Chemistry Research Facilitator

Department of Chemistry

Closing date: 16 September 2018

Interview date: 9 October 2018

Vacancy reference: 6934
INTRODUCTION

Applications are sought for the post of Research Facilitator within the Chemistry Administration Team. The post holder will facilitate and support funded research activity for the department and work in partnership with the Chair of Research Committee, the academic community, the existing research group administrators, the Head of Department's office including the Management Accountant and the University's Research and Enterprise Office. In addition, they will liaise with external funders and collaborators in other Universities. The role includes line management of a part-time Research Support Officer who assists the Research Facilitator, particularly in the area of post-award support.

The Research Facilitator and Research Support Officer deliver a high-quality, pro-active administrative service to support academic staff in applying for and running research grants. Pre-award support includes ensuring that staff are aware of relevant funding opportunities and application processes, as well as preparing costings, assisting with and submitting applications, including the co-ordination of the approval process. The post holder will also provide management information on research grants and research activity and will contribute to activities designed to promote inter-disciplinary research, helping to co-ordinate inputs from other departments and partner organisations.

The Department of Chemistry is one of the UK's leading Chemistry departments. We are renowned internationally for our research, the breadth, volume and impact of which have grown significantly in recent years, aided by the work of the previous post holder. Our research is combined with a commitment to teaching and outstanding student satisfaction; we have also been recognised consistently for our family-friendly policies and are proud of our Athena SWAN Gold Award, held for ten years: [https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/](https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/)

As a Department we strive to provide a working environment that allows all staff and students to contribute fully, to flourish, and to excel. We aim to ensure that there is a supportive and egalitarian culture at all levels and across all staff groups and we promote good practice and a strong culture of equality in higher education. Further information can be found within this brief and on our website: [www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/](http://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/)
**Main purpose of the role**

To be the first point of contact for academic and research staff in the research grant process and deliver a high-quality administrative service; to provide support in applying for research grants and together with the Research Support Officer, to administer and manage a portfolio of research grants, dealing with a wide and varied range of grants and associated contracts.

The post holder will support the department’s aim to improve further the number and quality of research grant applications to external funders.

**Key responsibilities**

(ROLE HOLDERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE SOME OR ALL OF THE DUTIES BELOW)

**Pre-Award Support:**

- Develop and maintain a good working knowledge of the activities and expertise within the Department of Chemistry, relevant research funding sources and funder regulations.

- As a specialist on the individual rules and regulations of each funding body/sponsor, provide advice & guidance to academic researchers to ensure effective co-ordination of the procedures for submitting research proposals. This includes carrying out accurate Full Economic Costings in the best interests of the Department and University.

- Provide a suitable funding opportunity alert service and, through awareness of the department’s research strengths/interests and of funding availability, assist staff in matching ideas to suitable sponsor schemes.

- Assist principal investigators (PIs) and research group administrators in the preparation of research grant applications including large, multi-investigator applications (e.g., those that include several departments and/or Universities), providing advice on application procedures and eligibility criteria; complete project costings on the University costing system; coordinate input from collaborators/sub-contractors, obtaining appropriate authorisations; ensure the timely submission of applications (involving liaison with senior staff in the Department and University).

- In conjunction with the Intellectual Property and Legal Team, liaise on issues associated with Intellectual Property and Contracts.

- Be proactive in analysing and acting on funder/reviewer feedback, ensuring that relevant advice is disseminated to future applicants and to inform departmental practice.

- Develop and provide training, documentation and intranet pages and give presentations to assist researchers – including maintaining a bank of best-practice examples.

**Post-Award Support:**

- Provide help and advice to academic staff on funders’ output and impact reporting requirements.

- Oversee Research Support Officer with regards to Financial Post-Award Support and provide additional expertise when appropriate:

  - Ensure that key contractual obligations of the individual grants and contracts awarded have been highlighted to the relevant PIs including advice on cost eligibility.

  - Assist PIs with reports to funders and the financial management of live awards; provide PIs with relevant simple financial summaries; pro-actively monitor live awards to identify any potential budgetary issues, and liaise with PIs and the Research & Enterprise office to resolve these.

  - Assist PIs with the co-ordination of any project contributions from subcontractors/collaborators.
JOB DESCRIPTION

- Assist with managing research grants using the Agresso finance system to plan/cost research project resources, set up new grants, ensure contracts are in place, monitor/reconcile project spend, and prepare relevant financial reports/budgetary information as required.

General:

- Line-manage the Chemistry Research Support Officer
- Assist with reviewing, developing and implementing effective procedures and systems put in place by the Research Support Office (RSO)
- Maintain databases for tracking research submissions, providing statistical and relevant financial information to support the department’s planning of resources and aspects of its Research Excellence Framework return
- Working with the Research Support Officer, maintain and develop the department’s RSO web pages, disseminating information as required
- Oversee the Research Support Officer in preparing agendas, minutes, presentations and supporting documentation for the Departmental Research Committee and Research Fora involving liaison with the Chair of Research Committee
- Help the Departmental Research Committee (DRC) chair to engender a strong research culture:
  - identify potential issues and help to implement solutions
  - provide management information within the department on applications pending, success rates, live awards, outputs and other indicators, benchmarking research activity.
  - contribute to activities designed to promote inter-disciplinary research – for example, helping to arrange and support events for inter-disciplinary centres
  - provide regular reports on current funding, awards, research outputs and other research related data, as agreed with the DRC chair and the Head of Department
- assist in the preparation of the Annual Departmental Research Review
- prepare for mock REF and REF-check exercises (working with other members of the DRC as appropriate)
- Contribute to the tracking of research impact within the departments
- Offer advice to academics to keep the PURE research database up-to-date
- Contribute to forecasting of future research grant income for the department including monitoring live grants for unusual activity (large equipment spend, grant extensions etc.)
- Be an active member of the University’s Research Administrators’ Forum (YRAF); contribute to the ongoing development of University research processes and systems
- Engage with other Research Facilitators across the University on an informal basis to share best practice.

The above list of duties is not exhaustive and is subject to change. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties within the scope and grading of the post.
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Honours Science Degree or equivalent professional experience</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of research in a higher education environment</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of key funders for scientific research</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the areas of engagement, priorities and requirements of key funders</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of REF 2021 requirements, procedures, and regulations</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of research user needs</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Skills, abilities and competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills, abilities and competencies</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent verbal and written communication skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent interpersonal skills, with the proven ability to develop good working relationships with all staff</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High level of proficiency in the use of standard office software; able to develop skills associated with specific systems for costing and grant reporting</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to work independently and use initiative to manage competing demands and achieve deadlines</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent numerical and analytical skills, demonstrating accuracy and attention to detail</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent IT skills, particularly the use of Excel and databases</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong administrative, organisational and project management skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worktribe and Agresso or other similar costing and financial systems</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notable administrative or research project management experience in higher education or in a research funding organisation, or within a relevant industry</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing or co-ordinating research applications</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of working with financial information</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of and affinity for working with researchers</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of interdisciplinary research activities</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line-management or Supervision Experience</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Personal attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal attributes</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keen to keep up-to-date with new sponsor rules and policies and to develop as a professional research administrator</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A proactive attitude to the role</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keen to deliver a service to provide first-rate support for staff</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable ability to work as part of a team but use initiative and work independently when appropriate</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organised and flexible, able to prioritise</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to deal with confidential matters and act with discretion</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of, and commitment to, Equality and Diversity</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE DEPARTMENT

Chemistry Administration Team

Chemistry Administration team members (including part-time and job-share) work together to support the following academic functions: undergraduate and postgraduate student experience (admissions, teaching and assessment), research, human resources and equality and diversity activities, operations and strategy, health and safety, finance and outreach activities. Although administrative staff have individual responsibilities in a particular area, they share and transfer knowledge so that all tasks can be covered in times of absence or when workloads require resources to be pooled. The team is professional and friendly and is continually innovating and looking for examples of best practice to improve the level and efficiency of service provided to staff and students.

The Department of Chemistry

The Department of Chemistry: http://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry is one of the largest and most successful academic departments at York. The Department was placed in the top ten UK universities for Research Power by the 2014 Research Excellence Framework exercise (REF). Amongst our academic staff we have five Fellows of the Royal Society and many national and international prize winners, contributing to a dynamic and thriving department. The excellence of Chemistry at York was recognised in the 2019 Guardian League Table Guide, 2019 Complete University Guide and 2018 Times University League Table where it achieved outstanding 3rd, 6th and 4th places respectively.

The Department has nearly 60 academic staff (including teaching-only staff), more than 600 undergraduate students, approximately 160 graduate students (mainly studying for PhDs) and over 80 research associates and fellows. The Department has a group of coherent laboratories, recently extended and modernised, which provide an excellent environment for both teaching and research; £35M has been spent on new buildings and equipment in the last seven years.

Staff in the Department of Chemistry undertake research in a wide range of fields and there are particular strengths in analytical and archaeological science, atmospheric chemistry, chemical and structural biology, green chemistry, materials chemistry, metalloproteins, organometallic and catalytic chemistry, synthetic organic chemistry and time-resolved spectroscopy.

We have nearly 30 administrative staff (including those funded externally), as well as over 50 technical staff who provide assistance in the teaching and research laboratories and maintain the workshops (mechanical, glass and electronics) supporting these activities.

The Department was placed in the top ten UK universities for Research Power by the 2014 Research Excellence Framework exercise (REF). Amongst our academic staff we have five
THE DEPARTMENT

Fellows of the Royal Society and many national and international prize winners, contributing to a dynamic and thriving department. The excellence of Chemistry at York was recognised in the 2019 Guardian League Table Guide, 2019 Complete University Guide and 2018 Times University League Table where it achieved outstanding 3rd, 6th and 4th places respectively.

The undergraduate programmes, which typically attract over 1200 applications for the ca 180 places, have a flexible, modular structure with opportunities for specialisation in environmental, industrial and medicinal chemistry. There are three-year (BSc) and four-year (MChem) courses with opportunities for students to spend a year at one of a number of overseas universities or in industry. Students rated the Department with an overall satisfaction rating of 97% in the National Student Survey 2018.

The Gold Award from Athena SWAN: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/ for promoting women in science was won by the Department of Chemistry in 2007 and renewed in 2010 and 2015. This was the first Gold award made in this scheme. The Athena SWAN Charter recognises and celebrates good employment practice for women working in science, engineering and technology (SET) in higher education and research.

The case studies on our Equality and Diversity website: https://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/ed/fam-friendly-work/ illustrate the variety of working arrangements of staff which are supported by the Department.

The Department of Chemistry operates a set of family-friendly practices. Staff working patterns are flexible and a formal Flexitime system is also in operation. The Department has developed a maternity and paternity leave procedure to help provide support for staff and the University has a nursery http://www.york.ac.uk/univ/nursery/.

The Department provides support for all categories of staff in their applications for promotion, role reviews, awards, prizes and rewarding excellence nominations. Staff are encouraged to attend training events and take up opportunities for professional development including those offered by the award-winning University Learning and Development Team: http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/training/. The Department strives to address diversity inequalities to ensure that there is a culture that supports equality and encourages better representation throughout the Department. Support for all staff at all stages of their career is recognised as being extremely important; individuals will be allocated a specific mentor to help support them in future career development. Social events are also held regularly for members of staff.

Opportunities for employment for partners exist across the University, Science City York or within the City of York. The Department recognises that employment for partners can be an issue for new employees and will be understanding if you raise this and will do its best to help.
THE DEPARTMENT

The Department is committed to establishing a culture of environmental good practice and all staff are asked to go about their duties in a resource efficient way and minimise impacts to the environment wherever possible.

The University has recently invested heavily in Chemistry. The Dorothy Hodgkin Building was completed in two phases. The first, housing Analytical Science and Synthetic Chemistry, opened in 2005, while the second phase housing catalytic, materials and synthetic chemistry was completed in 2012. The department is exceptionally well equipped for NMR spectroscopy and departmental instruments are housed in a purpose-built building opened in 2006, while the Wellcome-Wolfson-funded Centre for Hyperpolarisation in Magnetic Resonance (CHyM) was completed in October 2012. The Wolfson Atmospheric Chemistry Laboratories were opened in 2013 and have recently been extended (2018 and a two-storey building housing new teaching and research laboratories (to house Green Chemistry) and offices was completed in March 2014. The department has recently secured funding from the Wellcome Trust, the Wolfson Foundation, a generous alumnus and the university to acquire a 200 kV cryo-electron microscope and a building in which to house it. Construction and installation are anticipated in 2018.
Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2018 it is the home of more than 17,000 students across more than 30 academic departments and research centres. Since opening over fifty years ago, we have become one of the world’s leading universities and a member of the prestigious Russell Group.

We are consistently recognised as one of the leading Higher Education Institutes and are ranked 16th in the Times & Sunday Times league table (2017). The University of York has won six Times Higher Education (THE) Awards and five Queen’s Anniversary Prizes.

The University is proud of its association with Athena SWAN, holding 12 awards in support of gender equality, representation and success for all, with gold awards for Chemistry and Biology and a University-wide bronze award.

Of 154 universities that took part in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, The University of York ranked 14th overall and 10th for the impact of our research. The University is consistently in the top ten UK research universities and attracts over £60m a year of funding from research alone.

Our vision is to make the University of York a world leader in the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research, the sharing of knowledge by teaching students from varied backgrounds and the application of knowledge for the health, prosperity and well-being of people and society.
Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we've worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package and Welcome Officers.

The University is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive community - a place where we can all be ourselves and succeed on merit. We offer a range of family friendly, inclusive employment policies, flexible working arrangements, staff engagement forums, campus facilities and services to support staff from different backgrounds.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages.
THE CITY AND THE REGION

The City of York

Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York’s bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford’s Tower and the Shambles - just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn’t just a great place to visit - it’s also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit www.visityork.org for more information on the city of York.

Shopping, culture and entertainment

York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools

Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location

York is one of Britain’s best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King’s Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire

The Lonely Planet guide recently declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
Apply online

- Go to https://jobs.york.ac.uk
- Find this job using reference 6934
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 16 September 2018

What will I need?

We will ask you for details of:
- your employment history
- relevant qualifications
- two referees

You need to be ready to show us how you meet the requirements of the job, either in a written statement and / or by answering questions.

Help and assistance

Direct any informal queries to Dr Helen Coombs, via helen.coombs@york.ac.uk

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324835