



PT41427: Research Assistant Sainsbury Laboratory



The role

Salary:

£29,605 - £33,966

Contract:

Fixed term for 4
years

Location:

Sainsbury Laboratory

Responsible to:

Group Leader

Working pattern:

Full-time

Purpose of the role

The Sainsbury Laboratory is recruiting a Research Assistant to join Dr Bartlett's team, starting in September 2024. This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic individual to support the university's reputation for excellence, join a newly-formed research team from its inception under the direction of an established PI of international reputation and work in a cutting-edge research institute.

Under the direct supervision of Dr Bartlett, the successful candidate will work independently on a research project focused on studying the genes that control the development and evolution of sex determination in grasses.

Additionally, the role holder will play a key role in establishing and supporting a new research group to ensure its smooth operation. Responsibilities include procuring and maintaining resources, implementing standard operating procedures, and establishing a brachypodium transformation program.

Key Responsibilities

Research and scholarship

Work independently on a research project, including:

- Analyse and interpret results, generate original ideas based on outcome, write up results of own research and present the findings in lab meetings and Institute seminars
- Conduct literature and database searches to update knowledge and develop skills
- Contribute to the production of research reports and publications.

Support other research projects within the group by designing, developing and modifying experimental protocols and techniques. Prepare and collate results for interpretation by self and others, using results to adjust experiments.

Teaching and learning support

Provide technical assistance and supervision to students and researchers on experimental design and sample analysis. Recommend solutions, sample preparation methods and techniques that could be used to improve the research output, taking into account time and financial constraints.

Introduce students and researchers on the proper application, use and maintenance of equipment, including safety procedures.

Train students and researchers in standard laboratory procedures, including: gene editing, brachypodium transformation, maize growth life cycle and routine molecular biological techniques.

Logistics and Lab Management

Monitor laboratory resources, manage expenditure within a set budget, identify new suppliers, place orders for consumables and equipment.

Address logistical challenges and operational issues that may arise in the laboratory environment.

Conduct risk assessments as necessary.

Liaison and networking

Collaborate with the departmental safety officer to implement and adhere to codes of practice and safety regulations.

Perform or assist with any other duties or ad-hoc projects as defined by the line manager.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Bachelor's degree in biological sciences	√	
Experience		
Practical experience of working in a plant sciences basic research environment	√	
Experience in overseeing laboratory operations, including ordering lab supplies, maintaining inventory, and ensuring equipment functionality	√	
Proficient in Brachypodium transformation and genome editing techniques	√	
Familiar with the complete life cycle of Maize, from planting to harvesting and seed selection	√	
Experience in pest control		√
Experience in teaching and mentoring students		√
Familiar with advanced microscopy platforms (SEM, confocal)		√
Skills		
Strong organizational skills	√	
Excellent problem-solving and troubleshooting skills	√	
Ability to work unsupervised and independently and as part of a team	√	
Team player	√	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills	√	
Good IT skills	√	
High degree of precision and accuracy	√	
Knowledge of the relevant regulations and practice		√

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
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Additional requirements

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|---|---|--|
| Ability to design and execute research projects in the field of plant biology | √ | |
| Contribute to writing research papers in scientific journals | √ | |
| Prepare and present research findings at lab meetings and seminars | √ | |

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, 300m² 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 15 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.



The School of Biological Sciences

The School of Biological Sciences is one of six Schools of the University of Cambridge. In line with the University's mission, the academic vision of the School is the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Our goal is to continue to deliver research and teaching at the highest levels, working in innovative ways to achieve ongoing excellence.

About the School

The research and teaching carried out in the School of the Biological Sciences is diverse and covers animal, human, plant and microbial science from the atomic, molecular and cellular levels through to tissues, organs, whole organisms, populations, ecosystems, biodiversity, and human behaviour. The research has impacts on health and disease across species, agriculture, conservation and the environment as well as on the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries, with direct translational relevance to



the clinic, public services and social policy, and the bio-economy.

The School is organised into nine Departments (Biochemistry; Genetics; Pathology; Pharmacology; Physiology, Development and Neuroscience; Plant Sciences; Psychology; Veterinary Medicine; Zoology) and four major interdisciplinary research institutes (Gurdon Institute, Cambridge Stem Cell Institute, Sainsbury Laboratory and the MRC Toxicology Unit) all of which are involved in fundamental biological research with varying contributions to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

The School has oversight of the Botanic Garden, the Herbarium and the Museum of Zoology through the Departments of Plant Sciences and Zoology respectively. The School also contributes to the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, an unprecedented and highly successful amalgamation of cross-Schools groups and Non-Governmental Organisations.





Research themes

Six cross-cutting Research Themes provide integration across the School. They are designed to facilitate interactions across traditional departmental boundaries and all activities are founded in the principles of openness, inclusion and mutual respect.

The Themes provide new opportunities for leadership across the School, bringing people together from a variety of perspectives and career stages, with applications actively encouraged from groups traditionally under-represented in such roles.

Culture and Inclusion

The School is working to deliver a thriving research culture so we can attract and retain the best researchers and empower them to do their

best work. It is home to a dynamic community committed to providing a working environment where all individuals feel valued and supported. In line with University values and frameworks, we are proactively working to achieve an inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity.

Terms of appointment

Tenure and probation

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

Pension

You will automatically be enrolled to become a member of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme) – a defined benefits pension scheme. If you are already a member of the NHS Pension scheme, you may be eligible to continue in the scheme and should contact the Pensions section of the University:
www.pensions.admin.cam.ac.uk/.

Annual leave

Research staff are entitled to 33 days annual paid holiday excluding public holidays. The annual leave year runs from 1 October until 30 September.

Right to work

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 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.

Please ensure that you upload a copy of your full Curriculum Vitae (CV) including a list of publications, a covering letter highlighting your suitability for the position and contact information of three referees in the Upload section of the online application. If you upload any additional documents which have not been requested, we will not be able to consider these as part of your application.

If you have any questions about this vacancy or the application process, please email HR@slcu.cam.ac.uk

Diversity, Representation and Inclusion

The University is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated, representation is prioritized, and everyone feels valued and supported.

We are dedicated to making your application process as accessible and inclusive as possible. If you have specific needs that require support during the application process, please reach out to us at any stage. We will make reasonable adjustments to enable all applicants to compete to the best of their ability and, if successful, to support them throughout their employment journey.

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. and, for those who prefer to discuss special arrangements related to a disability with an HR professional the HR Coordinator responsible for recruitment to this position can be contacted at HR@slcu.cam.ac.uk. Alternatively, you may reach out to the HR Business Manager for the department at hadmin@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Inclusive Culture and Equal Opportunities

We are dedicated to promoting equality and diversity within our organization. We strive to build a workforce that is reflective of the diverse communities we serve. We welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith, or disability.

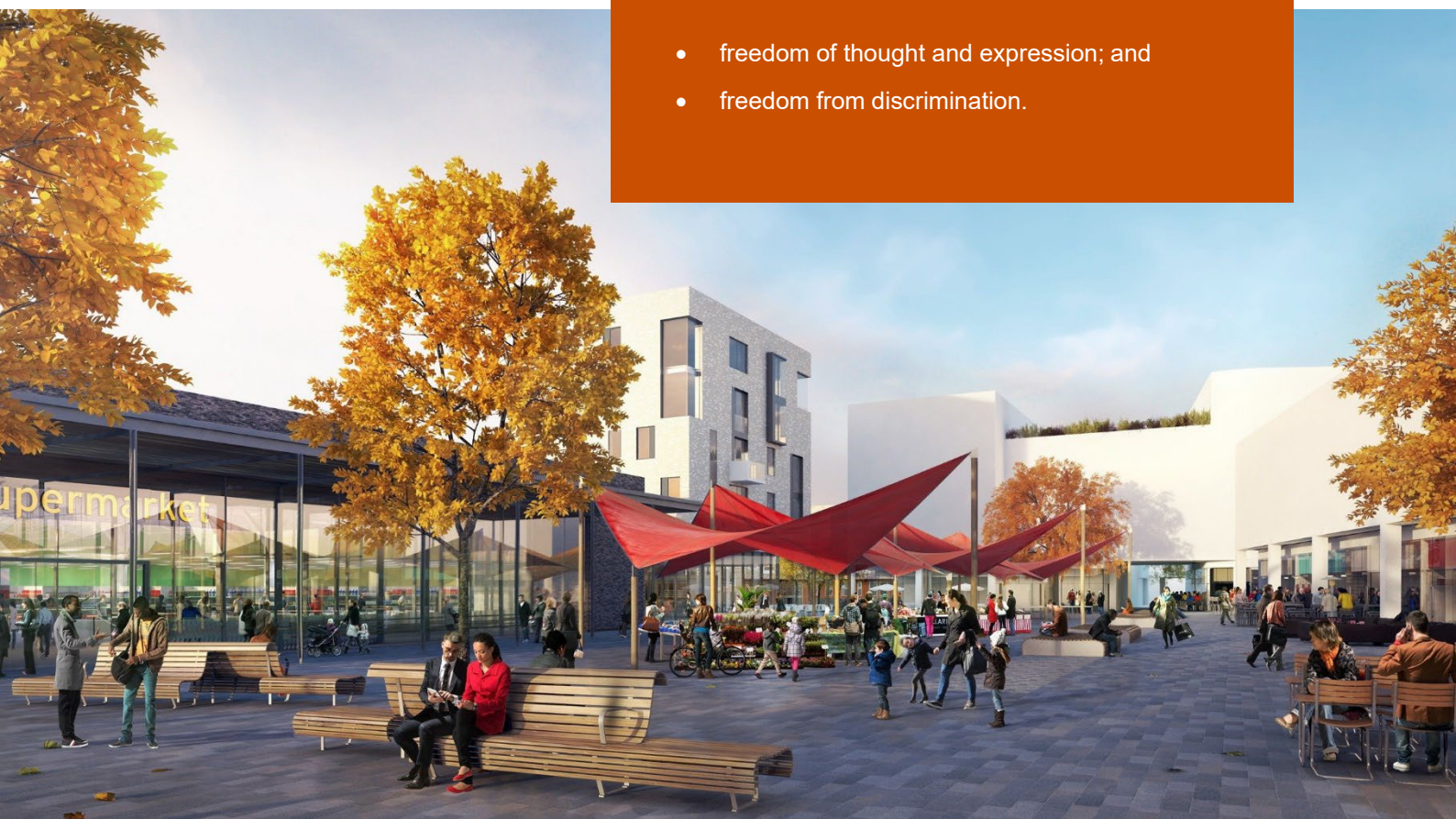
The University

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 £1.66 billion. Research income, won competitively from the UK Research Councils, the European Union (EU), major charities and industry, exceeds £400 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

Our ideas and innovations have shaped the world. Our campaign, 'Dear World... Yours, Cambridge', will raise £2 billion to help us shape all our futures.

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.

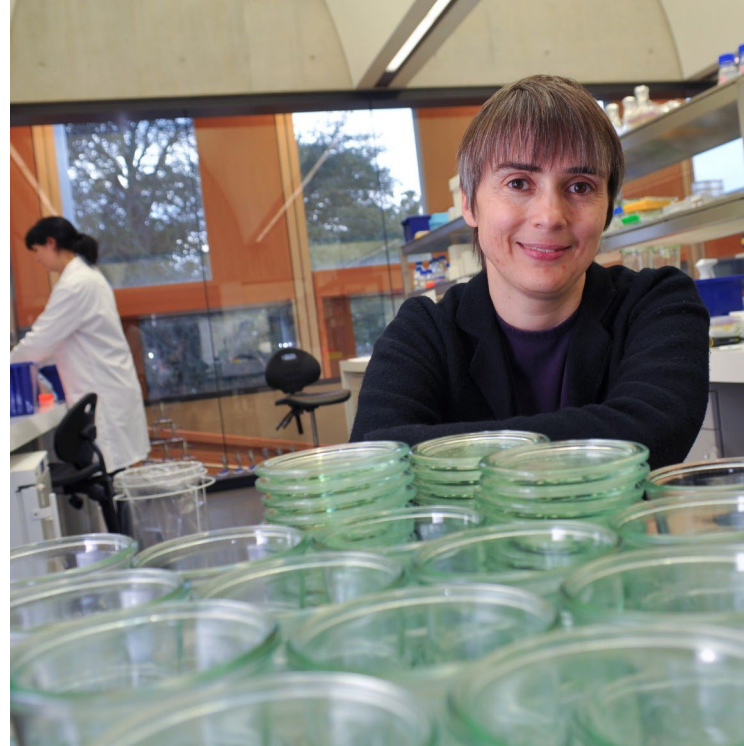
The University's estate is undergoing the most significant transformation in its history. Cambridge has been able to create a new science and technology campus to the west of the city centre, and is now expanding further to the north west of Cambridge including investing in affordable homes for University 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.

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.

Working at the University

Working at Cambridge you will join a diverse, talented and innovative community, with more than 18,000 students and over 11,000 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. Furthermore, the University's Athena SWAN award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women. 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 has signed up to the Race Equality Charter, a notional framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.



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.

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.

Further information about attractions in and around Cambridge can be found at [Visit Cambridge](http://www.visitcambridge.org), the official tourism website for the city.



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.

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. CAMBens Cars and CAMBens Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes are also available, which enable 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 of Cambridge.

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.

In addition, our Ofsted rated 'outstanding' workplace nurseries, childcare vouchers, a childcare salary sacrifice scheme and a high quality holiday play scheme are available to help support University employees with caring responsibilities. 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.

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.



What Cambridge can 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. 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.

Relocating to Cambridge

The University Accommodation Service exists to help employees in their search for a rental home in Cambridge. A new University development at North West Cambridge called Eddington offers subsidised rented accommodation to University staff. The development consists of high quality furnished one and two bedroom apartments. For more information about the development and how to apply please visit the website www.nwcambridge.co.uk

The importance of helping individuals settle into a new



area is also recognised by the University. The Shared Equity Scheme <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/cambens-employee-benefits/financial/shared-equity-scheme> provides financial assistance to qualifying new members of staff with the purchase of living accommodation, where they have to relocate to take up their appointment. Removal expenses are also available for qualifying new members of staff.

Equality & diversity

The University has a vibrant and varied community. We support and encourage under-represented groups and we value diversity. We welcome applications from individuals with disabilities. Our recruitment and



selection procedures follow best practice. 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/>

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.

Whether it is understanding the molecular basis of neurodegenerative diseases, or helping farmers in India increase their yield, or discovering better ways to live in large cities – I know that what we do in Cambridge affects lives, and livelihoods, the world over.

Vice Chancellor Emeritus, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, 2016

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.

Scientific enquiries apart from the formal application process should be directed to Anne Crozat at:

Anne.Crozat@slcu.cam.ac.uk

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 **9 May 2024**.



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