

**UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE**  
**Centre for Sustainable Communities**  
**Job Description**

POST TITLE: Postdoctoral Research Scholar

GRADE: UH 7

DEPARTMENT: Office of the Vice-Chancellor

RESPONSIBLE TO: Head of Urbanism

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The UH Lafarge Sustainable Living Partnership is a partnership externally funded by Lafarge Tarmac which is providing the basis for in-depth research into aspects of sustainable living among other related activities. The partnership has reached almost the midway point in a postdoctoral research programme of work, and is now seeking to recruit a post doctoral scholar to support the partnership for the next 18 months by continuing an existing major research project. (Provisional Timeframe: August 2013 – January 2015)

This substantial research project, entitled 'Living in a Material World', was begun by Dr Alasdair Jones under the direction of a Partnership Steering Group, and is being managed by an academic supervisor, Dr Susan Parham. Dr Jones, who has been in post for 17 months, will be moving in early August 2013 to take up a lecturing position but will be maintaining an advisory association with the ongoing research process and outputs.

The purpose of the post-doctoral scholar's role will be to successfully complete this in-depth, comparative primary research, analysis, reporting and dissemination project. This research is exploring attitudes to, and behaviours in relation to, sustainable living in new master-planned communities in Australia and the United Kingdom. The Australian component of the primary fieldwork will be completed and documented in detailed form by the time the scholar is in post and they will be responsible for the UK based data collection as well as ongoing tasks in comparative analysis, reporting and dissemination as stated.

**2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The scholar will be expected to build on the substantial primary data collection already undertaken, undertake further primary fieldwork in the UK, analyse comparative results and produce and help disseminate a number of applied research and more academic research outputs.

In so doing the Research Associate will have a key role in supporting the successful completion of the three year UH Lafarge Partnership for Sustainable Living.

Other duties will be to provide support in the Centre for Sustainable Communities in teaching, research and administration as required.

The research is academically grounded but applied in nature with collaborative work with stakeholders in public, private and third sectors. Thematically, the 'Living in a Material World', project is concerned with issues in the design, planning and behaviour of people in relation to housing, planning, energy and transport. Its results are expected to generate new ideas for the

partnership's work; will include production of high quality publications; the presentation of work at UK and international conferences and seminars; liaison with partners including on-site meetings and presentations in the UK and mainland Europe; and may encompass applying for new externally funded relevant research projects.

Administration of the work will require the scholar to undertake reporting and documentation of their work; and the facilitation of partnership meetings and partnership support activities, including events, publicity, and networking.

The scholar may be asked to contribute to short course and masters' level teaching in relevant areas.

To deliver the post-doctoral research effectively, a degree of flexibility is needed and the post holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above.

It is intended that a comprehensive handover process is undertaken between the departing scholar and the new appointee, either once in post or other arrangement mutually agreed.

### **3. SUPERVISION RECEIVED**

The post holder will report to Head of Urbanism, at the Centre for Sustainable Communities. Appraisal will be conducted by a member of the supervisory team. Direction and guidance will be provided by a range of colleagues including the UH Lafarge Sustainable Living steering group, which has previously defined the objectives for the work.

### **4. SUPERVISION GIVEN**

The job holder will not be accountable for supervision of any staff.

### **5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUDGETS**

The job holder is not responsible for any budgets.

This document outlines the main duties required for the aforementioned post. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list and the duties may vary from time to time, but this does not change the general character of the job, or the level of responsibility entailed.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential Requirements**

1. A doctoral degree awarded by a recognised University, in a discipline related to sustainable living.
2. Evidence of scholarship and research, in one or more of the following:
  - Urbanist principles: regeneration, sustainable homes and communities
  - Innovative use of traditional materials in the design of low energy homes
  - Place-making for long-lasting design in sustainable communities.
3. Excellent communication and inter-personal skills
4. The capacity to promote the research area within the University and the broader community.
5. Proficiency in English Language

### **Desirable Requirements**

1. Experience of working with partnerships in the private and/or public sector to deliver collaborative applied research.
2. Evidence of peer-reviewed publications of international standing
3. Experience of external funding applications
4. Membership of the Higher Education Academy

### **Additional Information:**

Closing Date: 13 August 2013

Quote Reference: 011453

Annual Leave: 35 days plus standard public holidays and an additional 4 days including the closure of our office between Christmas and New Year.

Salary: UH 7 £30424 - £36298

Informal Contact Details: Dr Susan Parham, Head of Urbanism, [s.parham@herts.ac.uk](mailto:s.parham@herts.ac.uk)  
tel: 01707 284166

**UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE**  
**Centre for Sustainable Communities**

**Further particulars**

**THE UNIVERSITY**

The University of Hertfordshire is an ambitious and entrepreneurial University. It offers excellence in teaching, learning and research and puts students at the heart of its activities. It is a model of a 21st Century university, international, business facing and business-like in approach - making it distinctive in an ever-changing higher education environment.

Our mission is to:

- help our students achieve their maximum potential, with graduates distinguished for being innovative, creative, highly employable and equipped for their future careers
- play a key role in our region's economic prosperity and cultural development, by working closely with businesses, the public sector and the wider community
- continue investing in our people, courses, partnerships and facilities, and to be the leading university in enhancing the student experience
- undertake and exploit research, creating new knowledge that is disseminated, transferred and applied; achieving international standing in key research areas
- prepare our students to operate in the global economy, and to engender international and multicultural understanding both within the University and beyond
- provide an outstanding service and to ensure a rewarding experience for all who engage with our University.

The mission is supported by detailed aims and strategic objectives at University and Faculty level.

The University has its origins in Hatfield Technical College, founded in 1952 to serve post-war needs for technological education and training. Within a very few years it was offering courses leading to external University of London Honours Degrees and then Diploma in Technology courses, all subsequently replaced by CNAA Honours Degrees. It became a major regional College (Hatfield College of Technology) and as Hatfield Polytechnic was one of the first three polytechnics designated in 1968. During the following two decades, the Polytechnic expanded steadily in both student numbers and breadth of disciplines. It acquired a major campus at Hertford following the closure of Balls Park College of Education. In 1987 it merged with Hertfordshire College of Higher Education, thus absorbing the College's Wall Hall (Watford) Campus. Immediately before designation as the University of Hertfordshire in 1991 it merged with the Hertfordshire College of Art and Design, founded some 110 years earlier. In 1993, following successful tenders to the Regional Health Authority, the University merged with both the Hertfordshire College of Health Care Studies and the Barnet College of Nursing and Midwifery and acquired contracts for a wide portfolio of health-related education.

These mergers, together with a controlled growth in student numbers, have produced a major expansion of the institution in recent years. In 1989/90 the Polytechnic had 7300 students (6000 FTE) and three major campuses. Now the University of Hertfordshire is one of the region's largest employers with over 2,700 staff and a turnover of over £200m. With a student community of 23,000, including more than 2,000 international students from over eighty-five countries, the University has a global network of over 160,000 alumni.

Recently the University has undertaken substantial masterplanning work which is further improving our campuses and we have invested substantially in their physical infrastructure to a total value of over £50M. Examples of this investment include:

- new laboratories in areas such as Health and Sports Science;
- a major new Art and Design building including an acclaimed gallery space;
- two major new 24 hour Learning Resource Centres;
- the new Forum centre, providing the Students' Union with the first 2000 person venue in Hertfordshire and a suite of bars, cafés, retail space, crèche and multi-faith centre.

In 2000 the University embarked on a new campus development to accommodate the two Faculties previously based at Watford (Humanities and Education) and Hertford (Business School). The de Havilland campus, just 1 km from the College Lane campus in Hatfield, cost £120M and is the largest campus development in UK higher education for 30 years. It opened in September 2003 and incorporates an additional new Learning Resources Centre, conference (460 seat auditorium) and sporting facilities (Sports Village), together with modern residential accommodation for 1500 students.

The University runs its own bus company, UNO, which owns 85 buses operating across the region and as far as north London. As well as bringing students and other clients from east and west, UNO serves the wider community. It makes the University over £1m per year, while reducing traffic on our local roads.

For more information, please visit <http://www.herts.ac.uk/>

## **CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES - PROFILE**

The Centre for Sustainable Communities (CSC) was formed in 2009. Its director is Professor Austin Smyth. The CSC is part of the Office of Regional Affairs, which is part of the portfolio of the Vice-Chancellor's Office.

The CSC is a thematic focus for cross-sectoral work in sustainability. It undertakes teaching, consulting, professional training, knowledge transfer, and research, with partners and bespoke teams to tackle multidisciplinary problems, for example:

- **Planning and urbanism:** research, collaborative design, public engagement, including charrettes;
- **Transport:** integrated transport policy, travel planning for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction; sustainable transport choices; electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- **Environment:** biodiversity, energy and waste awareness; recycling; employee transport plans.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** bringing sustainability issues to the forefront in our own communities.

We have a wide range of information online, in a variety of media:

Main site: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/csc>

Case studies, associate and partnerships: <http://www.uh-sustainable.co.uk/>

CSC on Facebook

CSC group on LinkedIn

CSC on YouTube

### **Partners**

The CSC enjoys active partnerships across a wide range of academic disciplines and industry. At UH, internal partners include over 50 associates in Engineering, Business, Environment, Geography, History, Art and Design, Law, Psychology and UNO buses. External partners include Lafarge Tarmac, Gascoyne Cecil, inmidtown business improvement district, the BRE, Hertfordshire County Council, and Turnberry Consulting.

### **Study with the CSC**

The CSC runs or contributes to a range of training and qualifications. Staff members run modules and teach on our Sustainable Planning Master's Programme <http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/MSc-Sustainable-Planning.cfm> and contribute to UH's Environmental Management Masters. We supervise Masters and PhD students and also contribute to a number of short courses. Details can be found here: <http://uh-sustainable.co.uk/courses/modularPlanning.php>

Postgraduate qualifications which the Centre contributes to include:

- MSc Sustainable Planning
- Environmental Management for Business (MSc, PgD, PgC, AIEMA)
- Environmental Management (MSc, PgD, PgC, AIEMA)
- Water and Environmental Management (MSc, PgD, PgC, AIEMA)

### **Research at the CSC**

The CSC integrates research activities with partners from across the whole University to address cross-sectoral issues. Key areas for research include:

#### *Urbanism*

- collaborative design and public engagement (we are currently undertaking externally funded research into guidance on county wide growth scenarios)
- placemaking (with colleagues from History, we are currently co-leading an AHRC funded research programme on the heritage of garden cities and New Towns)
- food and urban sustainability, planning and design (we are currently running two food centred planning and design projects, one funded by an external donor, the other through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership for which we secured £120,000 funding)

#### *Transport*

- integrated transport
- travel planning for organisations
- electric vehicles and their infrastructure
- hydrogen and fuel cell power train
- sustainable transport in a wide range of modes
- the nature and design of accessibility infrastructure as part of the urban environment

#### **Professional and commercial activities**

The CSC undertakes commercial and partnership-working activity especially in its transport related focus. Recent examples include:

- EValu8 Transport Innovations Ltd has been awarded £7m by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and the Department for Transport's Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV). EValu8 TI Ltd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the University, working with over 100 partners in the East of England.
- Supported by funding from the Local Strategic Transport Fund, we co-ordinate the St Albans Quality Network Partnership (QNP). The university is part of a unique public transport partnership in St Albans. Network St Albans is a Quality Partnership of local authorities, bus and train operators and expert bodies using powers under the 2008 Transport Act to co-ordinate and improve public transport and congestion in the area. We are currently the only university to be at the leading edge of these developments.
- Travel planning advice for SMEs through the "Fresh ways to work" programme, a €2m partnership led by Suffolk County Council, aiming at energy and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. The CSC is providing the consultancy for business engagement and travel planning.  
<http://www.freshwaystowork.org.uk/>

#### **Environment Unit**

The management of the University's Environment Unit sits within the remit of the CSC. The Environment Unit focuses on:

- Environmental Policy: waste management, energy use, water efficiency, sustainable purchasing, construction and refurbishment, biodiversity and community involvement.
- Travel Planning, Quality Network Partnership, bus marketing; awareness schemes for alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles.