

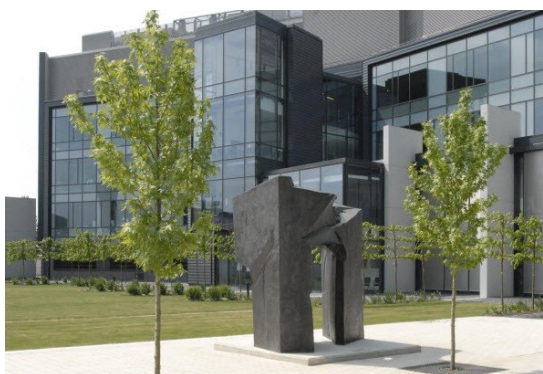
# **Junior Technician (Fixed Term)**

## **Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research**

**Department of Physiology, Development &  
Neuroscience**

**Closing Date: 21st April 2025**

**Job Reference: PM45421**



# Junior Technician (Fixed Term)

**Salary:**

£23,881-24,344

**Contract:**

Fixed Term – 1 year

**Location:**

Cambridge

**Department:**

The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research – Department of Physiology, Development & Neuroscience

**Responsible to:**

Loke CTR Executive Manager

**Working pattern:**

Full-time

**Purpose of the role**

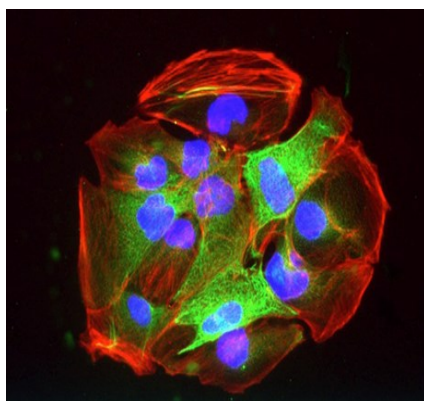
The role will support the research activities of the groups operating in the Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research (CTR) shared laboratory space. There are 16 researchers between 6 groups, excluding 6 group leaders: Prof Kathy Niakan, Prof Bill Colledge, Prof Erica Watson, Dr Thorsten Boroviak, Dr Courtney Hanna, and Claire Senner. The space is overseen by the Loke CTR Executive Manager, reporting to the Loke CTR Director, Kathy Niakan. Day-to-day operations in the lab are managed by the Loke CTR Chief Research Laboratory Technician with support from other lab managers. The post will provide basic laboratory support, tissue culture and histology techniques, laboratory housekeeping, looking after simple laboratory equipment, passing on knowledge to researchers

**Key Responsibilities**

- **Laboratory duties** - Preparation of stock solutions; Clean and sterilise glassware following standard procedures, ensure an adequate supply of clean glassware for use in the laboratories; Monitoring and replenishing stock levels of routine reagents and other materials; Laboratory housekeeping – assisting in maintaining good levels of housekeeping, ensuring waste is disposed of in proper and timely manner; Distributing deliveries from PDN stores; track inductions and current users in the lab; maintain equipment booking systems.
- **Tissue Culture and histology techniques** - Learn and perform, under the guidance of research staff, various tissue culture and histology techniques e.g. sterile technique, mycoplasma testing, preparation of sterile media and aliquoting, expansion of mouse embryonic feeder cells, histological sample preparation, sectioning. Post holder will, after some time, be able to advise students on use of some equipment.
- **Maintenance of the Loke CTR biobank** - Support sample management for the Biology of the Human Uterus in Pregnancy and Disease Tissue Bank; Assist with receiving and distributing samples; Monitor gas cylinders and incubators.
- **Health and Safety** - Contribute to the health and safety culture of the research groups; assist with the undertaking of risk assessments and writing of SOPs; maintain Microsoft Teams health and safety folders; present health and safety updates during joint lab meetings. Will attend various University safety training courses.
- **Support for Loke CTR Colleagues** - Provide cover for other colleagues as required; provide administrative support for Loke CTR lab space e.g. coordinating arrival of visiting maintenance technicians, track shared consumables use, act as secretary for the Tissue Culture user group, support the Loke CTR Technician in organising joint lab meetings.

**The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research (Loke CTR)**

The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research (Loke CTR) is a centre of excellence to promote scientific study of the placenta, early development and maternal-fetal interactions during pregnancy. The Loke CTR unites 28 group leaders across 10 departments and affiliated institutes and provides diverse opportunities for scientific interaction through events, training and shared state-of-the-art facilities to support world leading trophoblast-related research across Cambridge.

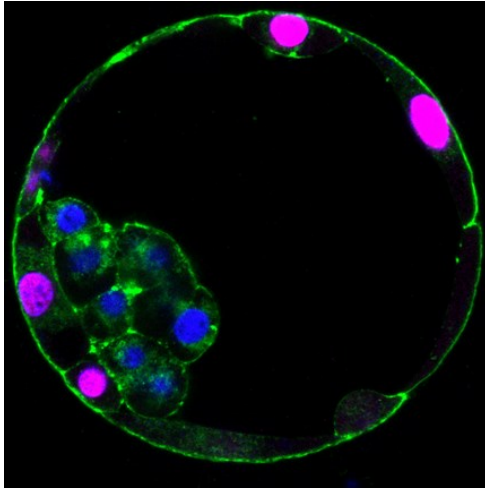


# Person specification

	Essential		Desirable
<b>Education</b>			
A minimum of A' level or NVQ level 3 in a biological or other related subject and/or relevant laboratory experience in molecular biology.	✓		
<b>Experience</b>			
Previous research experience would be an advantage, but it is not essential			✓
<b>Skills</b>			
Good communication and interpersonal skills to communicate with staff at all levels	✓		
Good organisation and prioritisation skills	✓		
Basic IT skills	✓		
Demonstrate basic factual knowledge of laboratory	✓		
<b>Additional Requirements</b>			
Initiative and eagerness to learn	✓		



## The Department of Physiology Development and Neuroscience



**The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research was founded in 2007 as a centre of excellence to promote scientific study of the placenta, early development and maternal-fetal interactions during pregnancy. It brings together over 30 Principal Investigators, many of whom are recognized international experts in their fields. The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research was one of the University of Cambridge's first inter-school initiatives, bridging research in the Departments of Physiology, Development, and Neuroscience, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Pathology and allied institutes, including Metabolic Science, as well as the Sanger, Babraham and Gurdon Institutes.**

<https://www.trophoblast.cam.ac.uk/>

In addition, the Centre embraces Fellows holding externally funded research fellowships, e.g. Sir Henry Dale and Dorothy Hodgkin fellowships, as well as its own Next Generation Fellows who are developing their independent research careers. This unique depth and breadth of expertise allows members to adopt an integrated and comprehensive scientific approach to understanding the complexity of placental biology.

Among the many landmark advances have been understanding how the trophoblast develops and the development of new technologies to study its physiology in the laboratory. The Centre has

pioneered research to learn how metabolism affects the genetics of the placenta and how this has consequences through generations. We have shown the importance of the placenta for the life-long health of mother and child, and discovered early detection methods to improve pregnancy outcomes. Research at the Centre is world leading in the development of novel technologies including advances in the in vitro culture of organoids, human embryos, genome editing, and the study of egg and sperm cell biology.

The aim of the Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research is to promote intellectual cross-disciplinary interactions, foster research collaborations, and provide the highest international standard of teaching and research training. The Centre promotes research and teaching in placental and reproductive biology through Research Fellowships, Studentships, seminars, workshops, and infrastructural support.

Trophoblast research in its broadest sense is the study of the interactions between the fetus and the mother during pregnancy. Trophoblasts are the first cells made by the early embryo and they interact with the uterus, helping the embryo to implant and later develop its placenta, which nourishes and protects the developing fetus for months. Failure of trophoblast function leads to health risks to both mother and child, including during the child's adult life.

The Loke Centre for Trophoblast Research also makes significant contributions to the University's interdisciplinary Strategic Research Initiative on Reproduction which is focused on research organised around three grand challenges: the future of reproduction; maternal and fetal mortality; and inheritance, development and environment.





# The Department of Physiology Development and Neuroscience

**The Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience (PDN) is engaged in teaching and research across a wide range of biological sciences - from cell and developmental biology, through cellular and animal physiology to systems neurosciences and human anatomy.**

Currently there are 46 academic staff, involved in teaching and leading active research groups, 12 independent research fellows (funded by the Wellcome Trust, the Royal Society and others), over 70 post-doctoral researchers and circa 50 professional support staff. Research grant income amounts to around £10M annually, and flows from a variety of sources, including UKRI Research Councils, The Wellcome Trust, The Royal Society, European Research Council, Leverhulme Trust, British Heart Foundation. Our PhD students go on to prestigious fellowships and influential scientific positions worldwide.

The Department occupies two buildings in the Downing Site, which include Teaching Facilities, research laboratories equipped for diverse research programmes, and facilities such as the Cambridge Advanced Imaging Centre. It participates in a range of University Interdisciplinary Research Initiatives including Cambridge Neuroscience, Cambridge Reproduction, Cambridge Cardiovascular Disease, Metabolism, Stem Cells. Members of the Department contribute to several of the School of Biological Sciences Research Themes, including leadership roles in Neuroscience and in Reproduction, Development and Lifelong Health (<https://www.bio.cam.ac.uk/research/research-themes>). PDN also has affiliates in Cambridge Stem Cell Institute and the Gurdon Institute and is located close to other major biological departments including Psychology, Genetics, Biochemistry and Pathology. There are strong collaborative links with the Clinical School, the Veterinary School, and the MRC Centre for Brain Repair and the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology.

sustaining a research enterprise of the highest international standard. Our central aim is to understand the relationship between Biological Structure and Function. The Department has the breadth of expertise, specialised research facilities and operative structures to conduct this research at all levels of biological organisation, ranging from gene expression through cell and tissue biology, ultimately to the analysis of the whole organism and its physiology and behaviour. The main research interests are set out on our web site (<http://www.pdn.cam.ac.uk/research/>).

**Undergraduate teaching activities:** The Department's extensive undergraduate teaching programme provides courses for medical, veterinary and science students. All academic staff are required to deliver lectures, teach practical classes and examine. The expectation is that new Lecturers would contribute to teaching across a broad range of Development, Reproduction and Physiology in 1st and 2nd-year undergraduate courses, as well as at more specialist level.

**Life in PDN:** A friendly and welcoming Department, PDN strives to create a workplace where everyone feels included and has a sense of belonging. It seeks to give staff and students support in making their work and studies as fulfilling as possible whilst respecting a healthy work-life balance. PDN recognises that its strength lies in the staff and students who work and study here and that the greater our diversity, the stronger we will be. We currently hold an Athena SWAN Bronze award and have a good gender balance (for example, of 19 Professors in PDN, 10 are women) and wish to improve our racial diversity. We encourage applications from all sections of society. <https://www.pdn.cam.ac.uk/intranet/equality-diversity-and-inclusion>.

**Research Activities:** PDN sets itself the goal of

# The School of Biological Sciences



**The School of 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).**

## About the school

The School of Biological Sciences 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.

# Terms of appointment

## Tenure and probation

The appointments will be made on a fixed-term basis for up to 1 year (reason for limit of tenure: specific project). Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a three month probationary period.

## Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are 36.5 hours per week, working Monday – Friday. We welcome applications from individuals who wish to be considered for part-time working for a minimum of 3 days per week.

## Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of CPS (Contributory Pension Scheme) – a defined benefit and defined contribution pension scheme. For further information please visit: [www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk](http://www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk)

## Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 36 days inclusive of public holidays. For 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.

## 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, Tracey Flack, [pdnhr@pdn.cam.ac.uk](mailto:pdnhr@pdn.cam.ac.uk), who is responsible for recruitment to this position.



# The University

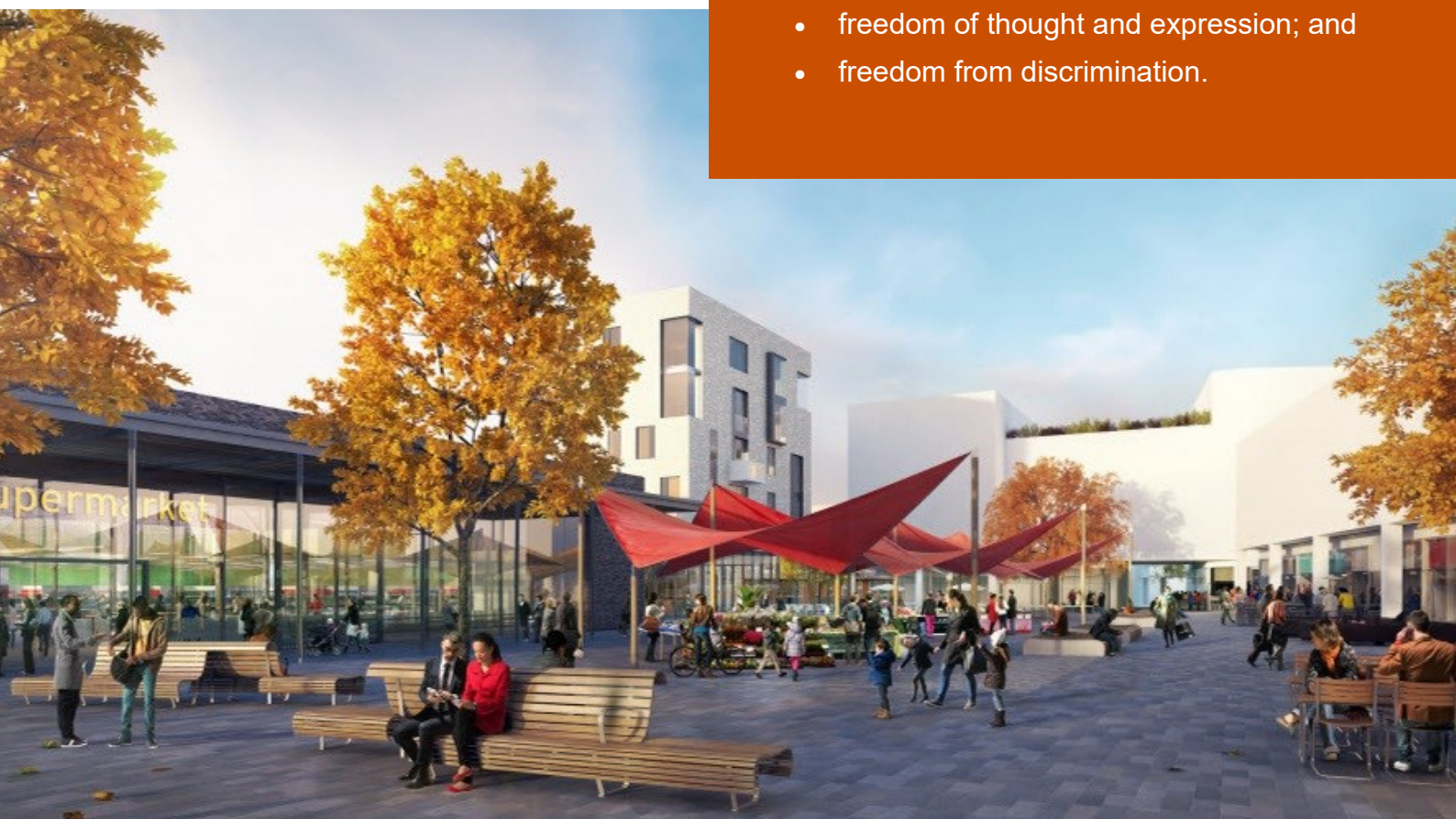
**The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful universities. We are a renowned centre for research, education, and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to society. The University is consistently ranked amongst the top universities in the world. Our affiliates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

Our sustained pursuit of academic excellence is built on a long history of 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*



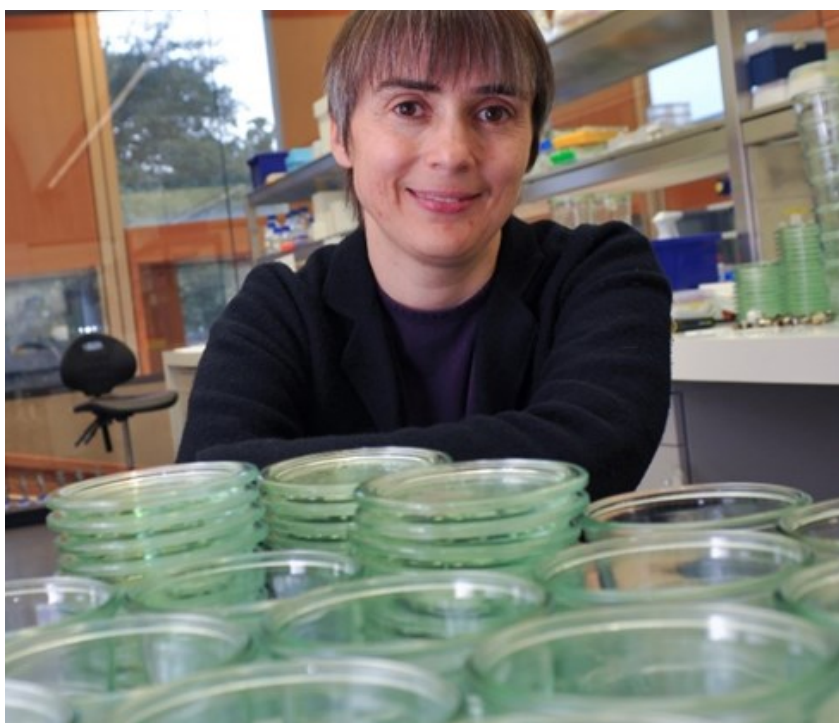
# Working at the University

**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](http://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, with your proposed sponsor or at interview if your application is successful.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to Loke CTR Executive Manager, Erin Slatery, [execmgr.loectr@PDN.cam.ac.uk](mailto:execmgr.loectr@PDN.cam.ac.uk)

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact Tracey Flack [pdnhr@pdn.cam.ac.uk](mailto:pdnhr@pdn.cam.ac.uk).

The closing date for applications is: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

In-person interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held on the 20th May 2025.