

Candidate Information

Position: Research Fellow
School/Department: School of Natural and Built Environment
Reference: 26/113516
Closing Date: Monday 31 August 2026
Salary: £42,972 - £51,270
Anticipated Interview Date: Monday 14 September 2026
Duration: 18 months

JOB PURPOSE:

The Research Assistant will support the delivery of Future Island-Island, an AHRC-funded Green Transition Ecosystem that brings together community, researchers, designers and creative practitioners to co-design greener, more resilient futures for island and remote communities. Working with Rathlin Island as both collaborator and teacher, the project develops innovative approaches to circular economy, adaptive reuse, heritage, education, digital technologies and community-led environmental transition, creating scalable models with national and international relevance.

The post is a critical role, and as such, successful applicants will have responsibilities will support the day-to-day delivery of research activities. This will include, qualitative research, co-design workshops, community engagement, fieldwork, data management, visual communication, project administration, rigorous research documentation and the preparation of research publication outputs. Working closely with the Principal Investigator and wider interdisciplinary project team, the successful candidate will contribute to high-quality research outputs while helping to ensure excellent project delivery.

The post is suited to an organised, enthusiastic and collaborative researcher with strong communication skills, an interest in design-led research and sustainability, and experience of working across interdisciplinary and community settings.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Support the delivery of research activities across the Future Island-Island project.
2. Undertake literature reviews and background research relating to green transition, regenerative design, circular economy, adaptive reuse, co-design, education, heritage, sustainability and place-based innovation.
3. Support fieldwork activities on Rathlin Island and other project locations as required.
4. Produce high quality research outputs consistent with project aims eg preparation of reports, policy briefs, academic papers, conference presentations and public-facing research outputs. This will include collaborating and co-authoring with PI and project team (as appropriate) on outputs.
5. Carry out analyses, critical evaluations, and interpretations of the research and the literature using methodologies and other techniques appropriate to area of research, for example, interviews, focus groups, observations and co-design workshops.
6. Assist in developing visual materials including diagrams, maps, illustrations, and presentations.
7. In consultation with the project team, promote research milestones and outputs at national and international conferences and through social media.
8. Assist grant holder in the preparation of funding proposals and applications to external bodies.
9. 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 or be about to obtain a PhD in Architecture, Planning, Urban Design, Geography, Environmental Studies or another relevant discipline (NB: 'About to obtain' is normally defined as within 3 months of application date).

2. Specific, relevant research experience to include:
 - Undertaking research in the area of architecture, planning, heritage, codesign, climate, green transition, adaptive reuse.
 - A proven track record of using relevant research methodologies to carry out analyses, critical evaluations, and interpretations of data relevant to the research project.
 - Strong publication record commensurate with stage of career.
 - Experience in writing funding applications commensurate with stage of career.
 - Proven experience organising and facilitating workshops with diverse stakeholders.
 - Working effectively as part of a research team in the development and promotion of the research theme.
3. Evidence of project co-ordination: scheduling fieldwork, managing participant recruitment, logistics, and record-keeping to deadlines.
4. Demonstrated stakeholder engagement with community organisations and with diverse stakeholders.
5. Willingness to contribute to School/consortium activities, meetings and reporting.
6. Ability to contribute to broader management and administrative processes.
7. Strong organisational skills and attention to detail.
8. Excellent written and verbal communication for mixed audiences (academic, policy, community).
9. Practical problem solving skills, independence of thought and initiative.
10. Ability to assess and organise resources.
11. Ability to present complex material clearly and succinctly, using high-quality visuals to communicate complex information in English effectively in oral and written format.
12. Commitment to continuous professional development.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Training in qualitative methods.
2. Training or micro-credentials related to co-design community engagement methods, climate adaptation, built heritage, adaptive reuse.
3. Short courses in research ethics and data management for applied fieldwork.
4. Professional affiliation in a relevant field (e.g., architecture, built-environment, planning, environment) or evidence of equivalent professional development.
5. Experience working with community groups and project partners.
6. Contribution to grant report writing and research data management plans.
7. Experience of translating research findings into presentation materials.
8. Experience building and sustaining cross-sector networks (policy, community, academia).
9. Contribution to public engagement (talks, briefings, community events) and/or university service.
10. Experience using NVivo or other qualitative analysis software.
11. Evidenced ability to build rapport quickly across sectors and maintain constructive relationships.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Informal enquiries may be directed to Tom Jefferies at t.jefferies@qub.ac.uk