

Research Assistant (Alcolea Lab)

Cambridge Stem Cell Institute

Closing date: 22nd April 2025
Job Reference: PS45659



Research Assistant (Alcolea Lab)

Salary:

£32,546 - £35,116 per annum

Contract:

2 years Fixed Term

Location:

Jeffrey Cheah Biomedical Centre
Cambridge Biomedical Campus
University of Cambridge

Department:

Cambridge Stem Cell Institute

Responsible to:

Dr Maria Alcolea

Working Pattern:

Full Time

Purpose of the role

Applications are invited for a Research Assistant position in the group of Dr Maria P. Alcolea within the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute (CSCI) and PDN Department at University of Cambridge. This post will be part of an ERC funded international collaborative effort to understand mutant cell competition.

Our group investigates how cells change their behaviour in response to tissue perturbations such as injury, ageing and the acquisition of cancer-related mutations. We make use of an interdisciplinary approach combining human tissue, mouse transgenic models, lineage tracing and 3D in vitro techniques to understand epithelial stem cell biology in the gastrointestinal tract.

We are looking to recruit a research assistant. The primary role will involve the management of multiple transgenic strains, performing and coordinating in vivo and in vitro experiments, administering varied treatment protocols and interventions as well as tissue collection and processing. The ideal candidate will also be able to oversee animal welfare and regulatory compliance.

The successful candidate will also be expected to provide technical support for other research activities, such as genotyping, staining, imaging, culturing of tissues, as well as to keep detailed records of the data and work undertaken. This role offers the opportunity to work in a multi-disciplinary team building on previously published work on epithelial stem cell biology and early cancer.

Key responsibilities

The appointed candidate will provide technical support to ensure the smooth running of our studies focused on mutant cell competition in the gastrointestinal tract. More specifically the post involves:

- Supervised by researchers in the team, the holder will manage mouse colonies (including transgenic strains) in the team, perform and record in vivo work in an efficient and timely manner, as well as adhere/oversee compliance standards.
- Perform experimental work under the supervision of researchers in the team. This will include undertaking genotyping, tissue processing, staining, tissue culture, and basic data analysis, among others. Where appropriate, the role may also include to provide some basic level of training to researchers.
- Other laboratory responsibilities include a wide range of tasks including ordering and maintaining laboratory supplies/stocks and equipment, as well as updating protocols, reagent databases and safety documents.



Key responsibilities continued:

Specific duties and responsibilities

- To undertake experimental in vivo work to encompass injections, weighing, health monitoring, chemical substance dosing/treatment and tissue collection.
- Check Home Office compliance of the in vivo work. Report the work and progress to the research team and, when required, to the NACWO's, NVS and Home Office.
- Management and maintenance of core and transgenic strains in the team.
- To oversee welfare of the mice used in procedures.
- Organise genotyping of transgenic strains.
- To keep detailed records of work undertaken/ genotyping using a custom-built database application.
- Provide basic technical support for research activities. This will may include perform genotyping, tissue processing, staining, culturing cells, record and interpret data, present the findings, among others.
- Provide basic training to researchers in the team, if relevant. And introduce new staff and researchers within to the laboratory to health and safety procedures, as well as regulatory aspects of the work.
- Liaise with the departmental safety officer to ensure codes of practice and relevant safety regulations are implemented and observed within the research laboratory, carry out risk assessments.
- Monitor laboratory resources including, laboratory consumable stocks, expenditure within a set budget, source new suppliers, place orders for consumables, animals and equipment when required, process invoices, delivery notes, and ensure maintenance and repair of equipment.

As such, the candidate should have good interpersonal skills, be organized and pay attention to detail. An understanding of the principles of cellular and molecular biology or computational experience would be desirable.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education		
BSc in Genetics/Physiology/Anatomy or relevant animal working experience	✓	
A Home Office Personal Licence (ABC, or equivalent) covering rodents		✓
Relevant Experience		
Extensive experience of handling mice, IP injection, substance administration and tissue collection.		✓
Experience of creation/ maintenance of transgenic strains.		✓
Experience of contributing to and following SOPs.	✓	
Experience of other experimental procedures, Home Office regulation, and routines in animal work.		✓
Experience of experimental design for animal studies.	✓	
Experience of working in a molecular biology lab, including knowledge of tissue culture, DNA extraction and staining procedures.		✓
Experience of laboratory management.		✓
Experience of animal licence preparation and renewal.		✓
Experience of equipment maintenance.		✓
Experience of using a mouse tracking database.		✓
Relevant Skills		
Attention to detail.	✓	
Good written and oral communication skills.	✓	
Ability to test and implement new approaches and techniques.	✓	
Ability to work to a schedule, manage and prioritise multiple tasks.	✓	
Ability to keep neat and accurate records.	✓	
Excellent organizational and planning skills in managing competing priorities in a busy environment.	✓	
Good IT skills.	✓	
High degree of precision and accuracy.	✓	
Additional requirements		
Occasional weekend or evening work may be required	✓	

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.

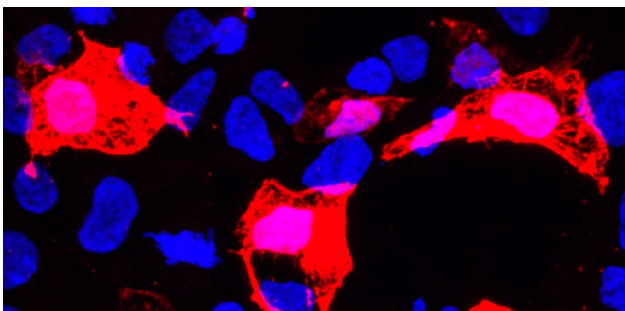
Attribute	Level
Valuing Diversity	A
Achieving Results	B
Communication	B
Innovation and Change	C
Negotiating and Influencing	D
People Development	C
Relationship Building	C
Strategic Focus	C

Cambridge Stem Cell Institute

The Cambridge Stem Cell Institute is a world-leading centre for stem cell research with a mission to transform human health through a deep understanding of stem cell biology. Our scientists study stem cell behaviour, both normal and pathological, and use their findings to improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

Our Institute currently consists of 29 outstanding research groups, working across three key research themes: Stem Cell States, Stem Cells in Disease and Stem Cells & Therapeutics.

Since 2019, our investigators have been together under one roof in the purpose-built Jeffrey Cheah Biomedical Centre building on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The Institute brings together scientists from multiple disciplines, operating across many tissues and at multiple scales. This unique set up allows commonalities and differences in stem cell biology to be explored in a cohesive and inter-disciplinary manner. We are:



- **Pioneering:** We use new technologies for innovative research to generate deep insights into stem cell biology and address the biggest challenges facing human health
- **Collaborative:** We bring together biological, clinical and physical stem cell scientists in a fully integrated, vibrant and cohesive Institute
- **Visionary:** We are training the next generation of stem cell scientists to



continue and extend our mission into the future.

Research Themes

Stem cells have the extraordinary ability to develop into any type of cell in the body. Stem cells are found in developing embryos and also in adults in tissues including the brain, bone marrow, skin and liver.

Our research at the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute falls into three broad themes: Stem Cell States, Stem Cells in Disease, Stem Cells & Therapeutics. Many of our scientists contribute to more than one theme, and within these themes we have particular strengths in pluripotency, haematopoiesis, neural and epithelial stem cells.

Core Facilities and Scientific Support

The very best science requires excellent facilities and infrastructure to enable innovation and ensure international competitiveness.

The Cambridge Stem Cell Institute has invested in a platform of core facilities providing its members with access to the requisite equipment including the latest technologies and specialist expertise. These cutting-edge facilities enhance research and training and enable investigators to perform pilot studies at the forefront of current search.



Professor Bertie Gottgens, Director of the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute

School of Clinical Medicine

Doing great work in a great place to work

About the School

The School of Clinical Medicine currently employs nearly 3,000 people, spanning all varieties of staff type from Academic Professors to administrative support.

In 1976 in response to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Medical Education in the late 1960's, a complete medical course was re-established in Cambridge with the opening of the School of Clinical Medicine at the new Addenbrooke's Hospital site.

On 21st November 1980, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, officially opened the Clinical School Building which presently accommodates the medical library, lecture theatres and seminar rooms.

The University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine aspires to change the practice of medicine and improve biological understanding in a wide range of clinical specialties and scientific disciplines. Collaborative research, both within biomedicine and crossing the boundaries to the mathematical, physical and social sciences, is key to our approach. The School also supports key enabling technologies and facilities in imaging, bioinformatics and biological systems. The main areas of research interest are:

- Cancer research
- Cardio-Respiratory Medicine
- Cellular mechanisms of disease
- Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism
- Epidemiology, Public Health and Primary Care
- Genetics and Genetic Medicine
- Haematological and Transplantation Medicine
- Infection and Immunity
- Neurosciences and Mental Health
- Stems Cells and Regenerative Medicine.



Professor Patrick Maxwell, Regius Professor of Physic and Head of the School of Clinical Medicine

The School aims to provide leadership in education, discovery and healthcare. It will achieve this through; inspirational teaching and training, outstanding basic and clinical research and integration of these to improve medical practice for both individual patients and the population.

The School will:

Through inspirational teaching and training, educate individuals who:

- will become exceptional doctors or biomedical scientists
- combine a depth of scientific understanding with outstanding clinical and communication skills demonstrate a caring, compassionate and professional approach to patients and the public and
- are equipped to become future international leaders of their profession.

Through its commitment to the pursuit of excellence, support scientists of international standing in basic and clinical research aiming to:

- understand fundamental biology and thereby the mechanisms underlying disease integrate basic and clinical research
- apply a rigorous mechanism-based approach to clinical problems and
- innovate to solve the health challenges of our society.

Terms of Appointment

Tenure and probation

Appointments will be made on a fixed-term basis for a period of 2 years

Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six month probationary period.

Hours of Work and Working Pattern

The hours of work for the position are 100% of full-time / 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 41 days inclusive of public holidays. For new part-time employees, annual leave will be pro rata'd based on days worked.

General information

Pre-employment checks

Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us.

If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

Health declaration Once an offer of employment has been made the successful candidate will be required to complete a work health declaration form.

Qualifications The person specification for this position lists qualifications that are essential

and/or desirable. Please note that if you are offered the post you will be asked to provide your relevant original certificates of these qualifications.

References: Offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Screening Checks

This role requires a basic disclosure (DBS) Check and a security check. Any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of these checks; whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the University.

The nature of this role means that the successful candidate will also need to undergo a health assessment.

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 Clinical School Recruitment Team who are responsible for recruitment to this position via:

csrstaffhub@admin.cam.ac.uk

The University

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

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

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 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.

“Through its outstanding education, research and innovation, the University of Cambridge has made – and continues to make – a lasting contribution to human knowledge and is flourishing. By working at the University of Cambridge, you will be joining a vibrant community of students, scholars and professional services staff committed to supporting and enhancing the University's mission to contribute to society.”

**Prof Deborah Prentice,
Vice Chancellor 2023**



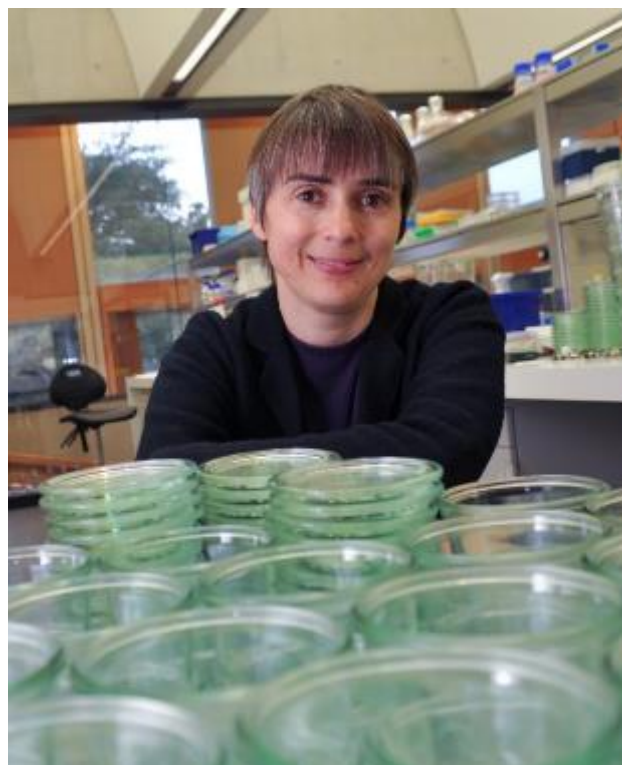
Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 18,000 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 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 aware, 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.

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/>. 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. Payroll giving is also a simple, tax-efficient way for employees to make monthly donations to charity.

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 scheme 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.



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 emergency family care support via My Family Care.

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 Office of Postdoctoral Affairs supports the postdoctoral community within Cambridge. 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.

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. Apprenticeship programmes are also available to support employees to develop their skills, experience and qualifications.



Clinical School Benefits

Cambridge Biomedical Campus

Being based on Cambridge Biomedical Campus gives the University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine employees an unrivalled range of on-site amenities.

These include:

Core amenities

- Marks & Spencer Simply Food
- Clothes & Gift shops
- The Body Shop
- Newsagent
- Barclays Bank
- Hairdressers
- Costa Coffee/Starbucks
- Various food outlets

Sports and Leisure

The Frank Lee Sports and Leisure Centre on the Campus is open to everyone who works on the Campus including employees of companies. The Centre offers a comprehensive range of activities for both adults and children (during the school holidays). Facilities include a 25m heated indoor pool, tennis and squash courts, cardio gym and fitness rooms. There is also a licensed bar, restaurant and function rooms.

Childcare

Bright Horizons Long Road nursery is located on the Campus making it an ideal location for parents who work at the site. The nursery is purpose built and houses five home bases, each designed specifically for babies, toddlers and pre-school children, as well as a spacious and secure external area in which children can play and explore the outdoors.

Apprenticeship opportunities

These are available for new and current members of staff to earn while they learn. The University is committed to nurturing talent and developing expertise through providing relevant vocational and professional apprenticeships across all of its departments and institutions.



Clinical School Wellbeing Programme

Following the launch of the Clinical School Wellbeing Programme in April 2014 it has continued to develop and grow each year. The School holds regular wellbeing talks and events in addition to hosting two dedicated Wellbeing Weeks packed with activities for staff each year. Activities include staff massages, smoothie bikes, step challenges, arts and crafts sessions and many more.

The School also has a team of Mental Health First Aiders recruited and trained from our own pool of staff. The School is always looking for new ways to engage staff and encourage them to look after their physical and mental wellbeing.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The School of Clinical Medicine has a dedicated governance group overseeing equality, diversity and inclusion related activities. Regular talks are held throughout the year and all staff members are expected to undertake Equality and Diversity training.

The School has a number of networks for different staff groups encouraging communication and sharing of practices. There is also a growing network of 100+ Equality Champions who meet termly and help raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion within their departments. The School currently holds a silver Athena SWAN award utilising the process to critically analyse all areas of equality and diversity within the school.

How to apply

Applications should be submitted online via the University of Cambridge jobs page www.jobs.cam.ac.uk by clicking “Apply online” in the job advert. You will need an email address to register for our online system.

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

Informal enquiries are welcomed and should be directed to:
MP. Alcolea (mpa28@cam.ac.uk).

If you have any queries regarding the application process please contact **HR department hr@stemcells.cam.ac.uk**

The closing date for applications is: 22nd April 2025