



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



Appointment of LEGO Professorship of Play in Education, Development and Learning

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Executive summary



The Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge is consistently ranked in the top five in the world and now seeks to appoint a new Professor in the Faculty arising from an endowment to the University from the LEGO Foundation.

The generous grant from the LEGO foundation has funded the LEGO Professorship of Play in Education, Development, and Learning and the Board of Electors now invites applications for this Professorship from outstanding scholars in the field of educational or developmental psychology in early years development and would particularly welcome applications from those working in the field of play and playfulness.

In association with the Professorship, the LEGO Foundation has further funded the establishment of a Research Centre in Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDAL). The Centre will examine the importance of play and playfulness in education globally with an aim to produce research which supports excellence in education so that children are equipped with 21st Century skills like problem solving, team work and self-control.

Candidates for the LEGO Professorship in the Faculty of Education will have an outstanding research record of international stature and the vision, leadership, experience and enthusiasm to act as Director of the newly established Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDAL).

Faculty of Education



The Faculty of Education at University of Cambridge is one of the largest groups of educational researchers and teacher educators in the country. It is committed to the highest standards of research and teaching and is a significant contributor to the improvement of educational policy and practice in partnership with schools, colleges and other educational agencies both in the UK and internationally.

It is a member of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) at the University of Cambridge and is a significant contributor to the University's strategic research initiatives for example Making Public Policy Work. Faculty staff are engaged in cross disciplinary research in networks within the Faculty, the School and across the University.

Research

The Faculty has a diverse research profile, currently with annual grant expenditure of £4 million from a range of sponsors including charities, research councils and a wide range of government departments and national and international agencies active in Education. The University of Cambridge performed strongly in the UK's 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF2014). The Faculty of Education ranked third in its Unit of Assessment in terms of the proportion of its research submission rated at 4* ("world-leading"), with a GPA score of 3.3 and 54 per cent of research submitted being ranked at 4*.

Within the Faculty, academic groups exist in order to promote the Faculty's research and to identify academic staff and research students with shared interests and expertise. Each academic group is chaired by one of the Faculty's Professors or Readers, and activities (seminars, research presentations, internal and external research bids) are coordinated within each group. The academic groups continue to evolve, and there is flexibility of membership across groups. A flexible approach to forming research teams is encouraged, with colleagues working together as appropriate within the Faculty, within the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences and indeed at institutional level.

Faculty of Education

Currently, the academic groups within the Faculty are:

- Education, Equality and Development
- Educational Leadership, Policy, Evaluation and Change
- Pedagogy, Language and Culture in Education
- Psychology & Education
- Science, Technology & Mathematics Education.

Information about the groups is available at

www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/academicgroups

The Faculty is also home to several Research and Teaching Centres:

www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/

Teaching

The Faculty has an extensive teaching programme with full- and part-time courses for over 800 postgraduate and undergraduate students undertaking a range of qualifications: PhD; EdD; MPhil; MEd; Advanced Certificate and Diplomas; BA in Education Studies; ITE. It has very sizeable student numbers from around the world undertaking PhDs as well as full and part-time Masters degrees Further information about the Faculty is available at www.educ.cam.ac.uk

Staff and facilities

Currently, the Faculty has an academic staff of 12 professors, five readers, over 30 lecturers/senior lecturers and over 40 research and teaching staff. There are approximately 50 assistant staff in support of teaching, research, outreach projects, finance, library, IT, audio-visual, buildings, etc.



Centre for Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDAL)



PEDAL is located in the University of Cambridge's Faculty of Education, and was established initially for a three year period in October 2015 with funding from the LEGO Foundation. PEDAL's mission is to conduct academic research into the role of play in young children's education, development and learning to inform wider practice and policy. The appointee to the LEGO Professorship will initially be Director of the PEDAL research centre.

Research

For the first three years, PEDAL will focus on three fundamental questions:

- **What is play?** Creating a framework for the conceptualisation and measurement of play, helping us to explore its role in social/emotional development.
- **How does play develop?** Establishing a longitudinal study of play throughout childhood and beyond.
- **Is there a role for play in school?** Investigating playful approaches to children's early learning in science.

Through PEDAL's research, the role of play in children's education, development and learning will be more widely understood by those involved in their care and education.

New insights will inform effective evidence-based policy and practice – and will unlock a source of knowledge and inspiration that will improve children's lives around the world.

These priority research projects will be augmented by further investigations – the role of outdoor play in children's social development; to compare play in children with autism to typically developing children; to examine play between parents and babies; to look at the potential of neuroscience to inform understanding of play; and international work across cultures and classroom environments.

The Centre intends to explore numerous other research directions and is seeking further financial support to develop the work of the Centre in the long term.

Further information about the Centre can be found at:

www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/pedal/people/

The University of Cambridge



University of Cambridge is one of the oldest English-language universities in the world and ranked in the top five Universities globally and first within Europe. Its mission is “to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.”

University of Cambridge strives to fulfil this mission by adhering to its core values of freedom of thought and expression, freedom from discrimination, and a commitment to the confederation of the University with its 31 constituent and independent Colleges. Undergraduate and postgraduate education, provided commonly with the Colleges, is of the highest quality; students and staff live and work in collegiate communities that are microcosms of the wider University’s comprehensive range of academic subjects and research centres.

This joint responsibility for undergraduate education through small-group supervisions in the Colleges complemented by lectures, practicals, and project-based teaching provided in the faculties and departments, promotes a culture in which students are encouraged to become independent thinkers with enquiring minds. While core teaching is primarily direct contact between teacher and student, the use of digital technology also enhances the learning experience.

The University of Cambridge

The confederal structure of the University also encourages and provides the support for individual academics and groups to undertake research of their own choosing. In recent years, however, there has been a significant move to develop broadly-based and inclusive research collaborations through 12 Strategic Research Initiatives (SRIs) and seven Research Networks. The former can become Interdisciplinary Research Centres following successful review.

The University ranks in the top five for the quality of its research in international league tables. The value and impact of this research determines the University's mission, excellence, and high standing, whether measured by peer esteem, the transformation of lives, the compelling integration with teaching that inspires and stretches our students, or by the broader dissemination of scholarship and learning. In 2014, the University submitted the work of 2,200 individuals to the UK-wide Research Excellence Framework, 87 per cent of the work was rated as "world leading" or "internationally excellent", and 47 per cent was awarded the highest rating of 4*. Cambridge can claim 92 Nobel Prize affiliates, more than any other university, including 16 since 2000.

The University has 19,000 students, (of whom 22 per cent are from overseas) and employs more than 11,000 people in over 150 departments, faculties, and institutes. It also currently holds an institutional Silver Athena SWAN award for its advancement of gender equality.

The University is in contact with over 220,000 of its alumni, 25 per cent of whom live and work overseas. Our alumni are important members of the wider Cambridge family, supporting the University, its values, its success, and its fundraising.



LEGO Professorship



The Faculty of Education seeks to appoint to an established Professorship of Play in Education, Development and Learning. Applications are particularly welcome from those working in the field of educational or developmental psychology in early years development and whose work has a focus on play and playfulness. This is a new Professorship at the Faculty of Education arising from an endowment to the University from the LEGO Foundation.

Selection criteria

Candidates will be considered for the Professorship on the basis of the following selection criteria, which applicants are asked to address in their application.

- An outstanding research record of international stature in the field of educational or developmental psychology.
- A record of research that is not only published in world leading journals but also has impact upon public policy in the educational arena and among the educational practitioner community, particularly in the area of early childhood education.
- The vision, leadership, experience and enthusiasm to act as Director of the newly established Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDAL), including directing its academic planning and strategic development within the University and, where appropriate, within the UK and internationally.
- The ability to manage and interact with staff and students at all levels, and to contribute to the strategic development of the Faculty.
- An awareness of the importance of, and willingness to be involved in, the training of the next generation of researchers, including undergraduates, masters, research students, and postdoctoral research fellows, and the ability to attract and develop talented researchers into the field.

LEGO Professorship

- The ability to lecture, to teach and to offer supervision where appropriate, the ability to undertake original work and the general supervision of research and advanced work in his/her subject, and the ability to assist students in their studies by supervision or informal instruction.
- The ability to provide strategic academic leadership in the Faculty and in the field of Education generally and to make various contributions mainly to their Academic Group's teaching commitments in line with their interests and experience.
- Candidates will hold a PhD or equivalent postgraduate qualification.

Standard duties

Teaching and research

The Professor will be required to make an outstanding contribution to the research of the Faculty and to deliver lectures and give instruction in his/her field of education and in particular to perform the following duties:

- To provide a significant contribution to teaching as required.
- To undertake original work and the general supervision of research and advanced work in his/her subject and Faculty, and to assist students in their studies by supervision or informal instruction.

Examining

The Professor will be required to undertake such University examining as may be required by the Faculty Board.

Supervision

The Professor will be required to act as the supervisor of graduate students as and when requested.

Administration

Administrative duties are shared equitably among the teaching members of the Faculty. The Professors are expected to play significant roles from time to time on the Faculty Board and Faculty Committees dealing with such matters as academic and other appointments, admission of graduate students, research and teaching assessments, the libraries and computing arrangements. They are also encouraged to accept appointment to University Committees.



Appointment process and how to apply



The University has engaged Perrett Laver to support the Board of Electors in this appointment process and further information is available at from Perrett Laver by emailing **LEGO@perrettlaver.com**.

Applications should comprise a full academic CV and a statement of interest/covering letter outlining suitability for the position by 09.00 GMT on Friday 20th January 2017. The full field of candidates will be presented to the Board of Electors at the end of January and preferred candidates will be invited for further discussion with Perrett Laver.

A shortlist of preferred candidates will be determined by the Board of Electors in mid-February and thereafter there will be opportunities for informal interactions with the Faculty of Education. Finally shortlisted candidates will be invited to the University for a series of meetings including formal interviews with the Board of Electors in mid-March 2017.



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