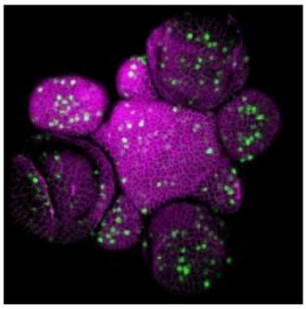
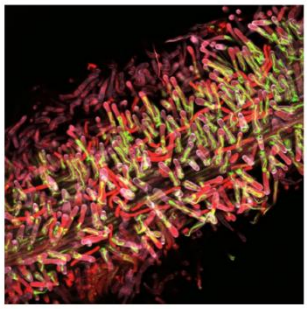
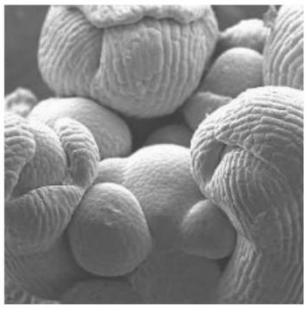
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Business & Operations Administrator

Sainsbury Laboratory Cambridge University (SLCU)

Closing Date: 24 November 2026
Job Reference: PT51585




Athena SWAN Silver Award

disability confident COMMITTED

We are a Living Wage Employer

The role

Salary:

£31,861-£36,320

Grade 5

Contract:
Assistant Fixed term

Location:

Central Cambridge

Hours of work:

Full-time
36.5 hours per week

Reports to:

Business & Operations Manager



Role Summary

We are looking for an enthusiastic and motivated individual to join the Sainsbury's Laboratory as a Business and Operations Administrator. This is a newly created and diverse role, offering a unique opportunity for the successful candidate to shape and develop the function from the outset. Working closely with key stakeholders, the post holder will have significant scope to design day-to-day processes, establish effective ways of working, and influence how responsibilities are delivered to support the organisation's objectives.

The successful candidate will have previous experience in an administrative role. Key skills and attributes required for this role include strong numerical and communication skills, as well as attention to detail. The ability to build effective working relationships is also essential for the role. To thrive in this deadline-driven operational role, you will need to be able to work independently, with the ability to prioritise workloads as well as managing tight deadlines.

The successful applicant will develop a deep understanding of the administrative support required across the Laboratory. You will be supported to take on varied responsibilities alongside the core requirements of the role, including assisting the Health and Safety Manager in the delivery of meetings, inductions and managing risk assessments.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide proactive research support to drive high-quality funding applications.
- Work closely with the Business and Operations Manager to support researchers in the preparation, costing and review of research bids, with a significant aspect of the role focused on costing and compliance.
- Provide advice and guidance on various operational aspects of grant applications, including eligibility of the applicant(s), adherence to the rules of the funding call and accurate costings.
- Develop a deep understanding of the administrative support required across the Laboratory.
- Varied responsibilities alongside the core requirements of the role, including assisting the Health and Safety Manager in the delivery of meetings, inductions and managing risk assessments.

Personal Specifications

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education/Training		
Educated to A level standard or equivalent level of practical experience.	✓	
Accounting training to the level of AAT 3 or equivalent knowledge of financial management is desirable		✓
Knowledge & Skills		
Previous experience in an administrative role	✓	
Strong numerical and communication skills	✓	
High level of accuracy and attention to detail	✓	
Excellent communication and organisational skills	✓	
Proven ability to manage concurrent projects often with conflicting deadlines.	✓	
Ability to prioritise own workload and work independently	✓	
Tact and Diplomacy	✓	
Knowledge of research support activities in Higher Education		✓
Experience		
Experience/knowledge of grant administration		✓
Experienced user of Microsoft Office, including SharePoint and Excel.	✓	
Knowledge of Health and Safety regulation		✓



The Sainsbury Laboratory

SLCU is a research institute funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation within the School of Biological Sciences. The Laboratory is focused on increasing understanding of the regulatory systems underlying plant growth and development. It brings together specialists in biological, physical, and mathematical sciences integrating a range of wet-lab experimental research with computational modelling. This interdisciplinary approach is essential for understanding the complex dynamic and self-organising properties of plants.

About the Institute

SLCU opened in 2011 in a purpose-built facility located within the Cambridge University Botanic Garden, within walking distance of central Cambridge and the train station. It is structured and operates as a research institute within the University of Cambridge.

SLCU has close connections with many other University of Cambridge departments, including Plant Sciences, Crop Science Centre, Genetics, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Engineering, Mathematics, Physics and nearby centres closely associated with the University, such as the European Bioinformatics Institute, the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, NIAB, the MRC Laboratory for Molecular Biology and Microsoft Research, as well as stakeholder networks.

More information at slcu.cam.ac.uk

The facilities

The Institute is well equipped for pioneering plant science research with its modern 11,000m2 building that incorporates laboratories, support areas, and meeting spaces, together with the University's Herbarium, a public café and a 121-seat auditorium where academic symposia and public talks are held.

SLCU runs a range of centrally managed facilities and services. It has 42 controlled environment growth rooms, 300m^2 of growing space under glass, tissue culture rooms and Level 2 Containment facilities. There is an in-house state-of-the-art advanced imaging facility, including live imaging of developing plant tissues, and high-resolution scanning electron microscopy.

The Laboratory is also set-up to support advanced bioinformatics, image processing and modelling software development. The Institute has a substantial core equipment budget, both for initial provision and recurrent needs. Future priorities will depend on the needs of appointee.

Flexible and inclusive working environment

SLCU has a wide range of family-friendly benefits, including maternity leave that exceeds the legal minimum, additional paternity leave, parental leave, adoption leave, childcare provision and flexible working options.

We are a diverse community with people from more than 25 countries. At SLCU we foster an inclusive culture in which people can speak openly, try new things and be bold. We welcome people from all backgrounds and respect, celebrate and value everyone regardless of race, colour, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, nationality or neurodiversity. SLCU actively supports equality, diversity and inclusion and encourages applications from all sections of society. SLCU currently holds a silver Athena Swan award.

Our people

SLCU is a community of about 120 scientists in research groups of up to 12 people, headed by Research Group Leaders who represent a balance between senior established academic staff and more junior and mid-career researchers. At steady state the Institute hosts 14 research groups, including 11 Group Leaders and 4 Career Development Fellows.
The current Director is Professor Henrik Jönsson, who also leads his own research group.
The community includes about 20 PhD students, 55 postdocs, a regular cohort of visiting students and around 30 professional staff.



Terms of Appointment

Tenure and probation

The appointment will be made on a fixed-term basis 31 December 2031. The appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of CPS (Cambridge University Assistants Contributory Pension Scheme). For further information please visit: https://www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk/

Annual leave

Professional staff are entitled to annual paid leave of 36 days inclusive of public holidays. The annual leave year runs from 1 October until 30 September.

General information:

Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working with us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, 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.

References

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

Application process

To submit an application for this vacancy, please click on the link in the 'Apply online' section of the advert published on the University's Job Opportunities pages. This will route you to the University's Web Recruitment System, where you will need to register an account (if you have not already) and log in before completing the online application form.

The closing date for applications is stated in the advert. If you have any questions about this vacancy or the application process, please email HR@slcu.cam.ac.uk.

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 https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policiesprocedures/disabled-applicants-and-members-staff

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any 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 HR Team on HR@slcu.cam.ac.uk

The School

The School of the Biological Sciences is one of the six Schools that are responsible for delivering teaching, research and the administration of those activities within the University. It delivers internationally-leading research and teaching on animal, plant and microbial science at scales that range from the atomic, molecular and cellular through whole organisms to populations and communities. The research impacts on the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries, on human and animal health and the clinic as well as in conservation, agriculture and the environment.



About the School

The School employs around 16,000 staff and teaches over 4,000 students in the Natural Sciences, Medical Sciences, Veterinary Sciences and Psychological and Behavioural Sciences. It acts as the interface with the University's central bodies and negotiates policy decisions taken at School level.

It is arranged into nine Departments and the Centre for Family Studies, plus five major research Institutes, including SLCU, and an animal hospital. Itis 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.

Professional Services staff

Professional Services staff play a fundamental role in the School's academic vision of the pursuit of education and research at the highest levels of excellence.

The School is an inclusive community looking for engaged individuals to join a dynamic community. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming work environment where all staff feel valued, encouraged to develop, and supported to achieve their best.

With excellent benefits, extensive opportunities, and a stimulating environment the School of Biological Sciences is a great place to work.

What we offer

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.

Personal and Professional Development

A dedicated team works to design, deliver and evaluate training and development opportunities. There are a range of programmes available to professional services staff, including job shadowing, mentoring, secondments and vocational qualifications. The University also offer access to wide range of training resources through LinkedIn Learning.

Mentoring

Ourcambridge developed a self-match mentoring scheme for Professional Services, where individuals support colleagues by sharing their professional knowledge and experiences, to enable that colleague to achieve their goals. The scheme offers a range of support and training tools available both to mentors and mentees.

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.

"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 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.

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. The University also has a flexible working policy for Assistant 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

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;
- 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, 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 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. 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. 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.

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact the HR Team on hr@slcu.cam.ac.uk.

The closing date for applications is 24 November 2026.



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE