



University of
St Andrews

School of Biology
Post-doctoral Research
Fellow – AR3119LS





University of
St Andrews

Introduction



Founded in the 15th century, St Andrews is Scotland's first university and the third oldest in the English-speaking world. The University of St Andrews is one of Europe's most research intensive seats of learning. It is one of the top-rated universities in Europe for research, teaching quality, and student satisfaction.

Today, under the leadership of Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Sally Mapstone FRSE, the University's strategy is to broaden its global influence, with a focus on diversity, building a culture of entrepreneurship, research excellence, and social responsibility.

From climate science and sustainable development to energy ethics and grass-roots level action across all our communities in which it operates, sustainability is at the heart of the University's strategic vision. World-leading research on sustainability is taking place across the breadth of the University, with researchers addressing key questions on the defining issue of our generation.



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The Urban Exploration Project

The Urban Exploration Project is a collaborative initiative developed in close partnership with the National Geographic Society. The Project Lead is Professor Christian Rutz FRSE, whose research group is based in the Centre for Biological Diversity of the School of Biology.

The Urban Exploration Project combines the powers of inclusive community building, cutting-edge technology, local empowerment, education and storytelling, to forge innovative pathways towards sustainable human–wildlife coexistence in the world’s unprotected areas, complementing the established 30x30 Initiative. Specifically, the project aims to produce a holistic understanding of animal behaviour in human-modified landscapes, by building a global network of ~250 field teams over ~10 years, to track ~10,000 animals across gradients of urbanisation worldwide. This major collaborative effort will fill critical evidence gaps on human–wildlife interactions, enabling innovative, context-appropriate and scalable approaches to environmental planning, conservation management, and policy making.

School of Biology

The School of Biology is one of the largest Schools in the University with over 65 Academic staff, a combined complement of 120 PhD students, 40 MSc students, 80 postdoctoral research fellows and 70 technical and administrative support staff. There are three Interdisciplinary (research) Centres within Biology: The Biomedical Sciences Research Centre (BSRC, North Haugh), the Centre for Biological Diversity (CBD, Queen’s Gardens), and the Scottish Oceans Institute (SOI, East Sands). There is much overlap between the research carried out at the three Centres as well as strong interdisciplinary links with other Schools in the University.





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School of Biology

The School prides itself on its research-led teaching, providing a broad curriculum to around 450 FTE undergraduates who now enter the University typically with straight As at A-level or in Scottish Highers. All academic staff are expected to be involved in teaching, which is strongly supported by dedicated education-focused academics and professional staff. The 40 taught MSc students are in our Marine Mammal Science, Marine Ecosystem Management and Animal Behaviour programmes, in addition to our postgraduate students in our research Masters and PhD programmes.

The School of Biology at the University of St Andrews is fully engaged with the Athena Swan programme and achieved Gold award status in 2022 for its sustained progression, achievement, and beacon activity in advancing equality and representation. The School particularly welcomes applications from those suitably qualified from all genders, all races, ethnicities and nationalities, LGBTIQ+, all or no religion, all social class backgrounds, and all family structures. The School values equality and diversity across its workforce and offers a family friendly and supportive environment in which flexible working is encouraged; we strive to hold important meetings/seminars within core hours of 09.15 to 14.45. In addition, a broad variety of measures are currently being introduced to ensure effective career progression for everyone and to eradicate the historical lack of diversity at higher professional levels.





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Centre for Biological Diversity

The Centre for Biological Diversity (CBD) in the centre of town occupies the Dyers Brae Building and Sir Harold Mitchell Building (HMB) and focuses on animal behaviour, ecology, evolution, population genetics and conservation. The CBD was created in 2012 as a virtual Centre across the University involving groups from the Schools of Psychology, Geography & Geosciences and Management as well as Biology. In 2016 the University funded an extensive refurbishment of the HMB to allow the School to bring together 20 PIs and their groups to create an exciting academic environment for the study of biodiversity.

Professor Rutz's Research Group

Professor Christian Rutz FRSE leads a dynamic, international research group at the CBD, which (amongst other things) leverages the powers of advanced animal-tracking technology ('bio-logging') for driving conservation progress, with a particular focus on sustainable human-wildlife coexistence. He is Founding President of the International Bio-Logging Society (2017–2024), Chair of the COVID-19 Bio-Logging Initiative (2020–), Project Lead of the Urban Exploration Project (2024–), an advisor to UNEP's Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (2015–) and Save the Elephants' Continental Tracking Initiative (2024–), and contributes to collaborative efforts to launch a global tag registry and develop the Move BON initiative.





Job Description

Reporting to: Professor Christian Rutz FRSE

Location: St Andrews

Job Family: Academic Research

Working Hours: 36.25

Grade/Salary Range: Grade 6 / £38,249 - £45,413 per annum

Reference Number: AR3119LS

Start Date: As soon as possible

Interview Date: To be confirmed

Duration of post: 2 Years with the possibility to extend

Main Purpose of the Role

The post-holder will support the launch phase of the Urban Exploration Project, in close collaboration with Professor Rutz FRSE (PI) and his team at the University of St Andrews, colleagues at the National Geographic Society, and various project partners. Specifically, they will help coordinate the activities of field teams conducting animal-tracking studies (and related work) as part of the project's pilot phase, support collaborative data analysis and write up, and help evaluate and refine plans for scaling up operations. This will include developing an in-depth understanding of the support needs of field teams, updating budget estimates for future rounds of grant-making, identifying (and supporting the development of) opportunities for participatory science and community engagement, refining partnering arrangements between field teams, and summarising findings in internal reports. The post-holder's dual responsibility – of assisting with both research activities and project management – will help ensure delivery of high-quality pilot studies and support the growth of the Urban Exploration Project over the coming years.



Key Responsibilities

1. Plan and conduct research and management activities within the project, to meet deadlines, deliverables, and agreed objectives. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - I. literature research, including preparation of systematic reviews and/or formal meta-analyses
 - II. processing and analysis of animal-tracking (GPS), land cover, and human mobility data, and other types of data and information
 - III. planning, delivery and analysis of participatory-science and/or community-engagement activities
 - IV. coordination of the activities of the field teams conducting studies during the project's pilot phase
 - V. evaluation and refinement of plans for scaling up project operations (including field team needs, budgets, participatory-science and community-engagement opportunities, partnership arrangements)
 - VI. write-up of findings for peer-reviewed publications and internal reports
2. Understand and convey material of a specialist or highly technical nature to the PI, wider project team and, where applicable others, through presentations, discussions, and progress reports.
3. Write up research work for publication in peer-reviewed journals (as principal or co-author).
4. Prepare and deliver presentations (and, where applicable, posters) at conferences, seminars, workshops, and other project-related meetings.
5. Engage in networking activities to make internal and external contacts, to develop knowledge, and to form relationships for future collaboration.
6. Participate in outreach via press releases, social media, blogs, and talks at public events.
7. Develop specialist knowledge to deal with problems affecting the achievement of project objectives and deadlines, devising solutions to unexpected challenges in collaboration with the PI.
8. Plan and manage own administrative activities.



Key Responsibilities

9. Proactively engage with other members of the project team, and the project's wider partner network.
10. Supervise and provide support and guidance to project team members and assigned project students, as appropriate and agreed with the PI.
11. Use initiative and creativity to identify areas for further project-related research, partnerships, collaborations, and other activities.
12. Identify potential sources of funding and write, or contribute to the development of, research proposals and grant applications, as agreed with the PI.
13. Ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements including equality and diversity, data protection, copyright and licensing, security, financial, health and safety and other University policies, procedures and codes as appropriate.

Special Requirements:

This position may involve some international travel to attend meetings and/or support the work of field teams.

Some evening or weekend work may be required to assist with time-sensitive, project-related matters.

Please note that this job description is not exhaustive, and the role holder may be required to undertake other relevant duties commensurate with the grading of the post. Activities may be subject to amendment over time as the role develops and/or priorities and requirements evolve.



Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of Assessment (i.e. application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
<p>Education & Qualifications</p> <p><i>(technical, professional, academic qualifications and training required)</i></p>	<p>Good first degree in relevant subject (e.g., Biology, Zoology Conservation)</p> <p>Hold, or be close to submission of, PhD on relevant topic (e.g. , movement ecology, animal tracking conservation and sustainability science, environmental planning)</p>		<p>Application, Certificates</p>
<p>Experience & Knowledge</p> <p><i>(examples of specific experience and knowledge sought)</i></p>	<p>Experience of applying relevant analytical skills, techniques and methods – for example, relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - animal behaviour - Population ecology - remote sensing (GIS) - Human mobility - Environmental planning - Other topics relevant to the project 	<p>Knowledge of one or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservation management - International conservation frameworks and programmes - Policy making - Science –policy interface - Stakeholder engagement - Cross-disciplinary research - Database management 	<p>CV, Application, Interview, Presentation, References</p>



Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of Assessment (i.e. application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
<p>Experience & Knowledge</p> <p><i>(examples of specific experience and knowledge sought)</i></p>	<p>Developing track record commensurate with career stage</p>	<p>High-quality research publications</p> <p>High-quality reports</p> <p>Experience of applying for external funding</p> <p>Experience in project management</p> <p>Experience of supervising others (academically or in a management capacity)</p> <p>Experience of organising events for academic or public audiences, or network activities</p>	<p>CV, Application, Interview, Presentation, References</p>



Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of Assessment (i.e. application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
<p>Competencies & Skills</p> <p>(e.g. <i>effective communication skills, initiative, flexibility, leadership etc</i>)</p>	<p>Effective communication (orally and in writing)</p> <p>Well-developed presentation skills, including ability to communicate complex, theoretical and technical material in an engaging and intelligible way to a range of expert and non expert audiences</p> <p>Collegiality, and ability to work in a team/collaborative environment</p> <p>Enthusiasm for the project's goals, and high degree of self-motivation</p> <p>Ability to work autonomously and to be proactive in identifying and resolving issues</p> <p>Administrative and IT skills appropriate for the efficient and effective delivery of research and other work</p>	<p>Experience of working with non-academic communities and stakeholders</p> <p>Experience in project management and administration</p>	<p>CV, Application, Interview, Presentation, References</p>



Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Means of Assessment (i.e. application form, interview, test, presentation etc.)
Competencies & Skills <i>(e.g. effective communication skills, initiative, flexibility, leadership etc)</i>	Excellent time-management skills with the ability to meet deadlines Meticulous data handling and record keeping		CV, Application, Interview, Presentation, References
Other Attributes/Abilities <i>(if applicable)</i>	Evidence of keeping up to date with new developments and techniques in relevant subject areas	Evidence of participation in relevant academic and professional associations/bodies and external networks Ability to work flexibly and to tight deadlines	CV, Application, Interview, Presentation, References

Essential Criteria – requirements without which a candidate would not be able to undertake the full remit of the role. Applicants who have not clearly demonstrated in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the short-listing stage.

Desirable Criteria – requirements which would be useful for the candidate to hold. When short listing, these criteria will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.



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Benefits

In addition to the salary on offer for this position, there are a wide range of benefits for staff working at the University of St Andrews. The package for the Post-doctoral Research Fellow includes:

- Grade 6 / £38,249 - £45,413 per annum
- Membership of the USS Pension Scheme with a generous employer contribution of 14.5%
- A hybrid working environment, including partial homeworking where appropriate and a range of family friendly policies
- Staff discount scheme for local and national goods and services
- Free staff parking, employee Carshare and Cycle to Work Schemes and subsidised local bus travel
- Subsidised sports membership, reduced tuition fees on degree programmes for staff, access to training and development opportunities including LinkedIn Learning, access to library facilities, salary sacrifice scheme
- A range of wellbeing initiatives including membership of Peppy, a health application that connects staff to expert practitioners and personalized support on health matters
- 34 Days Annual Leave plus 5 Public Holidays.





How to Apply



We are committed to creating an inclusive and accessible recruitment process for all candidates. If you would like to request any reasonable adjustments or accommodations during the application or interview process, please let us know, and we will be happy to support you.

We encourage applicants to apply online at www.vacancies.st-andrews.ac.uk/welcome.aspx

If you have difficulties in completing the online application form, please call +44 (0)1334 461990 or contact vacancies@st-andrews.ac.uk for an application pack.

Applications should consist of:

- Letter of application detailing research interests, relevant experience, and suitability for the position
- CV including full publication list
- Names and contacts of three referees
- A relevant writing sample (e.g. , first author, peer-reviewed publication or project report)

For all applications, please quote ref: AR3119LS

The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland (No SC013532).



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Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of the St Andrews experience and form a central pillar of the University Strategy. We strive to create a fair and inclusive culture demonstrated through our commitment to diversity awards (Athena Swan, Carer Positive, Race Charters). We celebrate diversity by promoting profiles of BAME, LGBTIQ+ Disabled and Neurodiverse staff and supporting networks including the Staff BAME Network; Staff with Disabilities or Neurodiversity Network; Staff LGBTIQ+ Network; and the Staff Parents & Carers Network. Full details available online: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/>

The University encourages all interested candidates to apply regardless of nationality and all applications received are assessed against the essential and desirable criteria listed in the further particulars. The successful candidate will have to demonstrate their right to work in the UK prior to commencing employment and where required, obtain the right to work in the UK without relying on University sponsorship. Information on other visa options is available at <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa> or by contacting our HR Immigration Team on hrimmigration@st-andrews.ac.uk.

The University of St Andrews has also received a prestigious institutional Silver Athena Swan Award in recognition of its continued efforts to advance gender equality across the University (building on our Bronze awards of 2012 and 2017).





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St Andrews

A modern location surrounded with ancient history, St Andrews is a dynamic and friendly town found on the east coast of Scotland. Situated in the Kingdom of Fife, St Andrews has easy links to nearby commuter towns and transport links (including airports) to the nearby cities of Dundee (13 miles) and Edinburgh (c. 1 hour by train).

St Andrews and the surrounding area is home to a wide range of restaurants and shops, while boasting an array of beautiful beaches. St Andrews is also the home of golf and there are seven local courses including the famous Old Course.

Fife is an area filled history and culture. There are nearly 5,000 listed buildings and 50 conservation areas across the Kingdom, with some historic structures dating all the way back to the 12th century. St Andrews enjoys a microclimate and is typically much drier than western parts of the country.





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Further Information

This post is fixed term as it is reliant on external funding

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