JOB TITLE: RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, DISTRIBUTED FINANCIAL MARKET INFRASTRUCTURE (FIXED TERM)

REPORTS TO: DIGITAL ASSETS LEAD

Background

The Cambridge Centre for Alternative Finance (CCAF) is a multi-disciplinary research institute established within Cambridge Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. The CCAF is an internationally renowned centre of excellence, noted for its pioneering market and regulatory research in alternative finance. In addition to its research, the Centre has developed leading initiatives in the regulation of alternative finance, including digital tools, capacity building, and education programmes. These focus on providing an evidence-base for policymakers and regulators to make more informed decisions on alternative finance/FinTech. The Centre works in collaboration with over 150 regulators, central banks, international standard-setting bodies, and other development partners. This includes the UK Financial Conduct Authority, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Asian Development Bank Institute, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and the World Bank.

Learn more about the Cambridge Centre for Alternative Finance: www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/faculty-research/centres/alternative-finance

The role

As a member of the core CCAF Digital Assets Team, you will take a leading role in driving forward the research agenda under the Cambridge Digital Assets Programme (CDAP), a unique public-private research initiative undertaken in collaboration with 16 world-leading institutions from the financial and development sectors to inform evidence-based policymaking and regulation. As part of this initiative, you will contribute to the development and promotion of open-access datasets, insights, and tools serving as public goods to facilitate a balanced public dialogue about opportunities and risks of digital asset activities. This involves the scoping, conceptualisation, implementation, and dissemination of impactful research projects related to the Distributed Financial Market Infrastructure (dFMI) workstream, the management and co-ordination of a diverse team of contributors, and the public representation of CCAF and the CDAP.

Learn more about the Digital Assets Programme: www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/faculty-research/centres/alternative-finance/the-digital-assets-programme
**Main responsibilities**

**Research**

- Undertake and publish research which advances the understanding of digital financial market infrastructure and its underlying components and activities by developing both a quantitative and qualitative data knowledge base.
- Take a leading role in research design and conceptualisation, literature review, data collection, sanitisation, and analysis, as well as writing up and preparing stream-specific research output for public release.
- Likely research areas include developing robust taxonomies of networks, bridges, application ecosystems, and related systems, analysing the operational resilience of permissionless dFMI settlement systems and related components, and mapping the ecosystem structure to monitor the emergence of systemically-important components and identify potential spillover risks to traditional markets and systems.
- Develop research projects with CDAP members and ensure that they are aligned with the broader CDAP mission.
- Prepare and present research updates to CCAF leadership and CDAP research collaborators on a regular basis (including drafting briefs, ppt decks, and public presentation).
- Write and produce analyses which advance the world’s understanding of the opportunities and risks of digital assets in the context of current events and developments in the digital asset ecosystem.
- Identify how rigorous data and existing tools/insights can be leveraged to shape policies and regulations for technology-enabled financial innovation.

**Team management**

- Manage a diverse international research team of affiliates, visiting researchers, post-docs, interns, and other contributors.
- Co-ordinate projects and tasks among remote team members taking into consideration individual circumstances and constraints.
- Co-ordinate projects with adjacent CCAF teams to identify and leverage synergies between departments.

**Teaching and learning support**

- Contribute to the development of educational material on digital assets and the ecosystem custom-tailored to different audiences.
- Organise, prepare, and deliver seminars and workshops, relating to research area.
- May develop and deliver training and education programmes, both online and offline, to support regulatory capacity building in the field of digital assets.

**Liaising and networking**

- Consult with stakeholders to maximise the impact of projects and ensure optimal learning. This may include media engagement such as interviews.
• Build internal and external contacts and participate in networks for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration.

• Publicly represent CCAF in relevant fora, and among key public and private digital asset stakeholders, including regulators and supervisors, industry participants, incumbent financial institutions, universities, think tanks, grantees, donors, and other commercial providers. This may include participating and contributing to academic, regulatory, and industry conferences, workshops, roundtables, and similar events.

• Support CCAF leadership in the further development of the Centre, and CDAP more specifically, by contributing strategic insights and ideas.

• Support the development and public dissemination of the CCAF’s programmes, networks, and outputs. This includes developing strong stakeholder relationships and identifying and supporting the development of further funded initiatives.

• Partner with external stakeholders to develop and promote frontier ideas on policy and regulatory topics.

The person

The ideal candidate should have the following qualities, skills, and attributes. You are asked to provide a CV and a covering letter demonstrating how your own experience meets these requirements:

• Educated to degree level.

• Extensive experience in, and knowledge of, financial market infrastructure underpinning digital assets (including various types and forms of L1s, L2s, bridges, and DeFi) based on multiple years of active and direct involvement, with a proper understanding of the common jargon, tools, methods, processes, and best practices of the discipline.

• Demonstratable track record in conducting and delivering high-quality research on permissioned and/or permissionless blockchain networks and their corresponding application ecosystems that is of interest to industry, policymakers and regulators, and other researchers.

• Proven thought leadership in the field of blockchain, DLT, and DeFi with a demonstratable track record of publicly presenting thoughts and ideas effectively verbally and/or visually.

• Good knowledge of traditional financial market infrastructure, payment systems, and other value transfer rails strongly preferred.

• Relevant experience in managing a collaborative research project and/or co-ordinating a remote team, with a proven ability to identify and manage stakeholders needs.

• Experience working with incumbent and/or digital asset related financial market infrastructure (FMI) providers (eg custodians, exchanges, payment networks, CSDs) strongly preferred.

• Excellent communication and presentation skills in professional English with an extreme attention to detail.

• A problem-solving aptitude, demonstrating self-initiative to proactively identify and address issues without the need for extensive guidance or instructions.

• Good time management and planning skills with a commitment to delivery, which includes the ability to organise/prioritise work and meet deadlines within a fast-paced environment with multiple and competing demands.
Benefits

This is a full-time position working 37 hours per week. There will be a six-month probationary period. Holiday entitlement is 33 days per annum plus eight days of public holidays. The salary will be in the range £33,309-£40,927 per annum.

The full incremental salary range for the position is advertised in order to demonstrate the progression for the Grade. In the majority of cases appointments will be made at the Grade minimum; only in very specific exceptional circumstances can a higher salary be offered.

The University of Cambridge comprises more than 150 departments, faculties, schools, and other institutions, plus a central administration and 31 independent and autonomous Colleges. It is one of the world’s oldest and most successful universities, with an outstanding reputation for academic achievement and research.

With excellent benefits, extensive learning opportunities and a stimulating and attractive environment, the University of Cambridge is a great place to work. Our employees are eligible for a wide range of competitive benefits and services. We give them access to numerous discounts on shopping, health care, financial services, and public transport. We also offer final salary pensions and tax-efficient bicycle and car lease schemes.

We have two nurseries and a holiday play scheme to help support those with childcare responsibilities and we offer various types of family-friendly leave to aid employees' work-life balance. In addition, we operate a number of initiatives to promote career development, health and well-being.

Further details can be found at www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/staff/benefits. There is also a range of information about living and working in Cambridge at www.jobs.cam.ac.uk.

Application arrangements

To submit an application for this vacancy, please search for this position on the University's Job Opportunities website at www.jobs.cam.ac.uk and click on the "Apply online" button at the bottom of the relevant job description. This will route you to the University's Web Recruitment System, where you will need to register an account (if you have not already) and log in before completing the online application form.

The closing date for applications is 3 July 2022.

This is a fixed term role until 31 July 2023 in the first instance.

Applicants are required to provide details of two referees. These will not be contacted unless the applicant is shortlisted.

Equality of opportunity at the University

The University of Cambridge is committed to a proactive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture and values diversity. Entry into employment with the University is determined by personal merit and by the application of criteria required for the post. No applicant for an appointment or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of sex (including gender reassignment), marital or parental status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability (including HIV status), sexual orientation, religion, age or socio-economic factors.
The University has various diversity networks which help it to progress equality; these include the Women’s Staff Network, the Disabled Staff Network, the Black and Minority Ethnic Staff Network and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Staff Network.

Information if you have a disability

The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities and is committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the recruitment process. Adjustments will be made, wherever reasonable to do so, to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability and, if successful, to assist them during their employment.

We encourage applicants to declare their disabilities in order that any special arrangements, particularly for the selection process, can be accommodated. Applicants or employees can declare a disability at any time.

Applicants wishing to discuss any special arrangements connected with their disability can, at any point in the recruitment process, contact, a member of Cambridge Judge Business School’s HR team who are responsible for recruitment to this position by email on hr@jbs.cam.ac.uk.