



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Associate Professor of Plant Science, School of Biology, Faculty of Biological Sciences



Salary: Grade 9 (£61,759 - £73,708 p.a, depending on experience)

Reference: FBSBY1216

Full time

This role will be based on the University of Leeds campus, with scope for aspects of the role to be undertaken in a hybrid manner. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements.

Associate Professor in Plant Science School of Biology

Are you an ambitious and experienced plant scientist with the motivation to carry out world-leading research and deliver an exceptional student experience in a research-intensive Russell Group University?

This role offers the opportunity to further develop your career within one of the UK's leading research institutions, working as part of a supportive and interdisciplinary community within the School of Biology.

We are seeking a highly motivated individual who will lead research and teaching activity in fundamental and/or translational plant science, contributing to and enhancing our research strengths in [crop science, plant genetics, plant development, plant pathology, plant symbioses or plant-soil interactions](#) within the [School of Biology](#). You will play a key role in advancing our vision for crop science at Leeds, working at the interface of fundamental and applied plant science to support the sustainable intensification of agriculture.

As a member of the [Centre for Plant Sciences](#) and [School of Biology](#) you will become part of a vibrant and highly interdisciplinary research environment at Leeds. Leveraging and extending our expertise in crop science, plant development and genetics, you will be supported by cross-faculty initiatives including the [Global Food and Environment Institute](#), and by the new, multi-million pound investment in [state-of-the-art research infrastructure](#).

You will also contribute significantly to the development of outstanding graduates and scholars through inclusive, innovative teaching and compassionate mentorship, while leading rigorous, ground-breaking research in your field with integrity and professionalism, and fostering a positive, supportive and inclusive research culture.

The primary criterion for your appointment will be demonstrated academic excellence. As a valued member of our team, you will have the opportunity to work in a dynamic and interdisciplinary environment, contributing to our vision of sustainable and impactful research.



Main duties and responsibilities

- Taking a leading role in research, innovation and impact at national and international levels as well as, contributing to local School/Faculty initiatives
- Maintaining a record of high-quality, internationally recognised refereed publications
- Attracting research funding individually and collaboratively to underpin high-quality research activity and research programmes/projects
- Promoting the integration of your own research area with other research interests within and, as appropriate, outside the School and Faculty
- Providing high-quality research supervision and helping to attract postgraduate researchers to the University which may include developing or co-developing funding bids for Doctoral Training Centre and similar postgraduate research studentship programmes
- Undertaking high-quality research-led teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including delivering and supporting field courses, research projects and postgraduate taught courses as required, and contributing to assessment and examinations, as well as module design, review and quality assurance mechanisms
- Developing new teaching and research across the breadth of our degree programmes in line with the University's vision for digital transformation
- Providing support and guidance to students, offering timely feedback, acting as a supportive personal tutor, resolving issues and/or referring to specialist services, where appropriate
- Contributing to the collegiate culture of the School, including engagement with administrative processes and committee structures within the School or Faculty, and taking on leadership roles or managing initiatives that support a positive, inclusive culture and enhance School, Faculty and University performance.

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.



Qualifications and skills

Essential

- A PhD and postdoctoral research experience in plant science or a closely related discipline
- A sustained track record of high-quality, internationally excellent peer-reviewed research publications
- A successful track record of obtaining external research funding, together with a clear and sustainable strategy for securing further funding
- An established international reputation for innovative research or for the application, translation and impact of your research beyond the academic arena
- Proven ability to lead and develop interdisciplinary and/or collaborative research projects
- A track record of effective PhD/postgraduate student supervision and the ability to attract postgraduate research students
- The ability to contribute to the strategic direction of research and innovation within the School or Faculty
- A proven record of high-quality teaching in a university environment, at a level appropriate to your career stage, with an enthusiastic and inclusive approach to teaching biology. You should also be able to deliver teaching in different formats, including lectures, practicals and/or field-based classes, in ways that enhance the student experience
- Experience of proactive development of new teaching approaches and materials, and in designing, reviewing and developing modules
- A flexible approach to teaching and an ability or willingness to teach outside your core research area, including on residential field courses if required
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to collaborate and inspire colleagues and students

A demonstrable commitment to the University of Leeds values, including integrity, inclusivity, compassion and professionalism, evidenced through your experience of fostering a positive, collaborative and equitable culture in research and teaching.

Desirable

- Experience of programme and/or academic leadership
- Experience of decolonising curricula
- Experience embedding EDI principles in research and teaching



- Experience of developing and/or delivering continuous professional development modules/online short courses
- A track record of industrial engagement or other translational activity in your subject area, with the possibility to develop long-term demonstrable impact from your research.

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.

Your application should include:

- An academic curriculum vitae, including a list of your publications and any other relevant indicators of academic, societal, economic or translational impact (e.g., patents, software, datasets, industry collaboration, policy engagement, public-facing outputs, or contributions to academic citizenship or governance)
- A compelling and sustainable vision for your research programme over the next five years, including planned grant applications, anticipated publications, and a description of the potential academic, societal, economic or environmental impact of your research (maximum 2 pages)

Contact information

For any queries you may have, please contact:

Stefan Kepinski, Professor of Plant Sciences and Head of School of Biology

Email: Biology.HoS@leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

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 re-awarded a Silver award in 2025. 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.

Find out more about the [School of Biology](#) and the [Faculty of Biological Sciences](#). Find out more about the cross-University research and innovation through [Priestley International Centre for Climate, Sustainability Research Institute](#), [Policy@Leeds](#), [Water@Leeds](#), [Global Food and Environment Institute](#), [Centre for Endangered Languages, Cultures and Ecosystems](#) and the [Leeds Institute for Data Analytics](#).

At the University of Leeds, we are committed to providing a culture of inclusion, respect and equity of opportunity that attracts, supports, and retains the best students and staff from all backgrounds. Whatever role we recruit for we are always striving to increase the diversity of our community, which each individual helps enrich and cultivate. We particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, people who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit 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.

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.



Salary Requirements of the Skilled Worker Visa Route

For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. For more information, please visit [the Government's page, Apply for the Global Talent visa](#).

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen, this may be your status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

