



Director, Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute

Candidate Information



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

WittKieffer

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
CANCER RESEARCH UK	4
CANCER RESEARCH UK CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE	5
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE	6
THE POSITION	8
THE PERSON	11
THE LOCATION	12
ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS	13

INTRODUCTION

FROM DR IAIN FOULKES AND PROFESSOR PATRICK MAXWELL

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of the CRUK Cambridge Institute.

This is one of the most influential leadership opportunities in cancer research. Cancer Research UK (CRUK) is the world's leading cancer charity and the largest independent funder of academic cancer research in Europe. CRUK has a community of 6,000 researchers, clinicians and nurses all pursuing the ambition of three in four people surviving cancer by 2034. Discovery science is central to that mission, and our Institutes provide the long-term investment, infrastructure and scientific freedom needed to achieve it.

The CRUK Cambridge Institute is CRUK's flagship investment and sits within one of the world's most dynamic biomedical ecosystems. Housed within the University of Cambridge, the Institute has close connections with Addenbrooke's Hospital, the CRUK Cambridge Centre, AstraZeneca and the Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital, creating an outstanding platform for translating discovery science into patient benefit. The Institute is focused on understanding every stage of the tumour lifecycle – from cancer initiation and evolution to interactions with the tumour microenvironment – to uncover the fundamental mechanisms that drive cancer. It combines this deep biological research with advanced technologies, including genomics, spatial biology and clinical data, to accelerate patient benefit.

We are looking for a new Director who can develop the Institute's vision and lead its next phase of development. The Director will need to bring an internationally distinguished research profile allied to well-developed leadership capabilities in an academic or scientific setting. Working closely with CRUK, the University of Cambridge and partners across academia, healthcare and industry, the Director will help shape the future of cancer research.

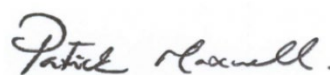
The role offers a rare combination of strategic influence, scientific freedom and access to world-class people, facilities and resources. If you are ambitious to shape the future of cancer research on a global stage we hope you will consider applying.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Iain Foulkes
Executive Director of
Research & Innovation
Cancer Research UK



Professor Patrick Maxwell
Regius Professor of Physic &
Head of the School of Clinical Medicine
University of Cambridge





CANCER RESEARCH UK

Cancer Research UK (CRUK) is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving and improving lives through research. Through sustained investment in discovery science, translational research, clinical investigation and population-level studies, the organisation plays a central role in advancing understanding of cancer and accelerating the development of new approaches to prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Today, CRUK funds research into more than 200 types of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses across the United Kingdom and internationally. Over the last 50 years, CRUK has helped double cancer survival in the UK, while its research has played a role in around half of the world's essential cancer medicines.

As the largest independent funder of academic cancer research in Europe, CRUK supports one of the most significant cancer research portfolios anywhere in the world. Recognising that transformative progress in cancer outcomes begins with a fundamental understanding of how cancer develops, evolves and responds to treatment, CRUK continues to invest heavily in ambitious, curiosity-driven science. Last year alone, CRUK invested approximately £419 million in research, supporting an extensive network of researchers, clinicians and research infrastructure.

CRUK's core ambition is clear: to accelerate progress towards a future where three in four people survive their cancer by 2034. A central component of this strategy is CRUK's network of four core-funded Institutes in Cambridge, Glasgow (the Scotland Institute), London (The Francis Crick Institute) and Manchester. These Institutes represent some of the organisation's most significant long-term scientific investments. Institute Directors are afforded substantial freedom, enabling their organisations to remain at the forefront of international cancer research.

The Institutes fulfil several important functions within CRUK's broader mission. They pursue high-risk, long-term research programmes; provide access to world-class technology, infrastructure and expertise; foster collaboration across disciplines; and create exceptional environments in which to train and develop future scientific leaders. As such, the Institutes serve as engines of scientific innovation, generating discoveries that influence cancer research far beyond their immediate communities.

As one of the charity's flagship research Institutes and one of the leading locations for cancer discovery research globally, CRUK's Cambridge Institute exemplifies the organisation's commitment to scientific excellence, innovation and long-term impact.

More information can be found here: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>.

CRUK CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE

The CRUK Cambridge Institute is one of the world's leading locations for cancer discovery research. As one of CRUK's core-funded Institutes and a department of the University of Cambridge, it occupies a unique position within the international cancer research landscape.

The Institute receives approximately £25 million in annual core funding from CRUK and serves as the largest constituent of the CRUK Cambridge Centre. This enables the Institute to play a central role within both CRUK's national research strategy as well as the wider Cambridge biomedical network. At its core, the Institute is dedicated to improving patient lives through discovery science. Its research seeks to transform understanding of every stage of the tumour lifecycle, generating the biological insights that underpin future advances in cancer prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment.

Currently, the Institute is home to approximately 450 staff and students. Researchers benefit from access to eleven state-of-the-art core facilities, substantial long-term investment and a funding model specifically designed to support ambitious, high-impact science. Unlike many conventional academic environments, this model provides exceptional flexibility, enabling scientific leaders to pursue bold research questions while responding quickly to emerging opportunities and technologies.

Beyond scientific excellence, the Institute has established a strong reputation for translation and innovation. Over the last six years, its research has generated more than 100 patents and led to the creation of 14 spin-out companies. An established culture of entrepreneurship is supported through dedicated incubation space and the Institute's Office of Translation and Impact, which provides researchers with funding, guidance and practical support to translate discoveries into new technologies, ventures and patient benefit.

As advances in science and technology expand the possibilities for discovery and translation, the next Director will have a rare opportunity to shape the future of one of the world's leading cancer research institutes.

More information can be found here: <https://www.cruk.cam.ac.uk/>.





UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Founded in 1209, the mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest and most successful Universities, with an outstanding reputation for academic achievement and research, being ranked sixth in the 2026 QS World University Rankings. Its graduates and affiliates have won more Nobel Prizes (126 to date) than any other university in the world.

The University comprises 31 autonomous Colleges, which admit undergraduates and provide small-group tuition, and more than 150 departments, faculties and institutions. It is a global university: its 25,000-student body includes students from 144 countries. Cambridge researchers collaborate with colleagues worldwide, with large-scale partnerships in Asia, Africa and the USA.

SCHOOL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE

The School of Clinical Medicine is one of six Schools at the University. It is one of the world's leading centres for biomedical research and medical education globally, bringing together internationally recognised strengths across cancer, genetics, immunology, neuroscience, cardiovascular medicine, infectious disease and stem cell biology, with a strong emphasis on translating fundamental discovery into clinical impact.

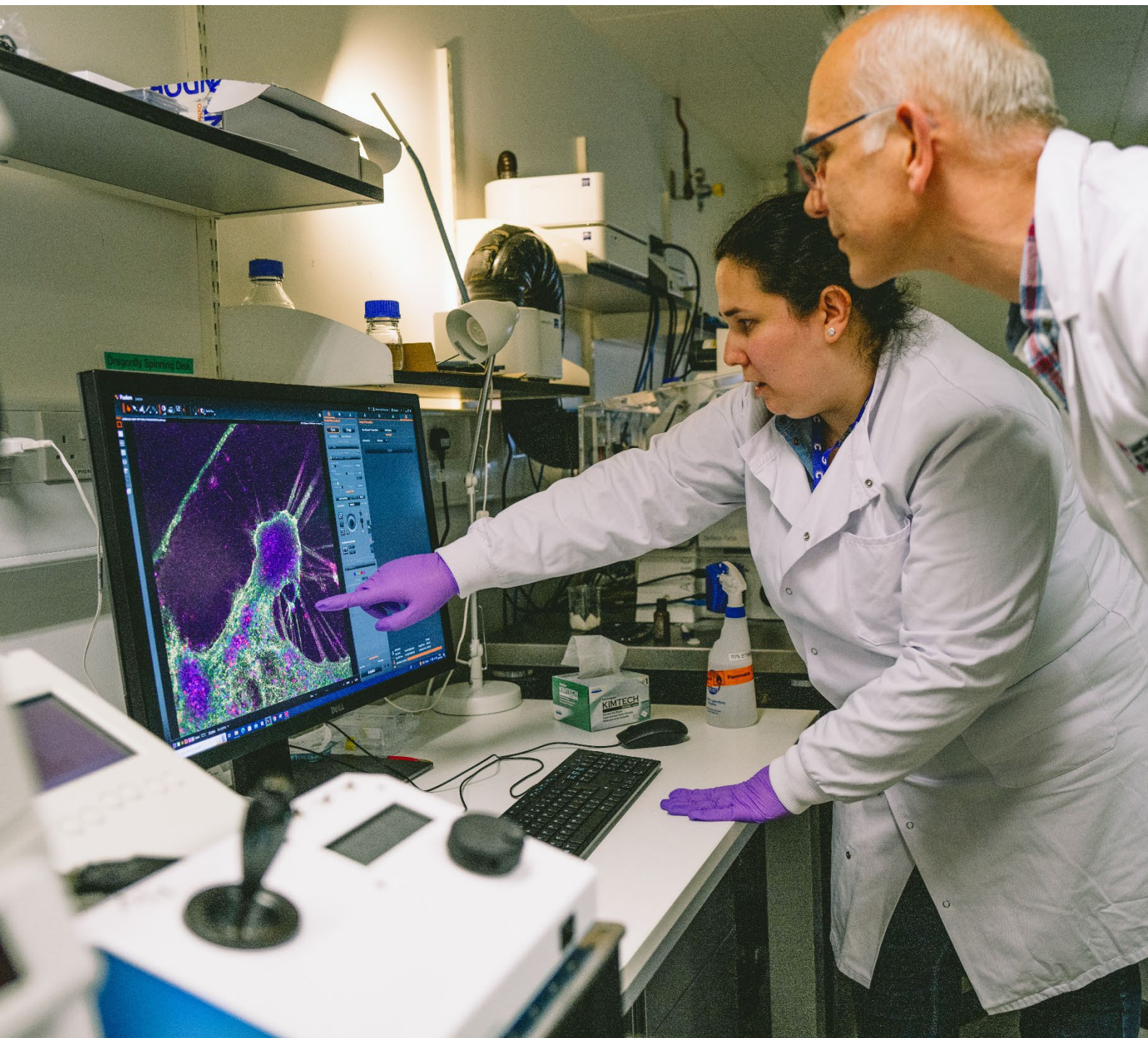
Collaboration between laboratory scientists, clinicians, engineers, data scientists and industry partners is a defining feature of the Cambridge approach, supported by world-class research infrastructure and close links to the NHS. More information can be found here: <https://www.medschl.cam.ac.uk/>.

THE CAMBRIDGE BIOMEDICAL CAMPUS

The Cambridge Biomedical Campus is one of Europe's leading biomedical and life sciences clusters. The campus includes a range of partners, including: The University of Cambridge, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, as well as major pharmaceutical companies such as AstraZeneca, and a rapidly growing community of biotechnology and health technology organisations with pharmaceutical company GSK soon to re-locate here. Neighbouring partners include the likes of the Wellcome Sanger Institute and the Babraham Research Campus.

At the heart of the campus is Addenbrooke's Hospital, one of the UK's foremost academic medical centres, alongside Royal Papworth Hospital, both of which enable close integration between discovery science, clinical research and patient care. The campus is also home to the forthcoming Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital, a major specialist cancer hospital that will bring together clinicians from Addenbrooke's Hospital with researchers from the University of Cambridge and the CRUK Cambridge Centre. Designed to accelerate the translation of scientific discoveries into earlier diagnosis, precision medicine and improved patient outcomes, the hospital represents a significant long-term investment in Cambridge's position as a global hub for cancer research and treatment.

More information: <https://cambridge-biomedical.com/>.





THE POSITION

CRUK and the University of Cambridge seek to appoint an exceptional leader as the next Director of the Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute, one of the most significant scientific leadership appointments in international cancer research.

The successful candidate will inherit an Institute recognised globally for the quality of its discovery science, the strength of its scientific community and the impact of its research, while leading the organisation through a period of scientific opportunity and institutional momentum.

The Director will provide overall strategic and scientific leadership for the Institute while maintaining an internationally recognised research programme as a Senior Group Leader. Working closely with CRUK, the University of Cambridge and the Institute Executive Committee, they will define and deliver an ambitious vision for the Institute, shaping its research priorities, scientific investments and contribution to the wider cancer research landscape.

A key aspect of the role will be to ensure the Institute remains at the forefront of rapidly evolving areas of research. This includes overseeing the Institute's approach to AI and data-enabled discovery and ensuring that emerging technologies are effectively integrated into future scientific programmes. The Director will also oversee the Institute's clinical strategy, strengthening relevant connections with the goal of fostering research that delivers meaningful benefit to patients.

Patient involvement is essential to shaping our research direction, and as the new Director will play a key role in overseeing the Institute's promotion and development of the Public Patient Involvement panel, they will need to be able to engage with a wide range of people from different backgrounds, with different experiences. The Director will also be expected to strengthen partnerships across academia, healthcare and industry. Moreover, they must support translational activity and commercialisation to maximise the opportunities presented by CRUK's multi-million pound investment, and the wider Cambridge ecosystem.

Furthermore, as one of the most senior and visible scientific leaders within CRUK, the Director will contribute to the development of national and international cancer research strategy, engage with major funding bodies and scientific organisations, represent both the Institute and CRUK at major scientific forums, and help develop new partnerships that advance research and innovation. The successful candidate will also be expected to engage with wider external stakeholders, serving as an ambassador for both the Institute and CRUK as a whole.

The role offers a rare combination of scientific freedom, organisational scale, long-term investment and international influence. With responsibility for an organisation comprising approximately 450 staff and students, annual activity in excess of £52 million and one of the most distinctive research environments in global cancer science, the successful candidate will have an exceptional opportunity to influence the future direction of cancer research on both the national and international stage.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director will be a senior leader within both the University of Cambridge and CRUK. They will play a central role in shaping the future direction of cancer research across the Institute, the wider Cambridge ecosystem and the international scientific community as a whole.

The Director will:

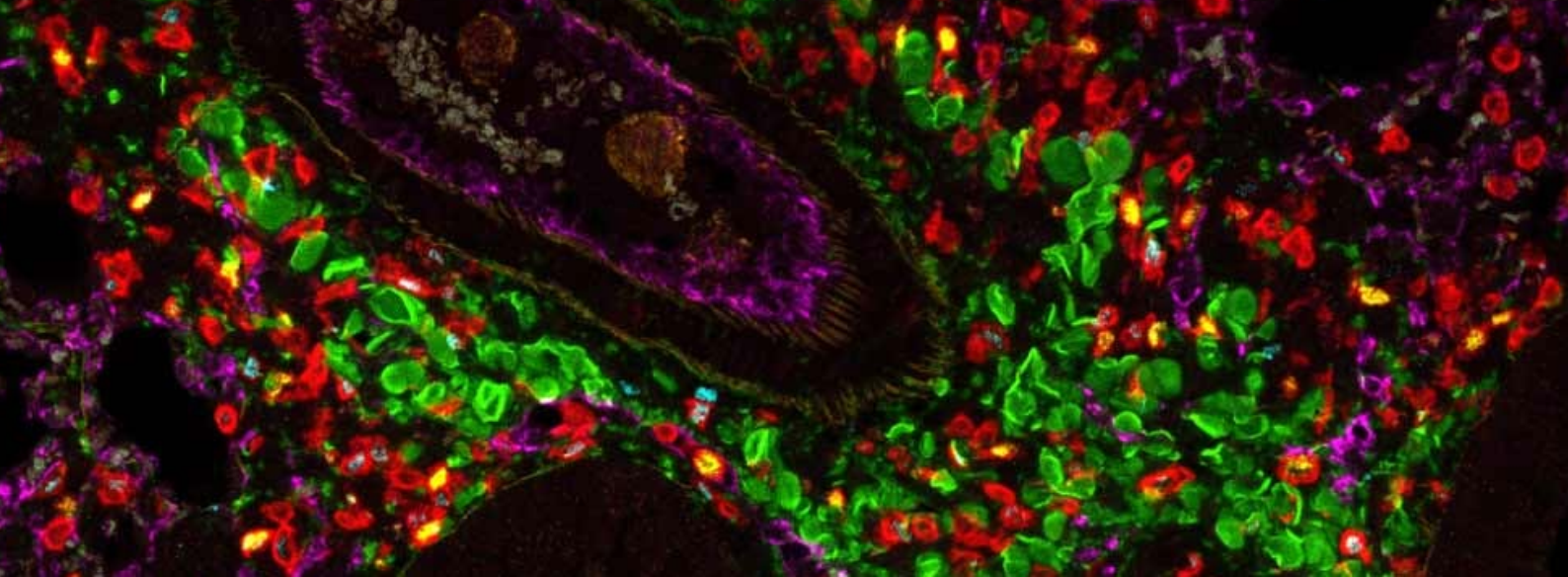
Scientific Vision and Research Leadership

- Define and deliver the Institute's long-term scientific vision, aligned with CRUK and University cancer research priorities.
- Appoint, and work in collaboration with, the Institute's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB).
- Lead a research programme as a Senior Group Leader, achieving outstanding, world-class research outputs and securing additional competitive grant funding.
- Oversee the Institute's AI strategy, with the aim of developing new research hypotheses and exploring further areas of cancer biology.
- Oversee the Institute's clinical strategy, fostering close collaboration between researchers and clinicians, designing experiments and clinical trials that enhance both scientific understanding and cancer patient outcomes.
- Maximise impact of the Institute's Core Facilities and technology platforms, ensuring access to cutting-edge capabilities across the Institute.
- Maintain awareness of global developments in cancer research to inform strategic and research priorities.
- Promote a culture of scientific excellence, collaboration, and translation, ensuring research outcomes have maximal patient impact.

People and Academic Leadership

- Provide values-based leadership: integrity, professional credibility, approachability, and inclusivity.
- Set and uphold the highest standards of academic excellence for postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and early career staff.
- Mentor senior staff and Institute leaders, delegating line management of Junior Group Leaders to the Deputy Director, ensuring career development and progression.
- Act as an exemplar of EDI principles in recruitment, development, and culture.
- Foster an environment of collaboration, innovation, and staff wellbeing, creating opportunities for all to thrive.
- Contribute to the University's wider academic community through engagement with School and University initiatives, governance and research activities.





Partnerships, Translation and External Influence

- Maintain and establish strategic partnerships with academia, hospitals, industry, and CRUK, enhancing translational research and patient benefit. Ensure partnership, in particular, with the new Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital.
- Promote integration of research, clinical translation, and AI-enabled discovery to accelerate progress from lab to clinic.
- Support technology transfer, spinouts, and commercialisation, collaborating with relevant stakeholders.
- Represent the Institute nationally and internationally, enhancing its global reputation as a leading cancer research centre.
- Strengthen collaboration within the CRUK Cambridge Centre.

Strategic Alignment of Operations and Infrastructure

- Define the strategic direction and priorities for the Institute, ensuring research, facilities, and resources support scientific goals.
- Collaborate closely with the Director of Operations, who manages operations, long-term strategic planning, and operational delivery.
- Oversight on high-level decisions on capital investment, facility establishment or retirement, and research space allocation.
- Ensure alignment between scientific priorities and operational capacity, enabling world-class research outcomes.

Governance, Ethics, and Research Integrity

- Uphold the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability, ensuring research is conducted ethically, safely, and in compliance with University, CRUK, and legal / regulatory frameworks.
- Ensure meaningful patient and public involvement in research programmes.
- Oversee policies on and advocate for the highest standards in research integrity, data management, and reporting, embedding a culture of compliance and best practice, in collaboration with operational and research leaders.
- Model and enforce responsible conduct of research, fostering a culture of honesty, openness, and professional responsibility.

National and International Leadership in Cancer Research

- Contribute to shaping national and international cancer research strategy, collaborating with CRUK, funders, policy bodies, and global networks.
- Ensure the Institute is recognised as a world-class hub for research, education, and infrastructure, driving innovation across discovery, clinical translation, and AI-enabled science.
- Advocate for the Institute's mission through conferences, publications, and leadership in scientific committees.
- Inspire and mentor the next generation of cancer researchers, promoting scientific excellence, collaboration, and curiosity.
- Conduct appropriate media representation, with direct involvement in philanthropic efforts, both local and nationally.
- Engage with other core-funded CRUK Institutes and Centres, including playing an active role in the CRUK Institutes Committee, and by chairing review panels to assess the performance of scientific programmes and group leaders.



THE PERSON

SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the following:

Essential:

- PhD, MD or equivalent doctoral qualification in a relevant scientific discipline.
- Internationally recognised scientific leader with a track record of delivering world-class research in cancer biology, cancer medicine, or a closely related field.
- Experience leading substantial research programmes and multidisciplinary teams within complex academic, research, or healthcare environments.
- Demonstrated ability to define and deliver scientific and organisational strategy, providing leadership within a major research institution or comparable organisation and overseeing significant scientific, operational and financial resources.
- Strong track record of building and sustaining influential partnerships across academia, healthcare, industry, funding organisations and international research networks.
- Demonstrated commitment to mentoring, developing and supporting researchers and scientific leaders across all career stages.
- Outstanding leadership, communication and stakeholder engagement skills, with the ability to inspire and influence diverse internal and external audiences alongside an open and approachable manner in relation to patient involvement.
- Demonstrated commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Values-based leader who demonstrates integrity, credibility, openness, accountability and sound professional judgement.
- Commitment to the highest standards of ethics, governance, research integrity and public accountability.
- Ability to act as a compelling ambassador for a world-leading research institute within national and international scientific, clinical and stakeholder communities.

Desirable:

- Experience influencing national or international research agendas through leadership of scientific committees, advisory boards, funding bodies or policy initiatives.
- Has led interdisciplinary research programmes that integrate computational, data science and AI-enabled approaches.
- Experience advancing translational research through clinical implementation, commercialisation, technology transfer, spin-out creation or industry collaboration.
- Able to engage with philanthropic, charitable, governmental or corporate partners to secure funding and strategic support.
- Fellowship or equivalent senior recognition from a leading scientific or professional body.
- Experience acting as a scientific spokesperson and engaging effectively with media audiences.



THE LOCATION – 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, 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 a thriving arts and culture scene 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: <https://www.visitcambridge.org/>.

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.



ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS

Applications must include:

- Your full contact details including email and full postal addresses, and a telephone number
- A covering letter or supporting statement explaining how you meet the criteria set out above, using examples of your skills and experience.
- A full CV and publications list
- The name, institution and contact details (e-mail address and telephone number) of precisely three referees. You will be advised in advance of when referees will be contacted.

The University and colleges welcome applications from candidates who have a disability or long-term health condition and is committed to providing long term support. Please let us know if you need any adjustments to the recruitment process, including the provision of these documents in large print, audio or other formats. If we invite you for interviews, we will ask whether you require any particular arrangements at the interview.

Please submit applications through the WittKieffer Candidate Portal [here](#). Candidates can also find this portal via the [WittKieffer website](#).

To enquire about a confidential conversation please contact:

Natalie Derry, nderry@wittkieffer.com Tel: +44 (0) 740 885 1596, or

Jamie Cumming-Wesley, jcumming-wesley@wittkieffer.com Tel: +44 (0) 789 158 8204.

Application deadline is **19th October 2026**.

It is expected that interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held January 2027.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

- Joint appointment between the University of Cambridge and Cancer Research UK.
- Competitive remuneration package commensurate with the scale and significance of the role.
- Membership of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).
- Generous annual leave entitlement.
- Comprehensive relocation support.
- Access to a wide range of family-friendly policies and employee benefits.
- The successful candidate will be expected to maintain an active internationally leading research programme.

For more information on living and working in Cambridge, alongside the support offered to new employees, please visit: <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/hr-staff/information-new-starters>.