



Natural  
History  
Museum

# Candidate pack

## Postdoctoral Researcher in Solanaceae Phylogenomics



Full time, fixed term

## About Us

The Natural History Museum is a globally recognised centre for scientific research. We care for one of the world's largest and most unique natural history collections, with more than 80 million objects, representing billions of years of history. Our more than 350 scientists are responsible for looking after and growing this collection as well as unlocking its secrets.

We're at a pivotal moment in our history. We have huge aspirations to extend our global reputation for cutting-edge science with a new state-of-the-art research facility at Thames Valley Science Park. This, alongside an ambitious digitisation programme, will open up the collections like never before, revolutionising access to natural history data and facilitating exciting new research endeavours. We're looking for talented people who'll welcome the flexibility, autonomy and opportunities for collaboration we offer. Who'll be motivated to help us achieve our mission of creating advocates for the planet by finding science-based solutions for nature, from nature.

## Diversity and inclusion matter to us

We welcome applications from everyone! Diversity, inclusion and the feeling of belonging matters to us. By attracting people from a broad range of backgrounds we can continue to look at the world with fresh eyes and find new ways of doing things. We offer a stimulating and professional working environment. All our staff work to embody our behaviours of being curious, ambitious, pioneering, teaming up, acting with pace and sharing the wonder.

We know we have more to do, but we're committed to making sure that everyone who works here feels valued, respected and that they can thrive.

## Thriving at the Museum: the way we work

Our vision is a future where both people and planet thrive. To accomplish this, we're delivering an ambitious strategy by 2031 to create advocates for the planet. To achieve this shared goal requires each of us to behave in ways that help everyone to thrive. We are proud to work at the Museum and have identified the qualities we all need to embody to reach this shared ambition.



**We're ambitious.** To make a difference on a global scale we have to push the boundaries and be big and bold not only in our thinking but in the goals

we set. We act with integrity, but this doesn't mean we're rigid or inflexible. We drive ourselves and others to be excellent at what we do and identify opportunities to make a difference to the organisation wherever we can.

**We're curious.** We never stop learning. We ask questions to advance our understanding, skills and professional knowledge and look outwards beyond the organisation to learn from others. We seek out and actively listen to different perspectives and to take time to reflect. We're thoughtful and always receptive to new ideas and ways of working.

**We share the wonder.** We are captivated by the natural world, proud of our treasures and trusted guardians of our collections. We relish telling stories to inspire others. We're passionate about what we do, sharing our own knowledge and expertise. We're proud of where we work and never take this for granted.

**We're pioneering.** We're not afraid to try something new. We experiment, embrace complex problems and use good judgment and evidence to innovate and take risks. Always adaptable, we're ready to change our approach. We don't dwell on setbacks or get preoccupied with problems – we find solutions.

**We team up.** We respect the expertise of others and recognise that we produce the strongest outcomes when we put the best ideas together. We trust each other, keep things simple and make it easy for others to do the right thing. We empower and support each other, sharing information, skills and experience so that all of us are equipped to succeed. We never let difficult moments develop into bad working relationships.

**We act with pace.** We prioritise action, are efficient and always focus our efforts where we know we can make the biggest impact. We don't wait to be told what to do - we take the initiative and deliver on our responsibilities with momentum. We're decisive and once a plan is set, we all get behind it to make it a success.



## Role Summary

We are looking for a postdoctoral level scientist with skills in phylogenetic and morphological analysis to work as part of a team investigating the evolution of the mega-diverse plant genus *Solanum*, a member of the nightshade family (Solanaceae). We expect the appointee to produce, collate and analyse DNA sequence and morphological data for clades of *Solanum* species, focusing on the diverse “spiny solanums”, in either Australia or the Americas.

You will join an international team of Solanaceae scientists, whose work spans biodiversity and genomics. The group works collaboratively and globally, with joint field work and papers. We expect the appointee to have had experience of working in the field collecting plants, in the laboratory with molecular sequences and in silico with phylogenomic data.

The candidate will be expected to work independently with minimal day-to-day supervision, but collaboratively as part of the wider Solanaceae community.

## Main tasks and responsibilities

- Compiling and creating a robust, broadly sampled phylogeny of a major clade of *Solanum* using phylogenomic data
- Undertake field and herbarium work to fill in gaps in the dataset
- Work with an international team to advance research setting *Solanum* in the context of other mega-diverse genera
- Publish high quality, impactful research
- Develop national and international research collaborations
- Secure independent external funding to support field work and conference attendance
- Actively contribute to outreach events and activities to share research with wider audiences
- Present work of the team at conferences and international fora
- Contribute to other Museum activities as required

## What we’re looking for

We are looking for a post-doctoral researcher to work with a dynamic international team investigating phylogenomics and biogeography in the mega-diverse plant genus *Solanum* (Solanaceae) in either Australia or the Americas. You will have a PhD degree in botany or the equivalent, experience in analysis of large phylogenomic datasets and of working in an herbarium with plant specimens, a good publication record, together with the ability to work independently and as a member of a dispersed team.

## Person Specification

- PhD in botany or related subject
- Scientific background that includes field- and lab-based research
- Experience of working with herbarium specimens and DNA sampling/sequencing
- Proven experience of leading the analysis of large phylogenomic datasets
- Strong publication record in peer-reviewed journals
- Proven experience in supporting fund raising activities and writing and obtaining grant applications
- A self-starter, able to contribute to the vision and direction of the project as part of the team
- Ability to work independently
- Experience of participation in international teams
- Ambitious and aspirational in growing their research career

## Key information

Salary: £43,645 per annum, grade 4

Hours: Full time, 36 hours per week

Contract: Fixed term – 3 years

The Museum supports flexible working however, due to the nature of this role, the work pattern will be 100% on site.

Please note that this role qualifies for Museum sponsorship. Whilst we would still expect the successful postholder to have valid right to work in the UK at the point of starting the role, the Museum can support in obtaining a Certificate of Sponsorship for this role to apply for future or continued right to work in the UK. Please contact our Recruitment Team at [hrteam@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:hrteam@nhm.ac.uk) if you have any further queries regarding this.

All positions at the Natural History Museum are conditional subject to receipt of:

- Proof that you are legally entitled to work in the UK
- A Basic Disclosure Check from the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS)
- Satisfactory references covering the last 3 years of your employment or education
- Health clearance

# Our benefits

In addition to competitive salaries, we offer a wide range of benefits to help you thrive both personally and professionally.



## Wellbeing and work-life balance

- Generous annual leave allowance of 27.5 days holiday plus public holidays
- Enhanced sickness pay to support you through periods of illness
- Wellbeing provision including Mental Health First Aider support and regular learning sessions on wellbeing topics
- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- A 24/7 employee assistance programme including face to face counselling sessions
- Occupational health advice and support
- Eye care vouchers for display screen users
- Supportive policies to help you manage life events, for example becoming a carer, menopause, transitioning at work



## Financial

- Generous defined contribution pension scheme with employer contribution up to 10% of salary
- Life insurance that will pay 4 times your salary to a beneficiary in the event of your death in service
- Season ticket and cycle loans to help you spread the cost of cycling to work
- Rental deposit loan scheme – to help you spread the cost of a deposit on a rental property
- 20% discount in our NHM shops both online and in store
- Discounts in our on site restaurants and coffee shops, and use of our staff canteen at South Kensington
- Discounts at local shops and restaurants within the South Kensington area



## Cultural and lifestyle

- Free entry with your NHM staff pass to a wide range of museums and galleries across London and around the UK
- Every staff member is entitled to 10 complimentary tickets each year to give to friends and family

- Access to the Civil Service Sports and Social Club for a small monthly fee, offering a range of benefits such as discounted tickets to visitor attractions and gym membership discounts
- Access to the NHM Sports and Social Association for a small fee which provides access to our fitness centre at South Kensington and a range of activities and clubs including football and yoga



## **Family friendly**

- Enhanced pay for maternity, paternity and adoption leave
- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- Supportive policies to help you manage fertility treatment
- Paid special leave to help you manage unexpected life events or to make caring arrangements

## How to apply

To apply, please complete an online application through our [recruitment portal](#).

The closing date for applications is **1 May 2026 at 23:59**.

First stage assessment for this role is likely to take place in week commencing **25 May 2026**.

## How we hire

We want everyone to be able to perform at their best throughout our hiring process. We've put together some information about how we hire as well as tips for completing your application and taking part in our assessment process. You can find this information on our careers site [here](#).

## Reasonable adjustments

We welcome applications from disabled candidates, and are committed to adapting our recruitment processes to make sure all candidates can perform at their best. If you require adjustments to our application process or require materials in a different format, contact us at [hrteam@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:hrteam@nhm.ac.uk).

If you need adjustments to the assessment stage of our hiring process, indicate this on your application form and we'll contact you before the assessment to put these in place.

We're part of the Disability Confident Scheme and guarantee an interview to all disabled candidates who meet the minimum shortlisting criteria for the role.