Candidate Information

Position:	Palaeoecology Research Fellow (Ecologies of Governance)
School/Department:	School of Natural and Built Environment
Reference:	26/113130
Closing Date:	Monday 23 February 2026
Salary:	£41,519 - £44,035 per annum
Anticipated Interview Date:	Friday 13 March 2026
Duration:	Available for 30 months or to 31 October 2028, whichever is soonest.

JOB PURPOSE:

The Ecologies of Governance project interrogates the emergence of inequality and the economic basis of rulership in early medieval, kin-based societies by undertaking multi-proxy and comparative analyses of the environment and agrarian regimes of some of the major and iconic royal landscapes of first millennium AD Britain and Ireland (https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/NBE/Research/research-projects/EcologiesofGovernance/).

This Research Fellow will be a highly productive, ambitious and collaborative member of the Ecologies of Governance team, to be based in Archaeology and Palaeoecology at Queen's University Belfast and collaborating with teams based at Newcastle University and Cardiff University. They will carry out field work and analysis for case study royal landscapes that form the focus of the project, with primary responsibility for performing multi-proxy palaeoecological analysis, including palynology, diatoms, XRF and isotopic analysis, to detail wider ecological contexts and effects of regimes of exploitation. The successful candidate will have multi-proxy expertise cross-cutting these areas, while additionally, candidates with knowledge or expertise in biomarkers and/or metagenomics are encouraged to apply. The successful candidate benefit from bespoke training and mentorship as appropriate, as well as state-of-the-art facilities including the 14CHRONO Centre (https://14chrono.org) and the Institute for Heritage and Environmental Science (https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/NBE/Research/facilities-infrastructure/HeritageandEnvironmentalScience/) at QUB.

Successful applicants will have responsibilities in independent and directed research, supervision of technical analysis, assisting in the planning and day-to-day management of palaeoecological work packages, related collaboration and outreach. Offering laboratories with a globally strong reputation and leading-edge capacities in radiocarbon dating, bio-geochemistry, materials analysis, chemical characterisation, conservation and heritage science, facilities underpinning the project include over £6m of recent investment in areas of geochronology, isotope geochemistry, material and chemical analysis (including XRF, X-ray Imagery, Micro-CT, SEM, LA-ICP-MS, TQ-ICP-MS and Microprobe), providing opportunities for training, skills enhancement and relevant CPD as a part of the project.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Conduct research, sampling and analysis within multi-proxy palaeoecology work package for each case study royal landscape.
2. Carry out coring and sampling of coring as directed by PI, and to include characterisation and sampling for pollen, NPP, diatoms, plant macrofossil, isotope measurement and age-modelling.
3. Assist in fieldwork and sample collection across all project areas.
4. Undertake advanced integration and analysis of results within wider project datasets.
5. Assist in planning, and where appropriate, delivery and write-up of results.
6. Carry out analyses, critical evaluations, and interpretations of existing datasets, and to review and synthesise existing literature within relevant fields.
7. Produce high-quality research outputs consistent with project aims and commensurate with career stage. This will include collaborating and co-authoring with Co-PIs and project partners (as appropriate) on outputs.
8. In consultation with the project team, promote research milestones and outputs at national and international conferences and through social media (where applicable).

9. Assist in the preparation of discreet funding proposals and applications to external bodies as appropriate.
10. Engage and advise heritage stakeholders on access, sampling and results of same.
11. Undertake supplementary duties relevant to the success of the project, including administrative duties and additional training and development activities as required.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Have a relevant PhD in Archaeology or closely cognate discipline.
2. Specific, relevant* research experience to include:
   - An established expertise and proven portfolio in multi-proxy palaeoecology research.
   - Technical expertise in identification, sampling and analysis of XRF, Pollen, NPP, plant macrofossil and isotope data.
   - Post-doctoral research experience in archaeological or environmental science.
   - Proven ability to publish in national/international journals (commensurate with stage of career).
   - Working effectively as part of a research team in the development and promotion of research project results.
3. Ability to contribute to broader management and administrative processes.
4. Contribute to the Project outreach programme by links with industry, community groups etc.
5. Practical problem solving skills, independence of thought and initiative.
6. Ability to assess and organise resources.
7. Ability to communicate complex information in English effectively in oral and written format.
8. Ability to build relationships to develop internal and external networks.
9. Commitment to continuous professional development.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Doctorate in palaeoecology or closely cognate discipline.
2. Experience of sampling/analysis and integration of sedaDNA and/or biomarker data with other environmental proxies.
3. Experience of technical report writing and publication of same.
4. Experience of leading write-up of research results.
5. Knowledge of wider leading-edge advancements and applications in palaeoecology.
6. Track-record of working with archival materials and sampling for radiocarbon dating and materials analysis.
7. Experience of delivering collaborative results at international conferences (appropriate to career stage).
8. Familiarity with a wide range of fieldwork methodologies and practical experience of excavation and palaeoecological sampling.
9. Experience of managing budgets and research finances.
10. Experience of engaging with external stakeholders.
11. Experience of trouble-shooting and maintenance of technical apparatus.
12. Experience of integrating and dissemination multi-proxy data.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Informal enquiries may be directed to: Dr Patrick Gleeson - p.gleeson@qub.ac.uk