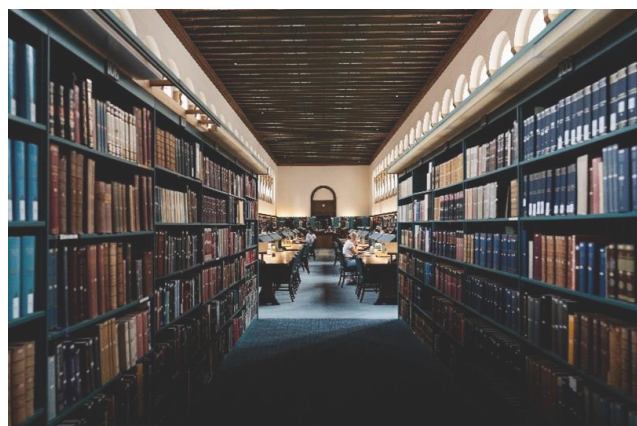


# Assistant Librarian

Department of Plant Sciences & Botanic Garden  
Cambridge University Libraries

Closing Date: Wednesday 23 April 2025

Job Reference: VE45560



*Library photos by Alice the Camera*

# Assistant Librarian

**Salary:**

£30,805 - £35,116 (pro rata)

**Contract:**Fixed Term – 12 months  
maternity cover**Location:**

Cambridge

**Faculty / Department:**

Department of Plant Sciences

**Responsible to:**

Biological Sciences Librarian

**Working Pattern:**

Part Time – FTE 0.6

**Purpose of the role:**

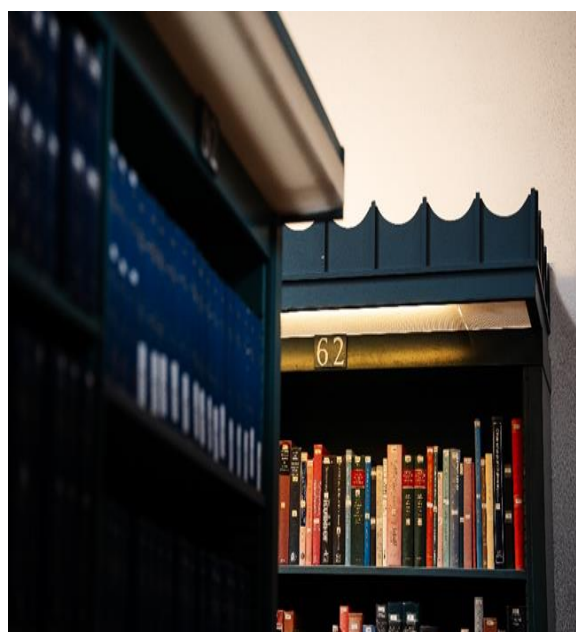
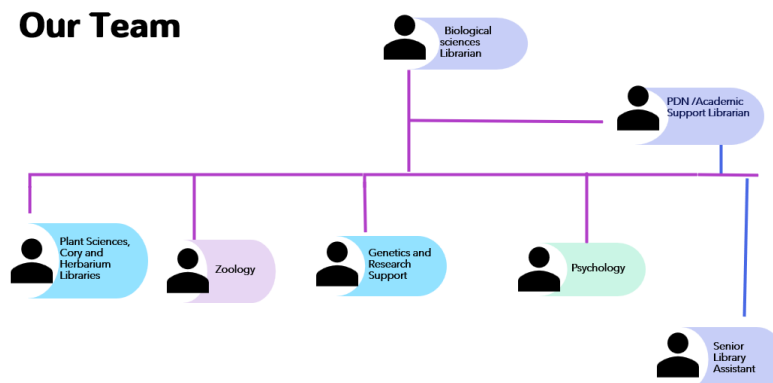
The Biological Sciences Libraries Team provides support across the School of Biological Sciences, through their collections, enquiry services, research support, and teaching provision.

The Team is based in multiple departments across the school and supports around 2000 staff and 4000 students based in dedicated teaching programmes and research degrees.

Your time will be split between supporting the Department of Plant Sciences and the University's Botanic Garden. You will oversee the Plant Sciences Departmental Library in addition to the Cory and Herbarium Libraries based in the innovative Sainsbury Lab.

You manage all aspects of reader services, including delivering training sessions and dedicated enquiry and research support. You will also liaise with key stakeholders to develop the modern and special collections across both sites to support teaching and research priorities across the School of Biological Sciences.

The Biological Sciences Librarian may also from time to time require the role holder to perform other duties appropriate to the grade of the post.

**Team Structure:****Our Team**

## Key responsibilities:

### Collections Development and Management

- Facilitate access to information resources to support the teaching, learning and research needs of staff and students
- Managing and developing the physical and electronic library collections to enhance educational and scholarly activities.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders to develop special collections while maintaining and preserving the existing inventory
- Liaise with specialists in the University Library to support the maintenance and exploit the scholarly value of archival and special collections.

### Academic Liaison & Reader Services:

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff in academic, support departments and professional colleagues in Plant Sciences and the University's Botanic Garden
- Provide comprehensive support and services, including scholarly communications advice and information services, to library users both locally and across the school wide level.
- Work with key stakeholders to ensure training and research needs are met within wider collections and services.
- Represent the Department of Plant Sciences and Botanic Garden's research interests and priorities through initiatives such as the Journal Coordination Scheme and related outlets.
- Collaborate with colleagues across the Biological Sciences Libraries Team to explore and develop new services and approaches to supporting the wider School community.

### Teaching & Learning Support:

- Offering and promoting inductions for new students and members on an ongoing basis throughout the year.
- Develop and present teaching sessions to users at all academic levels of the University, both within the Department and across the school.
- Contribute to the improvement of our teaching support based on research and best practice.
- Provide specialist advice for teaching support, including plagiarism and copyright, and relevant information resources.

### Communications:

- Market and promote library collections and services to resource users via relevant media including institutional social media accounts and websites.
- Represent the libraries at meetings, committees and events, both departmentally and in the wider community.

### Professional development:

- Attend relevant information and library services events and training in order to ensure up to date professional knowledge and to establish good networks with other professional information advisers.
- Contribute to the development of colleagues by reflecting on own professional development activities and reporting back to the wider Biological Sciences Libraries Team.

### General

- Participate in team meetings by presenting issues and papers as needed, and chair or serve on committees or working groups as required.
- Support the strategic goals of the School of Biological Sciences libraries team

# Person Specification

This Section details the knowledge, skills and experience we require for the role and would need to be demonstrated within your application alongside any experience related to the responsibilities for the role.

| Criteria   | Essential | Desirable |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Relevant Experience and Knowledge</b>   |           |           |
| Experience of working in an academic or research-focused environment   | ✓         |           |
| Experience of building relationships with service users  | ✓         |           |
| Experience of teaching or training   | ✓         |           |
| Experience of classification/cataloguing of collections  |           | ✓         |
| Understanding of special collections and/or conservation of archival collections   | ✓         |           |
| Awareness of the information needs of students and researchers in STEMM  |           | ✓         |
| <b>Interpersonal and communication skills</b>  |           |           |
| Excellent digital skills, including standard office (word processing, spreadsheet and presentation) software and web editing       | ✓         |           |
| Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with colleagues at all levels        | ✓         |           |
| Good organisational skills, including the ability to work independently and proactively while also seeking advice when appropriate | ✓         |           |
| Ability to work in a team environment, supporting colleagues and sharing expertise   | ✓         |           |
| Willingness to undertake additional duties and work in different office locations.   | ✓         |           |
| Creative and practical approach to problem solving   | ✓         |           |

# Behavioural Attributes

This section summarises the behavioural attributes (or competencies) that we expect the role holder to be able to demonstrate, at what level and whether this is an essential or desirable requirement. Full definitions are at: <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/behavioural-attributes>

Please review these and provide specific examples in your application of how you have demonstrated these attributes in your work, education or other experience. It will assist your application if you explain the situation, what you did and what the outcomes were.

| Attribute                   | Level |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Valuing Diversity           | A     |
| Achieving Results           | C     |
| Communication               | C     |
| Innovation and Change       | C     |
| Negotiating and influencing | D     |
| People Development          | C     |
| Relationship Building       | C     |
| Strategic Focus             | D     |

# Professional Services Values

Developed by professional services staff, our values underpin everything we do. By living the values in the work we do, we hope to foster an environment where staff feel empowered. The values encourage staff to; work together and share skills to create a sense of community, act with integrity, take an inclusive and fair approach and develop honest and open relationships that are underpinned by our shared values. We encourage applicants to consider these values within their application.



## Further information about the Libraries:

### Plant Sciences Library

The Plant Sciences Library, situated within the Department of Plant Sciences, plays a crucial role in supporting teaching, learning and research in plant sciences and related disciplines. The library's extensive collections include:

- **Books:** Over 16,000 volumes covering a wide range of topics including plant anatomy, physiology, genetics, microbiology, pathology, ecology, conservation, applied botany, palaeobotany, and the history of botany. Many newer titles are available in ebook format.
- **Serials and Journals:** The library holds rare plant-related serials and historic journals, alongside modern publications.
- **Leisure Reading:** A small collection of non-academic texts focused on wellbeing and leisure reading with plant or nature themes.
- **Archives:** The archives contain teaching materials such as lecture notes and diagrams, minute books of departmental clubs, photographs, manuscripts and research data. Notable archival items include correspondence from prominent botanists like Harold Whitehouse and Sir Harry Godwin.

### Cory and Herbarium Libraries

The Cory and Herbarium Libraries is a specialised botanical and horticultural library located within the Sainsbury Laboratory Cambridge University (SLCU), a research institute dedicated to understanding plant growth and development.

The libraries house extensive collections focusing on practical horticulture, plant taxonomy, systematics and geographically categorized floras. They also include historical and contemporary serials on taxonomy and horticulture.

Key collections include:

- **Cory Collection:** This features early botanical and horticultural works, including rare items from the 16th century. Named after Reginald Cory, a benefactor of the Botanic Garden, it highlights his contributions to horticulture.
- **Simpson Collection:** Comprising British and Irish local floras collected by Norman Douglas Simpson, this collection preserves his original donations.
- **Historic Plant Nursery Catalogues:** These serve as valuable resources for understanding the history of horticulture and gardening.

These collections make the library an essential resource for researchers in botany, horticulture and related disciplines. Access is primarily available to members of the Department of Plant Sciences, the Botanic Garden and SLCU, with limited access for external visitors by appointment.

# The Cambridge University Libraries

## Cambridge University Library and the affiliated libraries

Cambridge University Library is one of the world's great research libraries. The Library is a major scholarly resource, not only for the University's academic community, but also for researchers nationally and internationally. Cambridge University Library has been collecting books and manuscripts since the 14<sup>th</sup> century and now has one of the greatest and most accessible collections of books and manuscripts in the world. As a legal deposit library for over 300 years, the University Library also has comprehensive holdings of UK publications, as well as extensive collections built up through purchase over several centuries.

Organisationally, the University Library comprises the main University Library and its affiliated libraries (see below for a list of all Affiliated Libraries).



## The University Library Department and Faculty Libraries List:

- The African Studies Library
- The Architecture and History of Art Library
- The Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Library
- The Balfour and Newton Libraries (Zoology)
- The Betty and Gordon Moore Library for Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Technology
- The Chemistry Library
- The Casimir Lewy Library (Philosophy)
- The Classics Library
- The Cory and Herbarium Libraries
- The Divinity Library
- The Engineering Library
- The English Library
- The Everton Library (Education)
- The Haddon Library (Archaeology and Anthropology)
- The Genetics Library
- The Geography Library
- The Marshall Library (Economics)
- The Material Science & Metallurgy Library
- The Medical Library
- The Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics Library
- The MRC Cognition & Brain Sciences Library
- The Pendlebury Library (Music)
- The Plant Sciences Library
- The Psychology Library
- The Physiology, Development and Neuroscience Library
- The Scott Polar Research Institute Library
- The Seeley Library (History, Land Economy, Latin-American Studies, Policy and International Studies, Sociology)
- The South Asian Studies Library
- The Squire Law Library
- The Radzinowicz Library (Criminology)
- The Rayleigh Library (Physics)
- The Veterinary Medicine Library
- The West Hub Library
- The Whipple Library (History and Philosophy of Science)

# Terms of Appointment

## Tenure and probation

Appointment will be made on a fixed-term basis to cover maternity leave. The post is for 12 months or until the return of the current postholder – whichever is earlier.

Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a 6 month 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 21.9 hours per week, equivalent to 0.6 FTE, spread across three 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 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.

## 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 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 Department Administrator, 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 science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is 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.

## 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 (using the contact information below) or at interview if your application is successful.

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:

**Funmike Ifie, Biological Sciences Librarian.**

**Tel: 0776 1044287**

**Email: [yoi20@cam.ac.uk](mailto:yoi20@cam.ac.uk)**

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact **Jacqueline Quintana, Recruitment Administrator** at [jobs@lib.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@lib.cam.ac.uk)

**The closing date for applications is: Wednesday 23 April**

**The interview date for the role is: Thursday 15 May 2025**