UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Research Assistant -

Department of Computer Science and Technology

Closing Date: 2 December 2026
Job Reference: NR51764









Race Equality Charter Bronze Award

We are a Living Wage Employer

disability confident COMMITTED

Athena SWAN Silver Award

Research Assistant area of research or job title

Salary:
£34,504 to £37,228

Contract:
Fixed Term

Location:
West Cambridge

Faculty / Department:
Computer Science and Technology

Responsible to:
Amanda Prorok

Working Pattern:
Full Time

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 purpose of this role is to support and maintain the University's national and international mission for excellence in teaching and research.

Contribution to excellence in research will be as a member of a research team carrying out research at a similar level to that undertaken by lecturing staff and will provide substantial scope for academic judgement, originality, interpretation and presentation of results. The role holder will assist with grant administration and the writing of reports for funding bodies. Contribution to teaching will include assistance in the presentation of seminars and may include participation in the research group's teaching programme. The role holder will participate in the overall contribution of the department/faculty, as appropriate.

Applications are invited for a Research Assistant (RA) to join the Prorok Lab in the Department of Computer Science and Technology, at the University of Cambridge, UK. The position is full time.

The Research Assistant will work together with a team of PhD students and research collaborators on a project aimed at developing multimodal foundation model to serve as the core infrastructure for advanced AI robots and physical AI. Within the project's Exploratory Track, the "Agent" area focuses on realizing multimodal AI agents capable of operating seamlessly in both real and virtual spaces.

The research pursues four core themes: modelling virtual and real worlds, understanding first-person context, fostering cooperation in large-scale multi-agent systems, and interpreting unspoken human needs. To achieve these goals, we will leverage shared evaluation frameworks, reinforcement learning, and sophisticated simulation environments to bridge the gap between complex digital models and practical real-world applications.

Main Responsibilities

1 Research and scholarship:

- undertake basic research for example by preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcome of experiments and field work, the development of questionnaires and conducting surveys, using straightforward mathematical modelling or scientific computation;
- continue to update knowledge and develop skills;
- write up results of own research;
- contribute to the production of research reports and publications;
- present information on research progress and outcomes to bodies supervising research, e.g. steering groups, sponsors or members of research groups;
- prepare papers for steering groups and other bodies; make use of standard research techniques and methods;
- analyse and interpret the results of own research and generate original ideas based on outcomes.

2 Teaching and learning support:

- may assist in the supervision of student projects;
- provide limited supervision/instruction to classes.

3 Liaison and networking:

- liaise with colleagues and students on routine matters;
- make internal and external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding and form relationships for future collaboration.

4 Planning and organising:

- Plan own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed programme.
- Co-ordinate own work with that of others to avoid conflict or duplication of effort.
- Contribute to the planning of research projects.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education		
Educated to first degree level or equivalent experience	✓	
Holds a BA or similar qualification in Computer Science	✓	
Specialist knowledge & skills		
Possess sufficient breadth or depth of knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques to work within own area	✓	
A broad range of software skills and research orientated thinking	✓	
Excellent analytical, programming, and problem-solving skills	✓	
Demonstrated ability to conduct independent research and publish in leading venues	✓	
Interpersonal & Communication skills		
Proven Communication skills and the ability to present their research at the appropriate national and international forums and technical and non- technical audiences.	✓	
Relevant Experience		
The role holder will have limited or no previous research experience or the scope of the role will require limited independent judgement and creativity	✓	
The role holder would possess some research experience with sufficient breadth/depth of specialist knowledge in the relevant disciplines and of research methods and techniques to work within established research programmes.	✓	
Additional Requirements		
Will continually update knowledge in the specialist area and engage in continuous professional development	✓	

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	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.



The Faculty / Department



The Department of Computer Science and Technology is an academic department that encompasses computer science along with many aspects of engineering, technology and mathematics. We have a world-wide reputation for academic research with consistent top research ratings. Professor Alastair Beresford is the Head of Department.

The Department has around 340 people engaged in research: academic staff, research associates, and PhD students. Research is carried out across a broad range of subjects within Computer Science. The Department carries out research across the computer science field and encourages the development of new technologies and applications. You can read more about research here in the Environment Statement submitted to the most recent REF (Research Excellence Framework) – the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. All aspects of our research environment were rated 'world-leading'."

The Department has an open and collaborative culture, supporting revolutionary fundamental computer science research, strong cross-cutting collaborations internally and externally, and ideas which transform computing outside the University. Please follow the links to the Themes at: https://www.cst.cam.ac.uk/research to find out more about our research.

Support staff play a key role in supporting the Department's academic and research endeavours. The Department provides a stimulating environment that promotes a strong sense of community, whilst valuing and recognising individual contributions.

The School of Technology

The School of Technology is one of six academic divisions at the University of Cambridge. The School brings together departments and institutes working at the forefront of technological and societal progress, including the Department of Engineering, Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Cambridge Judge Business School, and the Department of Computer Science and Technology.

Dedicated to benefitting society through advancing the frontiers of technology and the economies and enterprises into which it is deployed, we deliver outstanding education, conduct world-class research, and foster discovery and innovation. We support students, staff, industry, and society by nurturing talent, promoting individual enterprise, and building partnerships that benefit society.

We strive to continue to be a global leader in education, research, and innovation, inspiring a diverse community of staff, students, alumni, and external partners that drives technological progress and societal impact. Building on the fundamental underpinning technologies that we work on, we envision a future where our commitment to excellence and collaboration empowers individuals and industries to meet complex challenges and shape a better world.

Our four strategic research themes – **Sustainable Future, Health and Wellbeing, Increased Competitiveness, and Security and Resilience** – guide interdisciplinary collaboration and reflect our ambition to address some of the most pressing global challenges through technological innovation. We are proud to foster a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment where people from all backgrounds can thrive.

We value diversity and promote equal opportunities, recognising that a wide range of experiences and perspectives strengthens our community and our work. International staff are a vital part of our success, and we aim to support all new colleagues in their transition to life and work in Cambridge. Our staff benefit from access to outstanding resources, a vibrant global academic community, and a wide range of personal and professional development opportunities.

The School plays a key strategic role in supporting its departments, allocating resources, shaping academic and financial planning, and advancing initiatives in research, infrastructure, education, and engagement. The School Office, led by the Head and Secretary of the School, supports governance, coordination, and services across departments.

For more information about the School and its departments, please visit: https://www.tech.cam.ac.uk/



Terms of Appointment

Tenure and probation
Appointments will be made on a fixed-term basis for a period of 3 years due to limited funding. 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 37 hours per week, working Monday – Friday.

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/.

Annual leave
Full time employees are entitled to annual paid leave of 36 days inclusive of public holidays. For 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.

Equality and Diversity

We particularly encourage women and /or 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. (**Please see relevant guidance before inclusion:** https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/recruitment/equality-law-and-recruitment/exceptions-equality-law/positive-action)

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 HR Team, 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 research at the highest international levels of excellence" – has never been more relevant.



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.

The University offers 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 their 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 continues to redevelop its historic city centre sites demonstrating a clear determination to ensure that we can offer the best facilities and opportunities for our staff and students.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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

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: Amanda Prorok
Email: asp45@cam.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the application process, please contact: hr-admin@cst.cam.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is: 2 December 2026

