



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

## **CANDIDATE BRIEF**

**Research Assistant in Offshore Wind Development: Environmental and Economic Challenges, Faculty of Environment**



**Salary: Grade 6 (£27,511 – 32,817 p.a.)**

**Reference: ENVEE1392**

**Fixed-term until 31 July 2020 (to start no later than 1 April 2020)**

**We will consider job share / flexible working arrangements**

## Research Assistant in Offshore Wind Development School of Earth and Environment, Faculty of Environment

**Are you an aspiring researcher with a broad background in engineering, geology or geography? Do you want to make a difference by delivering research to underpin robust, sustainable and just climate and energy solutions? Do you want to develop your skills in trans-disciplinary research, and equip yourself with the expertise needed to link geoscience and engineering knowledge for sustainable, just development?**

The University of Leeds has world-leading expertise in subsurface characterization, resource exploration, geoengineering and tectonics through its long-established oil and gas, fundamental tectonic, metamorphic and geophysical [research and teaching programmes](#). In response to the University's bold [climate crisis policy announcement](#), we aim to harness this expertise to focus on the challenges relating directly to decarbonising the energy supply: energy/heat storage, and subsurface disposal and storage. We have a wealth of knowledge, expertise and skills to be applied to these areas as we work together with the [Sustainability Research Institute](#) and the [Priestley International Centre for Climate](#), towards a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions future for our campus, regionally, nationally and globally.

These innovative transdisciplinary projects are aimed to address a significant gap in understanding of potential geoenergy opportunities, social acceptance, barriers and technologies for a just energy transition in line with Net Zero Carbon ambitions. These projects will set a novel standard of how to approach sustainable geoenergy solutions, developing a set of briefing notes and academic outputs to inform decision makers at multiple scales of governance. Our approach will evaluate the challenges and opportunities of a geoenergy problem from the geoscience and social/governance perspectives – a necessity if we are to deliver sustainable, just and responsible solutions for the energy transition. Each pair of projects will be co-supervised by an academic lead from the geosciences and an environmental social scientist.

You will have an undergraduate or Master's degree in geoscience or a closely allied discipline. You will be eager to work in a team of geoscientists and social scientists to enhance the portfolio of the University of Leeds in contributing to Sustainable Geoscience based solutions in the Energy Transition. You will have a strong



background in engineering, geology or geography and have excellent communication, planning and team working skills.

This position focuses on identifying the environmental and economic challenges to delivering a sustainable offshore wind industry. Offshore wind is set to power 30% of UK electricity by 2030, but to do this, it is important to reduce project and overall system costs, so that future projects can move towards a subsidy free world. This post will focus on researching the environmental and economic challenges to offshore wind, that geoscience is able to contribute too, as part of the global energy transition. You will work closely with your partner social scientist.

## What does the role entail?

As a Research Assistant your main duties will include:

- Carrying out a literature review of the future risk of climate change (e.g. sea-level rise, extreme events, cascading risks) to offshore wind;
- Carrying out a literature review of environmental impacts of offshore wind;
- Working with stakeholders to understand the design lives of current infrastructure projects, and the limitations to longer decommissioning timespans;
- Reviewing the level of detail of characterisation of the subsurface required to drive economic savings (in particular for foundation placings and cabling);
- Developing an understanding of how data sharing (both nationally and internationally) can be improved to develop best practice and deliver cost savings to the industry;
- Acting as a first point of contact for the partner social scientist;
- Working with your partner social scientist to develop an integrated understanding of the social and economic barriers to offshore wind development;
- Working both independently and as part of a larger team of researchers and stakeholders, engaging in knowledge-transfer activities where appropriate and feasible;
- Providing a concise brief on research results;
- Attending workshops/conferences to further your understanding of the offshore wind industry.



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 Research Assistant you will have:

- An undergraduate or Master's degree in geoscience or a closely allied discipline;
- A strong background in engineering, geology or geography;
- Good interpersonal and communication skills, both written and verbal and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders;
- Well-developed analytical skills;
- Good time management and planning skills, with the ability to meet tight deadlines;
- A proven ability to work well both individually and in a team;
- The ability to work unsupervised and to use your own initiative.

You may also have:

- Experience of Research and Innovation Development;
- Experience of working with industrial partners.

## 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:

**[Dr Rachael Spraggs](#), Director Institute of Applied Geoscience**

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## Additional information

Find out more about the [Faculty of Environment](#)

Find out more about our [School of Earth and Environment](#), Institutes of [Applied Geoscience](#), [Geophysics and Tectonics](#) and [Earth Surface Science](#)

Find out more about our [Research](#) and associated [facilities](#)

Find out more about [Equality in the Faculty](#)

### A diverse workforce

The Faculty of Environment has received a prestigious Athena SWAN silver award from [Advance HE](#), the national body that promotes equality in the higher education sector. This award represents the combined efforts of all schools in the Faculty and shows the positive actions we have taken to ensure that our policies, processes and ethos all promote an equal and inclusive environment for work and study.

### 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.

### 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](mailto:disclosure@leeds.ac.uk).

## Criminal record information

### Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

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.

