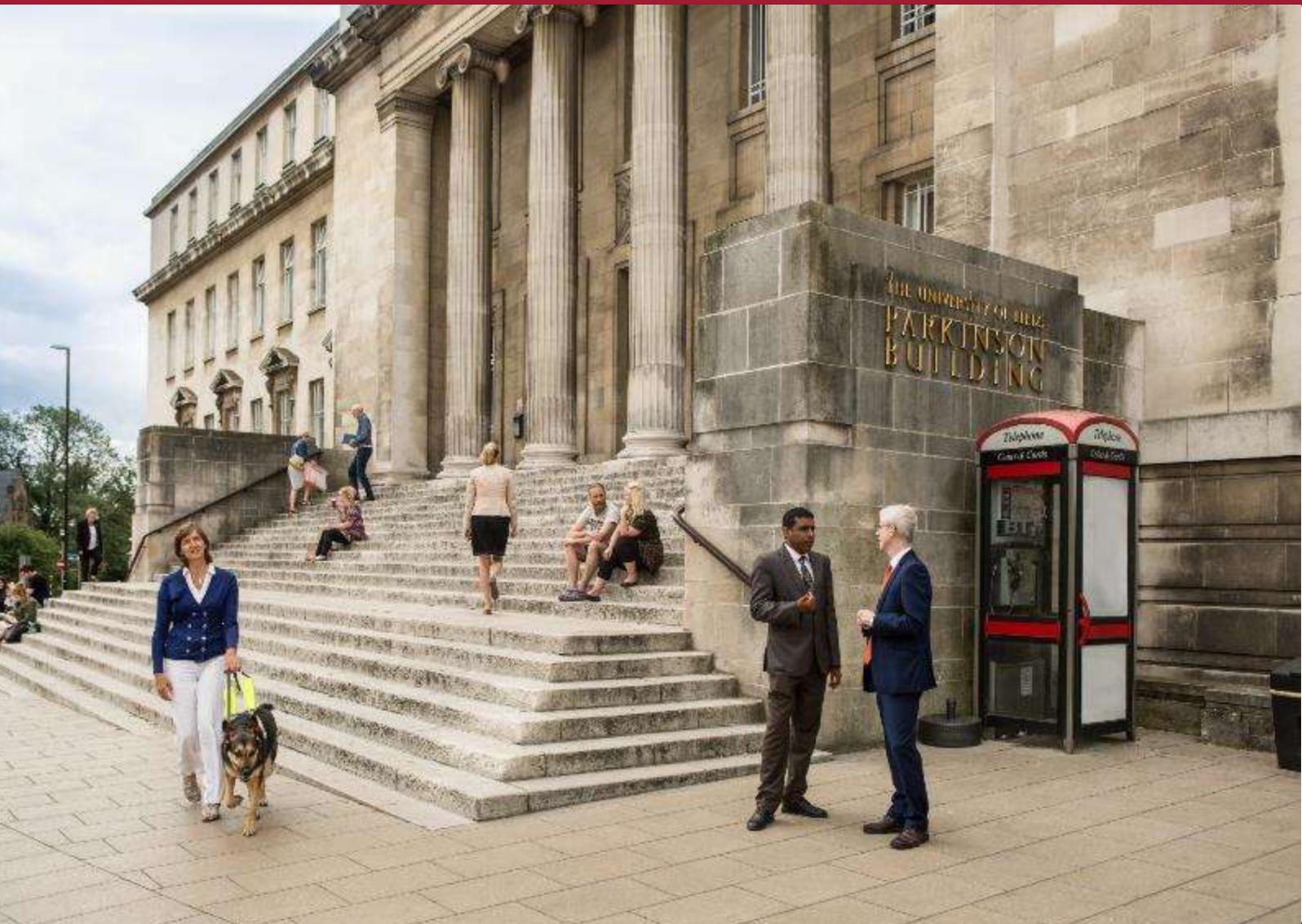




UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

University Academic Fellow, Rhizosphere Biology



Salary: Grade 8 (£41,526 – £49,553 p.a.)

Reference: FBSBM1140

University Academic Fellow, Rhizosphere Biology

Faculty of Biological Sciences

Are you an experienced and ambitious researcher looking for your next challenge? Do you have a strong research background in rhizosphere biology? Do you want to further your career in a world-leading, research-intensive Russell Group University?

With a vision and drive to contribute to a World-Leading research portfolio, as well as a passion for undertaking research-led teaching, you will make a significant impact on the performance, stature and profile of research and student education at The University of Leeds. You will lead new areas of rhizosphere biology that establish you as an international leader in your field and that contribute to collaboration across faculties and disciplines. You will play a key role with the academic leaders of the Centre for Plant Sciences and the Global Food and Environment Institute to collaborate across faculties and disciplines and establish the University of Leeds as a leading institution for soils research.

Our understanding of the rhizosphere has increased exponentially in recent years through application of physiological and molecular tools to the interactions of plants with the soil and soil microbiota. These interactions drive nutrient cycling, carbon storage and their significance in powering above-ground productivity, underpinning the evolution, development and regulation of global ecosystems. By working at the interface between fundamental and applied rhizosphere science, there is great potential to address global challenges including food, water and soil security, biodiversity and climate. The UAF in Rhizosphere Biology will play an important role in developing and expanding our expertise in this area, helping us to achieve our vision for the future of translational plant and soil research at Leeds.

We are seeking a highly motivated individual who will develop and lead new avenues of research in rhizosphere biology, particularly in plant root physiology, plant-soil interactions and/or microbial ecology. You will have a PhD and significant proven research experience with a record of international quality publications. You will have a clear and compelling research plan with the potential to deliver academic excellence at an international level, obtain competitive research funding, and commitment to undertake high quality and innovative teaching. You should also be able to develop collaborative research with members of the Centre for Plant Science and the wider Faculties of Biological Sciences, Environment and Engineering and Physical Sciences. You will have demonstrated collaborative experience that is relevant across major strategic research initiatives at the University, such as Future Crops and Smart



Agri-Systems and where your fundamental understanding of rhizosphere processes is integral to a range of regional and global environmental challenges.

Career Pathway: Tenure track equivalent post requiring successful completion of a 5 year development plan, leading to appointment to a grade 9 Associate Professor, with the potential for accelerated progression.

What does the role entail?

As a University Academic Fellow your main duties will include:

- Pursuing a programme of individual and collaborative research, resulting in high quality publications and a national and international profile and engaging with industry as appropriate to attract and co-ordinate major initiatives;
- Promoting the integration of your own research area with other research interests, in the School, Faculty and University;
- Attracting research funding individually and collaboratively to underpin high quality research activity and research programmes / projects;
- Developing a strategy to ensure that your research has the potential for impact beyond academia;
- Undertaking research-led teaching at different levels, with engagement in continual improvement in response to student and other feedback;
- Contributing to the design, development and planning of teaching modules and policy within the subject area as required;
- Working in partnership with students to provide outstanding education and an excellent student experience;
- Contributing to the management of the School or cross university interdisciplinary initiatives by taking on appropriate leadership, management and administrative responsibility;
- Leading academic initiatives and projects in research and student education which facilitate School, Faculty and/or University development;
- Participating in the recruitment, management and development of staff as well as acting as a mentor to less experienced colleagues;
- Contributing to the development of the discipline or research area, e.g. through organisation of conferences or membership of key bodies setting the strategic direction of the area;
- Becoming a specialist in the field, developing and maintaining an external profile as appropriate to the discipline;



- Maintaining own continuing professional development;
- Carrying out the duties of the post in accordance with University policies, procedures, values and standards, including the Leadership and Management Standard.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

What will you bring to the role?

As a University Academic Fellow you will have:

- A PhD (or equivalent qualification) in a relevant field, for example plant science, soil science, microbial ecology, biogeochemistry;
- Significant research expertise in plant, soil or microbial sciences, particularly with relevance to agriculture;
- A clear and compelling academic plan that will deliver impact at an international level for academia as well as on a more general basis;
- A clear strategy to connect across the different research groups within the University;
- Significant proven research experience within the academic discipline with a developing record of internationally excellent publications;
- Experience of presenting at national and international conferences and/or symposia;
- Evidence of building strong working relationships within and, as appropriate, beyond your own discipline and to contribute to successful projects and collaborations;
- The potential and commitment to undertake high quality and innovative teaching and gain a higher education teaching qualification or award;
- Experience of delivering and engaging with student education where opportunities have existed;
- A high level of interpersonal and communication skills, and a strong ability to communicate effectively in writing and verbally with students, academic and external audiences;
- The ability to lead projects and organise, balance and prioritise work commitments.



You may also have:

- Experimental and/or modelling and simulation research experience with plant-soil processes;
- A successful track record in gaining significant independent research funding;
- Experience of leading on projects and initiatives, including managing resources and conflicting priorities within challenging circumstances;
- A growing track record of successful and innovative teaching at both undergraduate and/or postgraduate level;
- Experience of involvement in postgraduate research supervision;
- Experience of working collaboratively with external partner organisations;
- Experience of mentoring less experienced colleagues.

How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information page. Applications should be submitted by **23:59** (UK time) on the advertised closing date.

Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

[Katie Field, Professor of Plant-Soil Interactions](#)

Tel: +44 (0)113 343 2849

Email: K.Field@leeds.ac.uk

Or [Lisa Collins, Head of School of Biology](#)

Tel: +44 (0)113 343 5940

Email: L.Collins@leeds.ac.uk

Or [Steven Banwart, Director of the Global Food and Environment Institute](#)

Tel: +44(0)113 343 1413

Email: S.A.Banwart@leeds.ac.uk



Additional information

You can find out more about the [Faculty of Biological Sciences](#) and the [School of Biology](#) from our web pages.

Working at Leeds

Find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area on our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

The University of Leeds and the Faculty of Biological Sciences are committed to providing equal opportunities for all and offer a range of family friendly policies. The University is a charter member of Athena SWAN (the national body that promotes gender equality in higher education), and the Faculty of Biological Sciences was reawarded a Bronze award in 2017. We are proud to be an inclusive Faculty that values all staff, and are happy to consider job share applications and requests for flexible working arrangements from our employees. Our Athena SWAN [webpage](#) provides more information.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our [Accessibility](#) information page or by getting in touch with us at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.

Criminal record information

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.

