



## Scottish Forests (Root Biomass) Project Assistant

### Future Leaders Programme 2024

Application form: <https://forms.office.com/e/CL6McsjANM>

Application deadline: 11:59pm GMT on Monday 11 March 2024

Position with: [Centre for Landscape Regeneration](#), University of Cambridge

Manager: Laim Wakefield, Department of Plant Sciences

Location: Cairngorms, Scotland\*

\*Please note that all project assistants on the Future Leaders Programme must be in person in Cambridge for the week commencing 15 July and the week commencing 2 September.

Programme dates: 15 July to 13 September 2024

### Project Overview

Woodland restoration and expansion is one option for meeting global carbon sequestration goals. However, the long-term effects of woodland expansion onto heathlands are poorly understood, especially concerning below-ground processes.

Root biomass is an important, yet often overlooked aspect of determining ecosystem carbon storage. Due to a relative difficulty in measuring below-ground biomass, root biomass is frequently estimated using existing equations, which can lead to inaccurate estimates of carbon.

This project will use Global Ecosystem Monitoring (GEM) plots across a range of natural pinewood expansion in the [Cairngorms Connect](#) project area – starting from heath through to established native pinewood – to monitor the effect of woodland expansion on root biomass.

The project assistant will assist with taking measurements of roots, analysing soil carbon and analysing root samples across multiple fieldsites in the Cairngorms.

This research project will involve extensive fieldwork in the Cairngorms throughout the placement. You will be part of a small team working in the field. You should be willing to be outdoors for long periods, possibly in adverse weather conditions. We are committed to ensuring an inclusive approach to fieldwork.

**We strongly encourage and welcome applications from those who are reflected in widening participation criteria below, as part of our commitment to improving diversity and inclusion and widening access to conservation and environmental science careers.**

- Those who come from an under-represented ethnic group
- Those who are care experienced
- Those who have been granted refugee status in the UK
- Those who are estranged from both primary carers (e.g. both parents/carers)
- Those who were eligible for the 16-19 Bursary/ Pupil Premium and/or those who were in receipt of Free School Meals
- Those who are a young carer, defined as being the primary carer for a parent or sibling
- Those who have experienced disruption to their education, for example due to health issues, family circumstances or homelessness.

## Person Specification

### *Essential criteria*

- Applicants must have a knowledge of climate, conservation and/or environmental issues as well as a passion for the subject.
- You should be willing to work in the field under variable weather conditions.
- Good analytical skills; able to collate, understand and draw conclusions from quantitative and qualitative information.
- Good interpersonal skills; confident in meeting and working with people from a range of backgrounds and disciplines.
- Well-developed organisational and timekeeping skills and the ability to manage projects.
- Ability to prioritise own workload and plan effectively as part of a small team.
- Competent in standard software packages e.g. Word, Excel, Powerpoint.

### *Desirable criteria*

- Studying or have completed a degree in a relevant subject such as conservation, environmental sciences, biological sciences or similar.
- Knowledge, for example as part of your studies, of forest ecosystems, carbon sequestration and/or effects of habitat restoration would be beneficial.
- Previous field work experience, for example as part of your studies, is desirable.