



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Development  
and Alumni  
Relations

# Careers in Development and Alumni Relations



**Candidate Information Pack**  
Principal Gift Director

May 2025

## Letter From Alison Traub



### Dear Prospective Candidate,

**Thank you for your interest in the position of Principal Gift Director. I am delighted that you are interested in this incredibly exciting role.**

Principal gifts are central to our ambition to secure transformational support for the University. As we look to the future, our aspiration is to scale philanthropic impact on a level few institutions can claim. This role involves leading efforts from identifying and cultivating relationships with extraordinary philanthropists to crafting opportunities that align their passions with Cambridge's most far-reaching goals.

This is an exciting time to join Development & Alumni Relations at Cambridge. Building on the success of our Dear World... Yours, Cambridge campaign, we are now in the early stages of planning a new transformative campaign that will bring far-reaching benefits to the University. In parallel, we aim to double our annual new funds raised, a significant growth target over the next 3-5 years.

This is a highly strategic role as part of a reinvigorated Principal Gifts programme, focused on gifts of £10 million and above.. You will work closely with academic champions, the Vice-Chancellor, senior leadership across Collegiate Cambridge, and an accomplished team of fundraisers. Your ability to manage complex relationships, while shaping ambitious funding propositions, will be vital as you lead the development of our principal gifts pipeline. The outcomes of your work will be measured not only in income secured, but in the depth and

durability of the relationships you forge. Our mission as a department is to align donor passions with University priorities, inspire generosity, and contribute to the excellence of the collegiate University. We value building relationships with all internal and external stakeholders, and find agile solutions in a collegial, responsive and transparent way. This role sits within a supportive and ambitious team where we hold ourselves—and each other—to high standards. We are building a culture that is creative, agile, and accountable, and where continuous learning is embedded in how we operate.

If you are driven by meaningful work and motivated by the opportunity to shape one of the most important philanthropic programmes in higher education, we would be excited to hear from you.

We look forward to exploring the future of philanthropy at Cambridge with you.

Best wishes,

**Alison Traub**  
**Executive Director**  
**Development and Alumni Relations**

# The Position

The Principal Gift Director is a pivotal leadership role within Cambridge's Development and Alumni Relations team, designed for a seasoned fundraising professional ready to operate at the highest level of global philanthropy.

At the heart of this role is the responsibility for building and sustaining relationships with individuals and organisations capable of making gifts of £10 million and above. You will manage a focused portfolio of ultra-high-net-worth prospects, for whom you will also lead the development of compelling philanthropic propositions aligned with the University's most ambitious academic and strategic priorities.

This is not a standard fundraising post. It requires a rare combination of strategic insight, diplomacy, and credibility at the most senior levels. You will act as a close partner to senior academic leaders and University leadership, working across complex institutional boundaries to align donor vision with University ambition. You will lead cross-functional working groups—composed of senior academics, fundraisers, and the University's institutional leaders—to ensure that each principal gift opportunity is institutionally grounded, bold in aspiration, and meticulously executed.

Success in this role will demand deep expertise in relationship management, a strong track record of securing transformative gifts, and a natural fluency in navigating complex, multi-stakeholder environments. You will be joining at a moment of significant institutional ambition, with a Vice-Chancellor committed to world-changing impact, and a development team actively preparing for the next chapter in the University's philanthropic journey.

We are seeking a colleague who can not only deliver exceptional results, but who will also shape the future of principal gift fundraising at Cambridge. If you are energised by complexity, inspired by purpose, and motivated by the opportunity to lead transformational philanthropy on a global stage, we invite you to bring your experience to Cambridge.



# About Development and Alumni Relations



We are a friendly, engaging and innovative Development and Alumni Relations team who work hard to deliver on the University of Cambridge's significant potential. Although the name and reputation of Cambridge are known worldwide, you will find it a down-to-earth and welcoming place to work where your experience will be recognised and valued.

For more than 800 years, the University of Cambridge has championed great minds, facilitated collaboration, and encouraged the development of world-changing ideas that have given birth to breakthroughs across virtually every academic discipline.

These advances are made possible in large part through Cambridge's history of commitment to fundraising. Philanthropy has long been key to enabling the collegiate University to meet its mission of contributing to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels. As funding for higher education grows more and more challenging, philanthropy has never been more important than it is today.

The University continues to invest significantly in Development and Alumni Relations, recognising philanthropy as a fundamental pillar of our long-term growth. As highlighted in the [Vice-Chancellor's annual address](#), philanthropy is not just a support function - it is embedded in the University's core strategy, shaping critical decisions and guiding transformative initiatives, such as student support. This commitment positions us to lead the sector in innovative and forward-thinking approaches to fundraising, ensuring we continue to make a lasting impact on education and research.





# The Development and Alumni Relations Office

## The University of Cambridge Development and Alumni Relations office is responsible for fundraising and alumni engagement.

We raise major philanthropic gifts from alumni and non-alumni sources, encourage lifelong relationships between the University, its alumni and supporters, and ensure that the worldwide community of more than 320,000+ alumni is informed about developments within the University and equipped to be effective ambassadors and advocates.

Cambridge in America (CAm) is the fundraising and alumni engagement arm for Collegiate Cambridge in the most developed philanthropic market globally, the United States of America. [Find out more about CAm.](#)

The Development and Alumni Relations office and CAm work with each other and their advancement counterparts in the 31 Colleges to maximise the philanthropic opportunities for the Collegiate University. [Read more about Cambridge University and its structure.](#)

### Our campaign

It's an exciting time to join our team as we build on our successfully concluded "Dear World, Yours Cambridge" fundraising campaign. The momentum created by the campaign is unique and we are investing now in the team that will build on our progress and take us into the future.

With plans underway for our next major fundraising campaign, set to launch in two years, you'll have the opportunity to work on innovative gift opportunities and initiatives, particularly in education and student support.

By collaborating closely with our Colleges, you'll contribute to a campaign that makes a lasting impact on our students and the University community. [Read more about the campaign's impact](#)

### About us

With more than 140 staff members, Development and Alumni Relations is a lively, collaborative and stimulating place to work. We enjoy each other's company and make time to have fun, whether with baking competitions, book clubs or fundraising for local Cambridge charities - to name just a few.

We understand that our progress is assured when we work collaboratively. We come from many different backgrounds and nationalities, and we know the positive contribution that difference, diversity, and mutual understanding bring to our workforce.

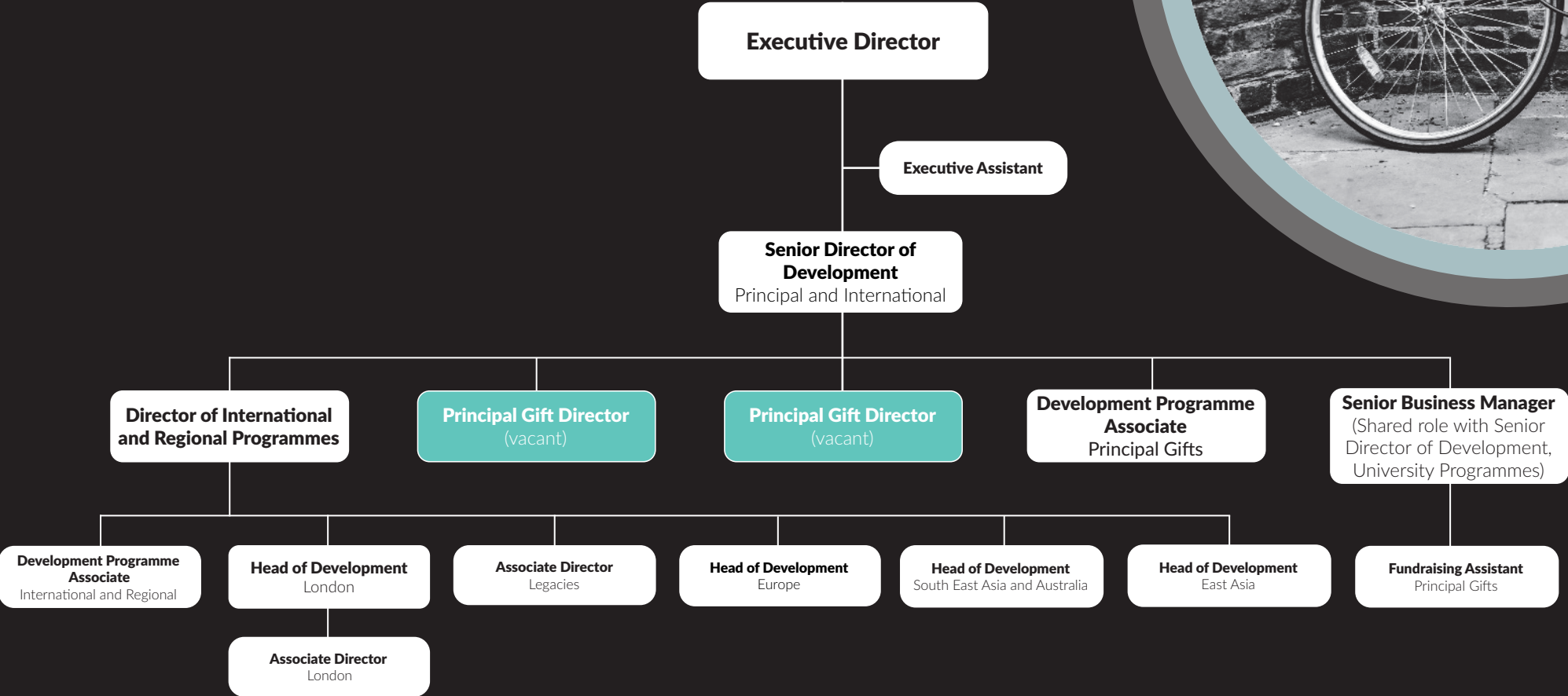
We are proud of our Major Gift Officer Learning Series – a fundraising curriculum based on research-inspired best practice in the fundraising industry, an exciting and career-building development and learning programme for staff.

[Find out more about us.](#)

We aim to be values-focused and our Peer Recognition Initiative recognises individual members of staff each month who have demonstrated at least one of our five values - Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, Passion and Excellence. [Read more about our mission, vision and values.](#)

# Organisational Chart

## Cambridge University - Principal and International



# Job Description

## Key Duties and Responsibilities



### Principal Gift Fundraising

- Manage a personal portfolio of approximately 20–30 ultra-high-net-worth prospects, cultivating and securing principal gifts of £10 million+ gifts.
- Develop and implement sophisticated fundraising strategies to engage and solicit key prospects, ensuring the successful closure of significant philanthropic commitments.
- Proactively identify and lead fundraising for key priorities as well as newly identified and additional priority projects as they arise.
- Work with the Vice-Chancellor, academic leaders, and DAR colleagues to develop transformative philanthropic opportunities that align with University priorities and lead on the preparation and presentation of compelling fundraising propositions.
- Steward principal gift donors, ensuring continued engagement and long-term relationships with the University.
- Represent the University at high-level donor meetings, cultivation events, and international fundraising engagements as required.
- Leverage insight into economic, societal and global trends to inform proactive cultivation strategies.

### Strategic Leadership and Collaboration

- Provide strategic leadership on principal gifts activity, contributing to the development of best-in-class principal gift fundraising strategies.
- Collaborate closely with the Senior Director of Development (Principal Gift and International), Directors of Development and other fundraising colleagues to ensure strategic alignment and donor coordination.
- Lead thinking on pipeline development and principal gift propositions for the University's next fundraising campaign.
- Engage in strategic forecasting to inform decision-making and long-term philanthropic success. Use and analyse data to enhance performance of the Principal Gift Programme.
- Provide advice, support, and briefing materials for University leaders engaging with principal gift prospects, ensuring seamless donor engagement experiences.
- Work in partnership with teams across Collegiate Cambridge, including Schools, Departments, Colleges and Cambridge in America, to enhance principal gift fundraising capacity and opportunities. Assemble and lead teams of fundraisers and academics to drive significant philanthropic income.
- Play a strategic role in shaping the University's readiness to attract and secure £100m+ transformative gifts by convening and aligning diverse institutional stakeholders, and creating the conditions necessary for success in securing mega gifts through high-value international prospect engagement.

# Job Description

## Key Duties and Responsibilities



### Prospect and Pipeline Development

- Identify and engage new prospects with the capacity to make transformational gifts to the University.
- Contribute to the ongoing development and monitoring of the principal gift pipeline, ensuring a dynamic and growing portfolio of opportunities.
- Utilise the University's prospect management systems to track and manage engagement, solicitations, and gift stewardship.
- Lead on long-range pipeline forecasting and scenario planning to anticipate future principal gift opportunities and gaps.
- Inform and influence prospect strategy across Collegiate Cambridge by championing cross-functional prospect review and strategic prioritisation.
- Bring insight from international wealth trends, philanthropy intelligence and institutional priorities to proactively shape a future-facing prospect pipeline.
- Actively contribute to a culture of discipline and creativity in prospect strategy, enabling the University to anticipate and respond to evolving philanthropic landscapes.

### Stakeholder Engagement and Donor Relations

- Support the Vice-Chancellor and University senior leadership with tailored donor strategies, ensuring alignment with reputational, academic, and philanthropic goals.
- Create bespoke engagement pathways for ultra-high-net-worth donors to engage with the University, as donors and as volunteers.
- Provide strategic input into high-level donor engagement activities, such as bespoke events, advisory board participation, and international fundraising initiatives.
- Partner with Cambridge in America and other key University partners to coordinate global fundraising efforts for the University.
- Act as a coach and mentor to less experienced fundraisers, while also leading multi-disciplinary project teams—including senior academics and professional staff—to develop compelling, institutionally-aligned principal gift propositions that resonate with global philanthropists.





# Person Specification



## Education and qualifications

- Educated to first degree or equivalent level of experience is essential.

## Relevant experience

- Significant experience in fundraising, with a track record of securing seven and eight-figure gifts from high-net-worth individuals, corporations and foundations.
- Experience in engaging and influencing senior stakeholders, including academic leaders and high-net-worth individuals.
- A high level of diplomacy, discretion and emotional intelligence in managing complex donor relationships.
- Ability to work collaboratively in a large, matrixed organisation with multiple stakeholders and competing priorities.
- Experience of working in higher education or working within a complex not-for-profit environment.
- Experience influencing or contributing to strategic institutional decisions through a philanthropic lens.
- Demonstrated impact on long-term philanthropic growth through programme design or strategic influence.



# Person Specification



## Specialist knowledge and skills

- Strong strategic thinking skills with the ability to develop and execute complex philanthropic initiatives.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, with the ability to build trusted relationships with donors, colleagues, and University leaders.
- Ability to develop institutional cases for support that are credible, visionary and tailored to ultra-high-net-worth individuals or organisations.
- Ability to translate complex academic or strategic priorities into compelling philanthropic narratives.
- Ability to relate effectively to the academic community and its aims.
- Capacity to build and manage mutually beneficial partnerships and networks, both internally and externally, to create opportunities for the University and to advance long-term plans.
- Ability to take difficult strategic decisions and an ability to resolve complex problems.
- Ability to promote a shared vision for the University.
- Ability to identify clear aims in negotiations and achieves satisfactory outcomes.
- Fosters a culture of innovation by identifying and championing new approaches for improving organisation results and building the University's capability.
- Demonstrable capacity to analyse, think critically, strategically and to innovate, both to promote innovation and resolve/respond to problems.

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## Additional Requirements

- The postholder must demonstrate the gravitas and credibility required to engage with senior University stakeholders, influential alumni, and major donors.
- Ability to work effectively within a high-performing team environment while also being self-directed and proactive in managing individual fundraising goals.
- Commitment to the values and mission of the University of Cambridge.
- The role will require UK and international travel, as well as some work outside of normal office hours.

# Terms and Conditions



## Location

1 Quayside, Bridge Street, Cambridge, CB5 8AB

The chosen applicant will be required to work from the office at least two days each week, as we operate under a hybrid working model.

This role offers the opportunity for regular remote work; however, the successful candidate will be expected to travel to Cambridge on a flexible weekly basis, depending on business needs. The schedule will follow departmental guidelines agreed upon in advance.

The Development and Alumni Relations Office at Cambridge University reserves the right to modify remote work arrangements with prior notice to employees.

## Salary

Highly Competitive

## Hours of work

37 hours per week.

There are no conditions relating to times of work but you are expected to work such hours and days as are reasonably necessary for the proper performance of your responsibilities. Your times of work should be agreed between you and your line manager.

## Length of appointment

Permanent

## Probation period

9 months

## Annual leave

33 days plus Bank Holidays, but including fixed periods at Christmas when the department is closed. The period for calculating entitlement to annual leave in any particular year is the academic year: that is, 1 October to 30 September.

## Pension eligibility

Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Pension scheme details are available on the University web pages. [Find out more about USS.](#)

It is a legal requirement for the University to automatically enrol its eligible jobholders into a qualifying workplace pension scheme. [Read more about the automatic enrolment.](#)

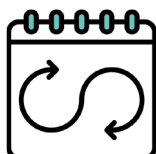
## Retirement age

The University does not operate a retirement age for assistant staff/research staff/unestablished academic staff/unestablished academic-related staff but for established academic and academic-related staff, the University operates a retirement age which is at the end of the academic year in which the University officer reaches the age of 69.

## Pre-employment checks

The University has a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment made to you will be conditional upon you gaining it. [Read more on our Right to Work checks.](#)

# Employee Benefits



## Flexible Working

We understand that achieving the right work-life balance is essential. That's why we offer flexible working, including remote work and adaptable hours, allowing you to structure your work in a way that suits your lifestyle. Whether you need to start earlier, finish later, or work from home when needed, we're committed to giving you the flexibility to be at your best both professionally and personally.

[Find out more](#)

## Personal and professional development

Access the thriving academia at the heart of Cambridge. Attend lectures and seminars, enjoy substantial course discounts from our Language Centre and Institute for Continuing Education as well as free access to LinkedIn Learning.

[Find out more](#)



## Discounts

Our shopping discounts scheme CAMbens offers discounts at more than 1000 retailers. Enjoy discounted membership at one of the best gyms in Cambridge, at our University Sports Centre. Get discounts on a new bike or travel by train with discounted season tickets.

[Find out more](#)

## Relocation support

With financial assistance for visa applications, support in finding and securing accommodation, and help to offset your travelling and removal costs, we aim to make your transition into Cambridge straightforward.

[Find out more](#)



## Childcare and parental support

A dedicated childcare office and four workplace nurseries are available to all staff. In addition, generous maternity and dependent leave policies make balancing work and family life effortless.

[Find out more](#)

## Generous pension plans

Benefit from monthly employer pension contributions of up to 21.1% of your salary and receive a one-off cash sum worth three times the gross value of your pension when you retire.

[Find out more](#)



## Health and Wellbeing

Stay healthy with extensive general and medical healthcare insurance for you and your dependents. In addition, dedicated counselling, chaplaincy and occupational health services ensure you can keep performing at your best.

[Find out more](#)



# University of Cambridge



## Equality, Diversity & 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. [Read more about equality and diversity here](#)

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. 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. [More information for disabled applicants is available.](#)

You are encouraged to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require, when applying for the role. This will enable the University to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. Applicants and employees may, however, declare a disability at any time.

## Sustainability

The University of Cambridge is at the forefront of addressing global environmental challenges through its ambitious Environmental Sustainability Vision. We are committed to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental performance, aspiring to be carbon neutral from energy use by 2050.

Our comprehensive strategy encompasses energy and water conservation, waste reduction, sustainable procurement, and biodiversity protection. The University not only implements these practices across its operations but also integrates sustainability into its world-class research and teaching.

As a member of our community, you will have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from our multifaceted approach to sustainability. From participating in our award-winning Green Impact programme to utilising our Living Laboratory for Sustainability, you will be part of an institution that values innovation in environmental stewardship. Our commitment extends beyond our campus, as we collaborate with local, national, and international partners to drive positive change. Read more on [Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy](#).

# Next Steps

## How to Apply


To apply for this vacancy, please visit the University's job opportunities page. [Apply for this role and read more.](#) There you will need to click 'Apply Online' and register an account with the University's web recruitment system.


The closing date for this position is **22nd June 2025**.


First round interviews for this position are anticipated to take place **between the 9th and 11th of July**.


Second round interviews for this position are anticipated to take place in **the week commencing the 21st of July**.


## What to expect...

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1 Once you've submitted your application, it will be reviewed by a member of the Talent Management team.
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2 Screening calls will be with a member of the Talent Acquisition Team. We will be in touch by the 4th of July to let you know if you have been shortlisted.
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3 During your first round interview, we will spend time finding out more about you and your experience. These interviews are usually done virtually, but may be in person depending on the role. There may also be a test, presentation or task.
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4 If you are invited to a second round, we will invite you to Cambridge to meet with several stakeholders. This will be a great opportunity for us to get to know you better and for you to see your potential new work environment and get a feel for what makes this location so special.
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5 We will be in touch regardless of the outcome, but our successful candidate can expect an offer letter when the decision has been made.

## Questions?

**Jo van Riemsdijk**, *Talent Acquisition Manager*, will be your contact throughout this recruitment process, so if you have any questions, please let her know via email at



**Jo.vanRiemsdijk@admin.cam.ac.uk**

