



Natural
History
Museum

Candidate pack

Research Assistant, PREDICTS Database Assistant



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

The Natural History Museum maintains the PREDICTS (Projecting Responses of Ecological Diversity In Changing Terrestrial Systems) database; the world's largest global database describing how local terrestrial biodiversity response to land use and related human pressures. The database underpins high-impact academic research and applied work with policy and business partners, and its value depends critically on the quality, completeness and traceability of the underlying data.

We are seeking a Research Assistant, ideally with an MSc-level background in ecology, biodiversity, environmental science or a related discipline, to support the ongoing expansion and curation of the PREDICTS database. The postholder will work closely with members of the PREDICTS team to identify relevant scientific studies, obtain raw data from papers or from corresponding with their authors, and curate those data into the PREDICTS database following established protocols. This exciting role in a rapidly-growing field is ideal for someone who enjoys careful, detail-oriented work with scientific data, is comfortable engaging directly with the academic literature and research community and can manage complex information streams in a systematic and organised way.

The postholder will be based within a collaborative and inclusive research environment within the Biodiversity Futures Lab, led by Professor Andy Purvis and Dr Adriana De Palma. They will work alongside a diverse group of researchers spanning ecology, biodiversity modelling, data science and geospatial analysis. In addition to their core data-curation responsibilities, there will be opportunities to engage in wider ongoing work in the lab, depending on interests and capacity. The postholder will also have opportunities for informal training and skills development, including to areas such as AI-assisted literature discovery, coding in the R language for data manipulation, statistical modelling and geospatial analysis.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Identify relevant peer-reviewed scientific papers whose data can contribute to the PREDICTS database, using targeted literature searches.
- Read and interpret ecological and biodiversity literature to assess suitability of studies for inclusion in PREDICTS.
- Contact authors to request underlying raw data, following our documented procedures, and manage ongoing correspondence in a professional and organised manner.
- Track data requests, responses and follow-ups to ensure progress is maintained.
- Curate received datasets into PREDICTS-standard formats, ensuring consistency, completeness and accuracy.
- Carry out basic Quality Assurance checks on curated datasets, identifying and resolving issues where possible.

- Maintain clear documentation of data provenance, decisions and correspondence (in accordance with PREDICTS guidelines and procedures).
- Contribute to improving and documenting curation workflows and procedures where appropriate.

Line management

- This role will be part of the Biodiversity Futures Lab and the role will be managed by the Biodiversity Data Supervisor.

What we're looking for

Person Specification

Essential

- A good MSc (or equivalent experience) in ecology, biodiversity, environmental science or a related discipline.
- Ability to rapidly familiarise with the PREDICTS project, including database structure, data standards, and its scientific applications.
- Strong ability to read, understand and critically interpret scientific literature.
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to manage multiple datasets, papers and correspondence streams simultaneously.
- High level of attention to detail and commitment to data quality and reproducibility.
- Confidence and professionalism in communicating with academic researchers to request data.
- Ability to work independently while contributing effectively as part of a collaborative research team.
- Ability to work to deadlines and manage multiple tasks in a research environment.

Desirable

- Experience working with ecological or biodiversity datasets
- Experience working on data synthesis projects (e.g. systematic reviews or meta-analyses)
- Familiarity with R for data manipulation and calculations.
- Experience using computational or AI-assisted tools (including large language models) to support literature searches or data discovery.
- Interest in linking ecological science to applied or commercial biodiversity assessment tools such as the Museum's Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII).

Key information

Salary: £32,500 per annum, grade 6
Hours: Full time, 36 hours per week
Contract: Fixed-term – 23 months

The role is based in South Kensington.

The Museum supports flexible working. We operate a hybrid working model that requires regular, weekly attendance for this role, with the precise pattern of days on site and worked from home to be agreed with your manager.

Please note that this role does not qualify for Museum sponsorship so the successful postholder will need to have a valid right to work in the UK at the point of offer.

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 arrangement.

How to apply

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

The closing date for applications is **31 August 2026**.

First stage assessment for this role is likely to take place between **10 and 15 September**.

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.

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.