

Appointment of
**Assistant Director,
Leverhulme Trust**

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Leverhulme Trust

The Leverhulme Trust was established in 1925 under the will of the First Viscount Leverhulme with the instruction that its resources should be used to provide “scholarships for the purposes of research and education.” The Trust is a charity that supports ambitious blue skies research. Awarding between £100–120 million annually, the Trust is amongst the largest all-subject providers of research funding in the UK, primarily in the university sector. The Trust’s income comes from an endowment; it does not fundraise.

£120.3m
Funding spend in 2024

661
Grants awarded

163
Institutions funded

This appointment brief should be read in conjunction with the Leverhulme Trust’s website: [Homepage | The Leverhulme Trust](#)

Leverhulme publishes a newsletter every three months, giving insight into recently funded research projects, and listing the recipients of grants awarded. [Newsletter | The Leverhulme Trust](#)

Annual Reviews, profiling the Trust’s activities, providing summarised financial information, and showcasing some research funded by the Trust, are available here: [Annual Review | The Leverhulme Trust](#)



Appointment of an Assistant Director

Context

The Leverhulme Trust awards some 600 grants each year, following c. 4,000 applications. The Trust aims to award grants of around £120 million each year through a number of schemes. Its main Research Project Grant Scheme makes awards for projects of up to £500,000, alongside a range of fellowships, and a small number of much larger grants.

The Trust recently announced its £100 million centenary commitment to UK research, which will provide new support over the next three years across the existing Leverhulme Research Centre, Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarship and Research Leadership Award schemes, and a new stream of EDI partnerships. The Centenary Awards are in addition to the Trust's regular grants programmes.

You can listen to a Leverhulme Trust podcast, in which the Director, Professor Anna Vignoles, discusses the Centenary Awards here: [Update on Leverhulme Centenary Awards | The Leverhulme Trust](#)

The Role

This Assistant Director role is a newly created position within the Trust. It is a

broad-ranging grants leadership position, covering three major activities:

1. Grant-making, with specific responsibilities across the Research Project Grant (RPG) and the Triennial Grant Schemes;
2. Representation of the Trust in meetings with partners and academic colleagues; and
3. Leading on key areas of policy development such as EDI, AI, research culture and/or conduct

Ensuring the timely and efficient processing of grant proposals is one of the major responsibilities of the role. The Trust receives in excess of 4,000 applications for funding each year. Each of the Trust's award schemes is 'responsive-mode', which leaves the choice of subject matter and approach to the applicant. All applications are externally peer reviewed, and all awards are made competitively. In many respects, therefore, the Trust's operations are analogous to those of a Research Council. The Assistant Director will be responsible for a significant part of the peer-review process, and the subsequent allocation of awards. Post-award, the Assistant Director has a key role in the ongoing engagement of grantees.

The Role

The responsibilities of the Assistant Director will include:

Operational leadership of the end-to-end application-to-award processes for several of the Trust's largest funding programmes.

Identifying and working with appropriate peer review experts, who provide opinions and recommendations to the Trust Board on applications to the RPG and other Trust schemes. This includes significant liaison with the Leverhulme Advisory Panel, who have a key role in the Research Project Grants (RPG), Major Research Fellowship and Visiting Professorship schemes.

The RPG is the Trust's largest grants portfolio, and a high-profile, long-running programme. Key responsibilities will include preparing briefing notes for each detailed RPG proposal, based on the peer review, to enable Board members to navigate and understand the peer review and make appropriate funding decisions. The RPG portfolio is c. 70% STEM focused.

Oversight of the Triennial schemes, with specific responsibility for the Research Leadership scheme.

Leading on specific areas of policy development, namely Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, research culture/misconduct, AI and GDPR.

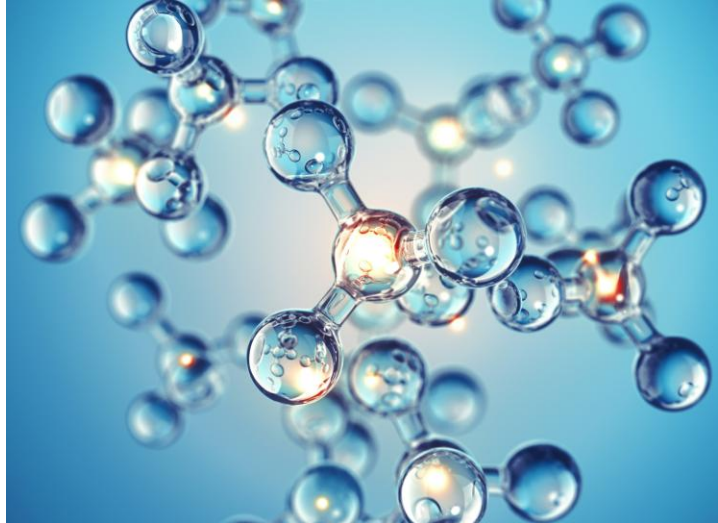
Making presentations of the Trust's work to academic colleagues, notably in talks given during visits to the institutions concerned. Typically, these visits are to universities, but there is also a representational role in liaising with the arts institutions funded by the Trust, and partners in Academies.

Supporting the Deputy Director and Director to prepare papers for the Board, and in all other aspects of grant management through the life cycle of the award.

Horizon scanning with colleagues, university partners, and other funding organisations to identify gaps in evidence or funding, and broader areas of improvement for the research funding landscape.

The responsibilities of the Assistant Director can be adjusted over time, depending on organisational need, at the discretion of the Director.





Key Relationships

The Assistant Director reports to Dr Tracey Henshaw, the Deputy Director, and will work closely with the Trust's Director, and senior leadership.

The Assistant Director will support the Deputy Director in the leadership of the grants team, and the RPG.

Line management of a small team of Grants Officers, and broad liaison with other grants managers across the Trust.

Liaison with the Director of Finance on aspects of post-award grants administration, and budget-handling more generally.

External stakeholders will include the peer review network, plus researchers, and institutional partnerships with universities, learned societies, and public sector research funders.

The Trust's Board, which meets four times per year.

Across all of these areas of responsibility, the Assistant Director will be required to work flexibly, in order to deal with activities ranging from the strategic to operational, and to ensure that the activities for which he or she is responsible complement those being undertaken by colleagues handling other Trust business. The Trust is a relatively small organisation, in which each person has a distinctive contribution to make to its success and culture.

The Trust changes its schemes from time-to-time, and the Assistant Director's responsibilities will evolve as the portfolio changes.



Person Specification

Essential Experience

- Substantial experience of research grants operations, end-to-end grant processes, gained in a complex funding environment.
- Peer review processes, including the identification of reviewers, analysis of reviews, and presentation to Board level.
- Knowledge of post-award grant management, supported by an understanding of university partners.
- Line management of grants officers.
- Combining grants management experience with experience in a university research office could be advantageous.

Qualifications

- Doctoral qualification in a relevant STEM field.

Personal Qualities & Profile

- A keen intellect, curiosity, and a breadth of perspective, capable of analysing grant applications across a broad array of fields.
- The flexibility, commitment, and collaboration skills to contribute broadly to the work of the Trust.
- Leadership skills that span high-level strategy work, people management, and hands-on management of grant processes.
- Highly developed communication skills, capable of engaging with leading researchers, the Trust's leadership, and Board. Public speaking skills will be advantageous, as there will be opportunities to develop relationships with external stakeholders, such as in the learned societies, universities, and across the public sector research funders.
- Comfort with ambiguity and autonomous decision-making: the Trust prides itself on its creativity and innovation.
- Pride in collective endeavour and results, appreciating and accommodating others.
- The ability to manage a complex, varied workload with accuracy and focus.
- A focus on continuous improvement across the portfolio, proactively identifying areas to refine, improve, or innovate.

Terms of Appointment

This is a full-time post, on a permanent basis.

Location: Leverhulme Trust office in the City of London

Working arrangement: The Trust currently offers hybrid working, but requires a minimum 40% attendance in the office.

Travel: The role would necessitate occasional UK travel, which may also require overnight stays, and occasional attendance at evening events.

Package:

Salary of £70,000 to £88,000

Employer pension contributions of 25%

Process

Informal conversations will be arranged with Leverhulme Trust in October for shortlisted candidates.

Interviews will take place on 21 October with the following interview panel

- Professor Anna Vignoles – Director of the Leverhulme Trust
- Dr Tracey Henshaw – Deputy Director of the Leverhulme Trust
- And an external member not yet appointed.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Leverhulme Trust on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **NALHB**

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Friday 5th September**

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.