

Further Particulars

Research Associate in Natural History Humanities



Grade 7, £35,116 - £45,413

Full-time, Monday to Friday (37 hours per week)

2-year fixed term contract 1 October 2025 – 30 September 2027.

Role Overview

We invite applications for a Research Associate in Natural History Humanities for the tenure of 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2027. This role is funded as part of an exciting programme run by the University's Collections-Connections-Communities Strategic Research Initiative (CCC), with funding from the Isaac Newton Trust. The programme is facilitating Natural History Humanities research inspired by the globally significant natural history collections cared for in Cambridge across its museums, libraries, archives and Botanic Garden.

The postholder will join two other Research Associates and will be free to pursue research of their choosing in any area that applies humanities research methodologies to the natural history collections. We would welcome proposals that will work with any of our natural history collections, in the broadest sense, i.e. including collections such as the University Library. Proposals working across Cambridge collections are encouraged and we would especially welcome proposals that include, but not necessarily exclusively, our zoological and/or geological collections.

We would also encourage prospective research fellows to actively engage with collections, collections managers, curators and relevant academics in associated departments in the formulation of their proposals. Such engagement may better inform the applicant's understanding of the collections, their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and this may strengthen the applications. We are happy to help assist in making any links and connections by emailing CCC at: info@ccc.cam.ac.uk.

The Research Associate is also expected to participate fully in the life and activities of CCC's Natural History Humanities programme, e.g. through participation in research and public engagement programmes, comprising activities such as talks, seminars, displays, participation in social media and other events.

The position is open to postdoctoral scholars in any discipline of any university and nationality. Applications will be evaluated by a panel comprising members of the Steering Group for the CCC Natural History Humanities programme and the following criteria will be considered:

- ☐ Academic record of the candidate, taking into account the career stage of the applicant .
- ☐ Suitability of the research proposal working in the area of Natural History Humanities and across collections, with a clear outline of its innovative and interdisciplinary research methods
- ☐ Potential for developing larger projects, including funding applications.
- ☐ Evidence of ability to contribute fully to the life and activities of the CCC's Natural History Humanities programme and other institutions across collegiate Cambridge.

As a collections-focused role, the candidate will be expected to spend significant time in Cambridge, but the University also encourages periods of working from home if based in the Cambridge area, with the option to hot desk at various collections in the University. Some travel to other locations may be required. Normal health and safety requirements will be followed.

Person Profile

This section details the knowledge, skills and experience we require for the role.

Criteria	Description	Essential or Desirable
Relevant experience	Research experience demonstrating sufficient breadth/depth of knowledge in the specialist area of the research proposal and experience of the research methods and techniques required to carry out an individual research project.	E
	Managing one's own workload.	E
Education & qualifications	PhD in a relevant specialist subject	E
Additional requirements	Ability to continually update knowledge in specialist area.	E
	Willingness to engage in continuous professional development.	E
	A commitment to exploring interdisciplinary methodologies	E

General Information

Tenure and probation

Appointment will be made on a fixed-term basis of two years due to limited funding. 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 hours of work for the position are 37 hours per week, working Monday – Friday.

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/.

Annual leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 6.6 weeks (or 33 days for those working full time), plus public holidays.

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, who is responsible for recruitment to this position. Alternatively, you may contact the HR Business Manager responsible for the department you are applying to via hrenquiries@admin.cam.ac.uk

University of Cambridge Collections

Museum of Zoology

Part of the University of Cambridge Department of Zoology, displaying thousands of specimens spanning the entire animal kingdom. It is open for the public to enjoy and used for academic study by researchers and students worldwide.

Cambridge University Botanic Garden

A 40-acre heritage-listed Garden home to a diverse collection of over 8,000 plant species. It combines its role as a research and teaching facility with that of public education and as a visitor amenity.

Cambridge University Herbarium

Home to 1.1 million specimens, each with a record of collection location, date, a profile of morphologies, life-cycle changes, pest damage and more. Many have historical and/or social information attached to them.

The Fitzwilliam Museum

A world-renowned collection of over 500,000 objects, ranging from prehistory to the present, particularly from Europe, Egypt and Asia. This include antiquities, decorative arts, manuscripts, money, paintings and works on paper. .

Kettles Yard

Comprising the house (home to collector Jim Ede) and contemporary art galleries.

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

A museum of humanity's history over hundreds of thousands of years, of world cultures over recent centuries, and of Indigenous life and art in the present.

Museum of Classical Archaeology

Dedicated to the study and teaching of the classical past through the material and visual cultures of ancient Greece and Rome as well as a collection of over 450 19th century casts of ancient artefacts.

Polar Museum

Over 5,000 objects charting the history of Antarctic exploration.

Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences

Cambridge's oldest museum with a collection that illustrates the evolution of life through geology and fossils. The Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences' important fossil and mineral collections are complemented by an extensive historical archive, and the Museum welcomes researchers interested in using humanities research approaches to explore the collections. Of particular interest is the [John Watson Building Stone Collection](#), an early C20th economic geology collection with the potential to explore both local and global extraction histories.

Whipple Museum of the History of Science

The Whipple Museum's collection includes scientific instruments, apparatus, models, pictures, prints, photographs, books and other material related to the history of science.

Cambridge University Library

Cambridge University Library's Special Collections comprise one of the world's great collections of global documentary cultural heritage, collected over six centuries and spanning some four thousand years of recorded thought. They include archives and manuscripts on clay, bone, bark, papyrus, palm leaves, animal skin and paper, rare printed books, and maps and music in both manuscript and printed form.

Duckworth Laboratory

One of the largest repositories of biological anthropology collections widely used for teaching and research.

What Cambridge 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. 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 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 Ofsted rated 'outstanding' 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.

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.

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 Northwest 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.

Equality & diversity

The University has a vibrant and varied community. We support and encourage under-represented groups, and we value diversity. We welcome applications from individuals with disabilities. Our recruitment and selection procedures follow best practice. 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/>

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.

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:

Wendy Godfrey **Email:** admin@botanic.cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact our Administration Team on the e-mail above.

The closing date for applications is Monday 26 May 2025