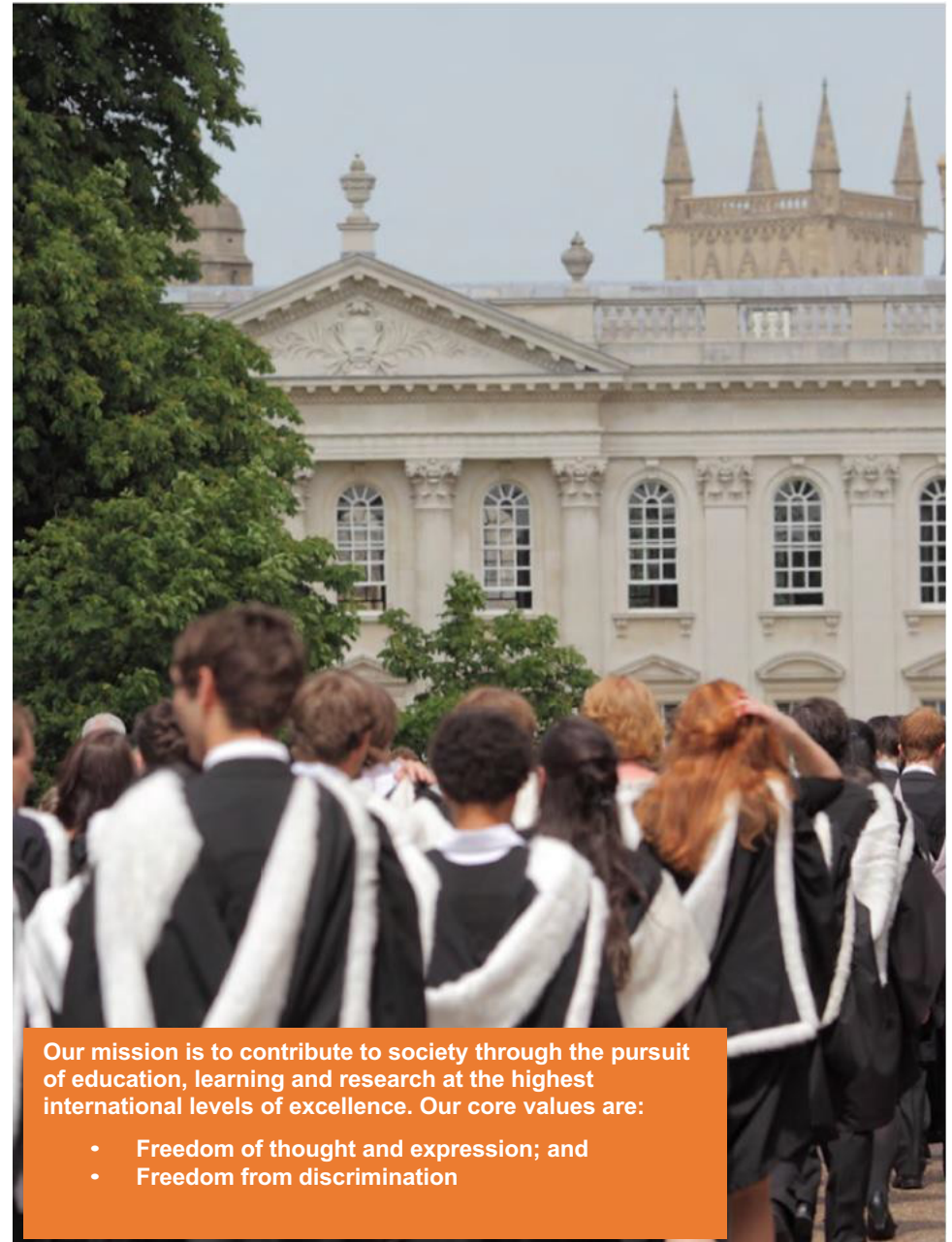
Our capital investment projects include the West Cambridge site, the North West Cambridge development and the growth of the Biomedical Campus in the south of the city. The North West Cambridge development includes the opening of a primary school – the first in the UK to be managed by a University. We 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.

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 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.

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



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

There is much more information about the University at <http://www.cam.ac.uk/univ/works/index.html> which we hope you will find helpful.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Equality and 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/>.

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

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 the University 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, hr@gurdon.cam.ac.uk. Alternatively, you may contact the HR Business Manager responsible for the department you are applying to via hrrassistants@admin.cam.ac.uk.



WHAT CAMBRIDGE CAN OFFER

What the University can offer you

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 and a CAMbens Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes is also available, which enables 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 of Cambridge.

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, a childcare salary exchange scheme and a high-quality holiday play scheme may be available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities. 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. Further details are available here: <https://www.opda.cam.ac.uk/>

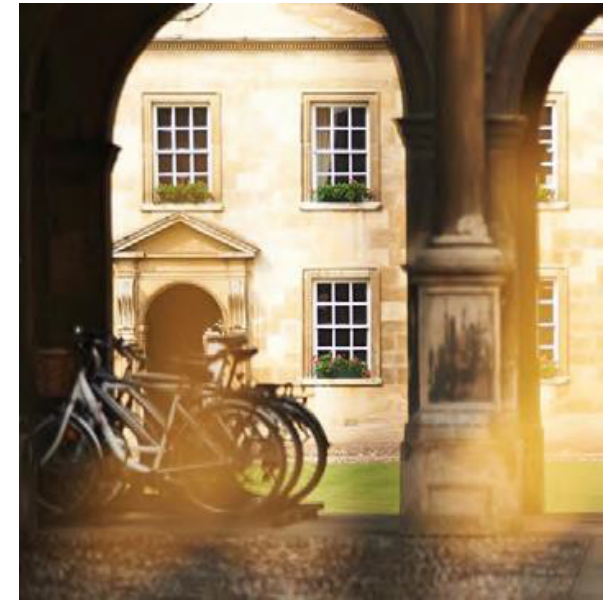
Your wellbeing

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. 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.

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.



WHAT CAMBRIDGE CAN OFFER

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/relocation>. 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.

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.



“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