

Junior Research Fellow – Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability

Location	Ashoka University, Rajiv Gandhi Education City, Sonapat, Haryana (On-site)
Department	Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability (3CS)
Reports To	Dr. Balaji Chattopadhyay, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, Trivedi School of Biosciences
Role Type	Contract, in-person · Six months (may be extended based on the needs of the Centre)
Experience	Post-graduate degree required; prior research experience preferred

ABOUT THE ROLE

This role sits within a 3CS-funded project studying how a small mammal community is responding to environmental change in the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot. Working closely with Dr. Balaji Chattopadhyay and the wider research team, you will lead field sampling, carry out molecular wet-lab work, and turn raw data into analysis-ready datasets. By month six, you should have completed at least one field season, established core lab protocols, and be contributing directly to project reports and analyses.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plan and carry out field data collection for small mammal sampling across sites in the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot, following standard sampling and animal-handling protocols.
- Conduct molecular biology wet-lab work, including DNA/RNA extraction, PCR, and library preparation for amplicon sequencing and metabarcoding/metagenomics.
- Manage day-to-day field logistics, including scheduling, equipment, permits, and coordination with local field teams and site partners.
- Analyse ecological and molecular data, and translate findings into clear summaries that feed into project reports and publications.
- Maintain accurate field and lab records, sample databases, and chain-of-custody documentation for all specimens collected.
- Prepare periodic progress reports and data summaries for the Principal Investigator and the funding centre (3CS).
- Collaborate with the broader team of researchers on cross-cutting analyses and contribute to manuscript preparation as needed.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Qualifications

- Post-graduate degree in Ecology, Wildlife Biology, Zoology, Molecular Biology, or a related field.
- Preference given to candidates who have cleared CSIR-UGC NET (incl. lectureship/Assistant Professorship), GATE, or other national-level examinations conducted by Central Government departments/agencies; other candidates are also encouraged to apply.

- Experience with molecular biology wet-lab techniques (DNA/RNA extraction, PCR, library preparation for ampliconseq and metabarcoding/metagenomics) and working in BSL2+ biosafety facilities is a plus.

Who You Are

- You have a broad understanding of ecology, evolutionary biology, molecular biology, and conservation, with a genuine interest in field-based research methodologies.
- You work well as part of a research team, communicating findings clearly in written reports and discussions with the Principal Investigator and collaborators.
- You're comfortable with large-scale wildlife sampling and don't mind extended field stints in remote, rugged Himalayan terrain.
- You are organised and detail-oriented, able to manage field logistics, sample records, and data analysis in parallel.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates should email their CV, detailing relevant research experience, along with contact details (email and phone number) of at least two referees, to balaji.chattopadhyay@ashoka.edu.in

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Please apply as soon as possible, preferably by **15th September 2026**; applications received after the deadline will not be considered. **Interviews will begin on a rolling basis from 21st September 2026** and will close once a suitable candidate is selected.

ABOUT ASHOKA UNIVERSITY

Ashoka University is India's premier interdisciplinary higher education and research-focused institution, offering world-class opportunities in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Established in 2014 by leaders, thinkers, academics, and philanthropists from diverse fields, it operates on a unique model of collective philanthropy, integrating exemplary governance standards with cutting-edge pedagogy and a faculty body of international acclaim.

Today, the University has a community of 3000+ students and operates seven Schools imparting industry-oriented education, professional skills, and values-based learning to prepare students for global careers. The University espouses principles of inclusivity and diversity, having more than 57% women, 4% international scholars, 100+ students with disabilities, and over 47% students on scholarships. Since its inception, Rs 723 crores have been awarded in scholarships with over 2,000 students receiving full-tuition fee waivers cumulatively and 5400+ students being supported through scholarships. In addition, nearly 5500 of Ashoka's alumni are pursuing careers of their choice in reputed organisations and leading universities across the world.

Ashoka University continues to reaffirm its commitment to building an inclusive institution of excellence in teaching and research, nurturing responsible leaders for India and the world. In 2025, Ashoka University was honoured with the 'University of the Year (Emerging)' award at the 20th FICCI Higher Education Summit 2025 - one of India's notable industry platforms celebrating excellence in academia and innovation. The University also secured the first position in the Indian Institutional Ranking Framework (IIRF) 2025 in two prestigious categories.

The Ashoka advantage will continue to equip its students with the skills to see the big picture - to critically analyse, question, interpret, craft compelling arguments, and find sustainable solutions. It is a collective effort towards nation-building. This is where tomorrow's leaders are born.

Check out the Ashoka Website to know more : <https://www.ashoka.edu.in/>