UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Contracts & Portfolio Manager

Research Office (UK Hub for Predictive & AI-Enabled Human Disease Models)

Closing Date: 25th November 2026
Job Reference: EW51473









Race Equality Charter Bronze Award

We are a Living Wage Employer

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Athena SWAN Silver Award

Letter from Hiring Manager

Isobel de Wouters

Assistant Director Biological School Team

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Contracts & Portfolio Manager within the University's Research Office and for taking the time to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

The Research Office plays a central role in enabling and supporting world-leading research across the University of Cambridge. Working closely with academics, departments, funders and partner organisations, we help create the framework that allows innovative research to flourish while ensuring that the University's interests are appropriately protected and managed.

This role sits at the heart of the new MRC Funded UK Hub For Predictive And AI Enabled Human Disease Models, which will bring together leading research institutions, NHS partners and industry collaborators to accelerate the development and translation of innovative human disease models into better healthcare. The scale, complexity and ambition of the Hub create a unique opportunity for an experienced contracts professional to make a lasting impact.

As Contracts & Portfolio Manager, you will provide contractual leadership across a diverse and high-profile portfolio of research collaborations. Working closely with academic leaders, departmental teams, Cambridge Enterprise and external organisations, you will help navigate complex contractual, intellectual property, legal and commercial considerations to enable research projects to progress successfully.

The role requires someone who combines sound judgement with excellent negotiation and relationship-management skills. You will be comfortable analysing complex contractual arrangements, balancing risk with opportunity, and providing clear, practical advice to a wide range of stakeholders. Alongside your contractual expertise, you will take a project-management approach, coordinating multiple parties and priorities to ensure agreements are delivered efficiently and effectively.

I am looking for an individual with experience of the UK higher education environment and of contracts management who enjoys solving complex problems, building productive relationships and working collaboratively in a fast-paced environment.

If you are excited by the prospect of working on major strategic research initiatives, contributing to the success of one of the world's leading universities and helping to shape collaborations that advance science and healthcare, I would be delighted to hear from you.

With best wishes,

Isabelle de Wouters



Contracts & Portfolio Manager

Salary: Grade 8
£43,099—£57,666

Contract:
Fixed-Term (3 Years)

Location:
Cambridge

Faculty / Department:
Research Office

Responsible to:
Senior Contracts Manager

Working pattern:
Full-time/Part-time (min 85%)

The University of Cambridge has a Hybrid Working Policy that aims to enable as many staff as possible to work in a hybrid way if they so wish, whilst recognising that some roles will include tasks that can only be performed on University premises.



Purpose of the role

The Contracts and Portfolio Manager will provide contractual leadership for the UK Pre-clinical Translational Models Hub, one of the UK's largest strategic investments in New Approach Methodologies (NAMs), funded by UKRI (c.£25 million over 3.5 years).

The Hub is led by the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute (CSCI) and brings together the University of Cambridge, Wellcome Sanger Institute, MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Papworth Hospital and other national and international partners to accelerate the translation of innovative human disease models into better healthcare.

The post holder will develop and implement appropriate agreements in order to facilitate research funding in the best interests of the University.

The role also involves carrying out a 'project management' role to guide academics and funders through the University processes to enable research projects to get up and running.

This includes:

Drafting, reviewing and negotiating research related contracts (such as agreements covering research funding, collaborations, studentships, confidentiality, material transfer and software);

Protecting the University's access to the results of research for further use or commercialisation, reducing legal liability, assessing risk, providing advice and guidance on costing and pricing, seeking optimal payment terms and academic publication rights;

Liaising with academics, Departmental Administrators and others to communicate and discuss key terms and risk.

The Contracts Manager assists the Senior Contracts Manager in developing systems, procedures and relationships for the negotiation of externally funded research agreements on behalf of the University.

Contracts & Portfolio Manager

Key Responsibilities:

- Oversee the Hub's portfolio of collaboration partnership and project agreements.
- Negotiate single and multiparty agreements.
- Provide advice and guidance on costing and pricing in line with University policy and to help the Department submit the most appropriate budget
- Provide advice on Intellectual Property (IP) in relation to research collaborations.
- Liaise with Cambridge Enterprise in relation to IP.
- Coordinate with third parties both internal and external to the University to ensure the project is able to be delivered within the agreed timeframe.
- Check for conflicts with other third parties.
- Liaise with Departments, Department's Research, Governance Officer, Academic, Student and Cambridge Enterprise portfolio manager, as necessary, to confirm acceptable terms.
- Carry out negotiation planning and coordination of negotiation between all parties.
- Project management.
- Undertake risk assessment and propose actions to mitigate possible risk.
- Understand and interpret University and Sponsor policies and requirements.
- Problem solving.
- Advise and clarify terms of contract to Academic member of staff and Head of Department.
- Draft bespoke agreements.
- Understand University policies and provide advice.
- Ensure academic lead is involved in negotiations and is aware of the obligations of the agreement Material Transfer Agreement/ Confidentiality Agreement/Software Licence.
- Review incoming MTA/CDA for acceptability in line with Research Office Operations' (ROO) guidelines.
- Negotiate terms and conditions with the third party Amendments, Extensions, Subcontracts.
- Review agreements for acceptability in line with ROO guidelines and templates.
- Draft specific IP, publication, and confidentiality terms in consultation with academics.
- Issue template agreements and letters.

Contracts & Portfolio Manager

Key Responsibilities Continued…

- Report to academic lead whether changes are needed.
- Verify and advise on finances with academic and Departmental administration where relevant.
- Negotiate terms and conditions with the third party Agreement administration.
- Check costings with Grants Team and Department.
- Ensure academic lead is involved in negotiations and is aware of obligations of the agreement.



Other Duties:

- Whilst the UK Hub will be the principal area of responsibility, the role sits within the wider Research Office Contracts Team. The postholder will also negotiate and manage a limited portfolio of other research-related agreements. Hub work will be prioritised and the active portfolio will normally be capped at approximately 20 live agreements.
- Work with third parties to establish terms for collaborative agreements, MTAs, CDAs, Studentships and other contracts.
- Liaison with Departmental Administrator/Research Governance Officer to optimize systems for handling Collaboration Agreements.
- Working on MTAs, CDAs, Software Licences, Studentships and other contracts.
- Attend Contracts and Team meetings to discuss and advise on Contracts procedures and to be kept.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Experience of negotiating and drafting Collaborative Agreements, CDAs, MTAs and other contracts	✓	
Experience of pre and post award research administration in a university	✓	
Skills		
Familiarity with interpreting and understanding detailed and complex contractual documentation	✓	
Ability to resolve issues in a timely and flexible manner	✓	
Good organizational and time/ project management skills	✓	
Accuracy and attention to detail	✓	
Ability to prioritise workload	✓	
A scientific background is desirable		✓
Excellent communication skills	✓	
Excellent inter-personal skills with the ability to interact both reactively and pro-actively, directly with third parties, academics and senior leaders.	✓	
Ability to convey complex information to a non-specialist audience	✓	
Qualifications		
Degree level or equivalent	✓	
Additional Requirements		
Ability to stay calm under pressure	✓	
Understanding the University pricing policy, IP policy, financial regulations and contract interpretation by all relevant parties.	✓	
A customer-focussed approach	✓	

Declaration on Research Assessment

The University of Cambridge is a signatory to the San-Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), and in recruitment or promotion evaluations will assess research on the basis of its merits rather than the journal or venue in which it is published. Applicants should not include Journal Impact Factors or uncontextualized metrics in their applications. Full details are at: https://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-policy/DORA

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	B
Negotiating and Influencing	C
People Development	B
Relationship Building	B
Strategic Focus	B

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.



Research Office

The University has an exceptional reputation as one of the world's leading research intensive academic institutions; a distinction which is of vital importance to its financial future through attracting external funding for research and to maintaining its academic excellence by attracting the very best research staff and students to Cambridge.

About the Research Office

The University is one of the world's leading research-intensive academic institutions. The Cambridge Research Office (CRO) provides leadership to the community of practice for all research services necessary to support the research carried out across the University. Its effectiveness is critical to the University's continued position in the top 5 University's worldwide. The University's external research income was in excess of £500 million in 2022/23 and its block grant funding for research, capital investment innovation and knowledge exchange was in excess of £170M.

The Research Office has a staff complement in excess of 200 and provides the central administrative hub for research activities at the University, with responsibility to maintain clear oversight of all Research Office policies and procedures, across the full range of pre- and post-award grants and contracts administration including quality assurance, risk management, audit and compliance.

The Research Office is responsible, annually, for submission of approximately 3000 applications totalling ~£1.4bn in value and approximately 1400 new awards.

The Research Office also holds responsibility for taking a strategic role in the oversight and development of all aspects of the University's research activities. It is also responsible for the central administration of the University's REF and KEF submissions.

The office has lead responsibility for management and oversight of research governance and integrity at Cambridge, the management of strategic relationships with major research funders, and supporting the delivery of activities to develop the University's research strategy including the development of major applications for research funding, the University's portfolio of Interdisciplinary Research Centres, Strategic Research Initiatives and Research Networks, delivery of the programme of Strategic Research Reviews and central coordination of the University's research impact and knowledge exchange activities.



Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation
Appointments will be made on a fixed term basis of three years. Appointments will be subject to satisfactory completion of a nine-month probationary period.

Hours of work and working pattern
The hours of work for the position are full-time (37 hours), working Monday – Friday. The post holder is expected to spend a minimum of four days per week on site, split between West Cambridge and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. We welcome applications from individuals who wish to be considered for part-time working (minimum 85%) or other flexible working arrangements.

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-rated 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 / standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check/an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check/a security check.

Any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of this/ these check(s); whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the 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 consistently ranked one of the best universities in the world, achieving academic excellence through its Faculties, Departments and other Institutions, together with the 31 Colleges.

The University is renowned for its record of discovery and innovation. It is one of the great institutions, with a regional, national and global reach, attracting the very best and brightest minds. Our staff and students shape the world around us for the better: we attract and partner with like-minded people.

Whether contributing to the development of new anti-cancer drugs, adding to the understanding of how black holes are formed, revolutionising the study of ancient settlements, convening academic expertise to offer solutions to the climate crisis, or analysing public attitudes towards democracy around the world, the University's research is remarkable in its breadth, quality and impact. The University also sits at the heart of Europe's largest technology cluster and has catalysed more than 1,500 high-tech companies. And yet what inspires our 24,000 students and 13,000 staff is not what has already been achieved, but what is possible in the future.

The education and experience of our students, based on a partnership between the University's academic Departments and Faculties and the 31 Colleges, is second to none. Every student is a member of one of the Colleges, each a community of students, academics and staff drawn from across the University's comprehensive range of subject areas.



The University is a self-governing community, with a system for decision-making that provides a high degree of accountability and transparency to its members. Each Department and Faculty is part of one of six academic Schools, but each of them, and each individual academic, has a great deal of autonomy. The Colleges are independent and self-governing, working in a symbiotic relationship with the University.

The University has a number of Institutions that are independent of any Faculty or Department and are not part of the academic Schools. These include the Institute of Continuing Education (which provides high-quality education to adults throughout their lives), the Fitzwilliam Museum, Kettle's Yard (an historic house and gallery that holds important collections of modern art) and the University Library. In addition to their diverse contributions to University and public life, these non-School Institutions are also important centres of teaching and research.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment provides academic publishing, examinations and learning materials worldwide, supporting the dissemination of research, academic development at school and in higher education, and international student mobility. Legally, the Press & Assessment is a department of the University. It provides very important funds to invest in the academic purposes of the University.

The University has made truly remarkable contributions to the sum of human understanding, with breakthrough ideas and discoveries that have changed the way we understand ourselves, our planet, and the universe around us. Yet the global and national contexts in which it operates are fast-changing and increasingly filled with uncertainty. In a world that is becoming - politically, economically, socially, and technologically – ever more interconnected but even less equal, the University's mission – "to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and



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.

"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."

Professor Deborah Prentice,

Vice Chancellor, 2023



Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 24,000 students and over 13,000 staff from all walks of life and corners of the world.

The University continually explores strategies to attract and retain the best people. It is committed to supporting its staff to achieve their best. We are a fair, diverse and inclusive society and we believe our staff are our greatest asset. There is strong commitment to developing institutional leadership and supporting and encouraging staff development at all levels.

We offer a variety of roles including academic, research, professional, managerial and support roles. We also offer extensive benefits and excellent learning opportunities within a stimulating working environment.

The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a new science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is now expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University key workers and community facilities. Even with our continued development, the University remains within walking or cycling distance across the campus. The University is a major partner on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and we continue to redevelop our historic city centre sites demonstrating our determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.



Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity groups, including the Women's Staff Network, Race Equality Network and LGBT+ Staff Network. More details are available here: http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/

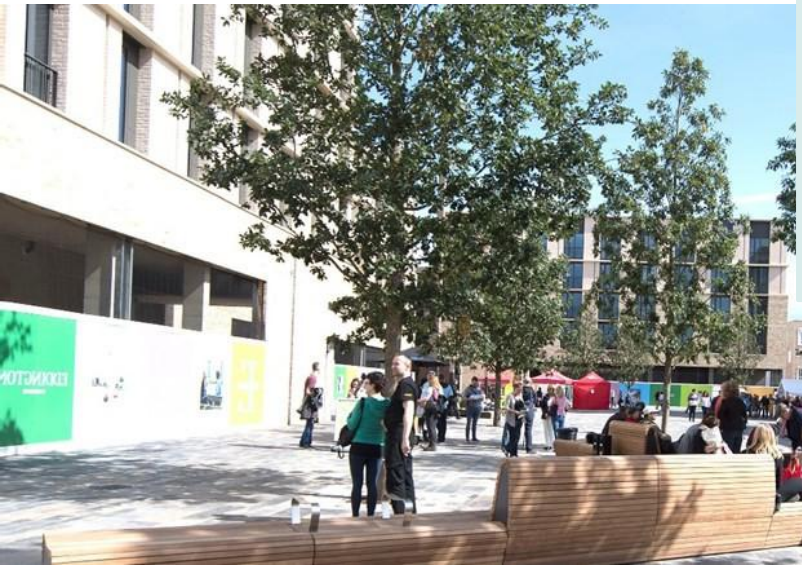
The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter award, with a framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's silver Athena swan award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting gender equality.

Living in Cambridge

Cambridge is rich in cultural diversity. From beautiful University and College buildings, museums and art galleries, quaint gardens and punts on the River Cam, to a vibrant restaurant and café scene, our employees are surrounded by the wonderful features of this unique city.

You can find a wide-range of high street shops and 3 shopping centres, with independent alternatives at the historic market and nestled within the passageways in the city centre. You will find a cinema, bowling alley, a nightclub and various live performances at the Cambridge Leisure Park, with further entertainment options at the Corn Exchange, Arts Theatre and the ADC Theatre. Further information can be found on the Visit Cambridge website.

If you prefer the faster pace of life, London is a 45-minute train journey away. For those travelling from overseas, Stansted Airport is just 45 minutes away and Heathrow Airport under 2 hours away. The University is a short distance from a host of other attractions such as Ely Cathedral, Newmarket Races and various wildlife parks and stately homes. Cambridge is also within easy reach of the beautiful Broads and coastlines of Norfolk and Suffolk.



Relocation Support

The University recognises the importance of helping individuals to move and settle into a new area. We provide support and guidance to those relocating internationally or domestically to take up a post at the University of Cambridge, liaising with other University offices and selected partners to ensure comprehensive relocation support is available. This includes: accommodation, childcare, schools, banking, immigration and transport. If you would like further information, please visit https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/RelocationService/. The Shared Equity Scheme and the Reimbursement of Relocation Expenses Scheme provide financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the costs of relocating to Cambridge.

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 26 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 are 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 (https://www.nvs.admin.cam.ac.uk/) is an organisation within the University that welcomes the partners and families of visiting scholars and new members of the University. Run by volunteers, the group offers opportunities to visit interesting Cambridge venues, learn about the community, take part in social events and gain local knowledge while developing a strong support network of both residents and other newcomers.



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 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 Isabelle de Wouters at: mailto:Isabelle.dewouters@admin.cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact recruitment at: crorecruitment@admin.cam.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is 25th November 2026

The interview dates for the role are 8th or 9th December 2026

