

Job Description and Selection Criteria

Job title	Leverhulme-Peierls Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Theoretical Physics (3 posts)
Division	Mathematical Physical and Life Sciences
Department	Physics
Location	The Rudolf Peierls Centre for Theoretical Physics, Clarendon Laboratory
Grade and salary	Grade 8: £45,585 - £54,395 p.a.
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term for 3 years (starting 01 Oct 2024)
Reporting to	Prof Shivaji Sondhi
Vacancy reference	167622
Additional information	Closing date – midday 13 Oct UK time

Research topic	Theoretical Physics
Principal Investigator / supervisor	Prof Shivaji Sondhi
Project team	Rudolf Peierls Centre for Theoretical Physics
Project web site	https://www.physics.ox.ac.uk/research/subdepartment/rudolf-peierlscentre-theoretical-physics
Funding partner	This post is funded by The Leverhulme Trust
Recent publications	



The role

Reporting to Prof. Shivaji Sondhi holder of the Wykeham, Tencent and Leverhulme Professorships, the post holder will be supported *en route* to becoming a recognised authority in their field of research in Theoretical Physics. The post holder will be expected to set an independent research agenda in one of more of the research areas of the Rudolf Peierls Centre for Theoretical Physics.

Responsibilities

- Carry out a frontier research programme in Theoretical Physics:
 - Develop research questions within at least one sub-field of theoretical physics, generate original ideas by building on existing concepts and results, conduct individual research, analyse detailed and complex qualitative and/or quantitative data from a variety of sources.
 - Adapt existing, and develop and implement new, research methodologies.
 - Prepare working theories and analyse data from a variety of sources, reviewing and refining theories as appropriate.
 - Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in other institutions and research groups as appropriate.
- Communicate results within the RPC and to an international audience:
 - Regularly write research articles for peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and reviews. Present papers at international conferences, and lead seminars to disseminate research findings.
 - Participate in and help to organize scientific conferences, workshops, journal clubs and seminars related to your research, and take part in related outreach activities.
- Participate in the scientific life of the RPC:
 - Collaborate with other members of the RPC (including students) as appropriate.
 - Act as a source of information and advice to other members of the RPC (including students) on methodologies and procedures.
 - Share responsibility for shaping the research group's plans and the writing of group-funding applications for new research projects where appropriate.
 - Contribute ideas for new research directions for the RPC and organize activities as appropriate to develop them.
- The post-holder will have the opportunity to teach. This may include lecturing, small group teaching, and research supervision of undergraduates and graduate students.
- Manage own academic research and administrative activities, involving small-scale project management and coordinating multiple aspects of work to meet deadlines.

Pre-employment screening

All offers of employment are made subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post.

If you are offered the post, you will be asked to provide proof of your right-to-work, your identity, and we will contact the referees you have nominated. You will also be asked to complete a health declaration (so that you can tell us about any health conditions or disabilities so that we can discuss appropriate adjustments with you), and a declaration of any unspent criminal convictions. We advise all applicants to read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at: www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/.

Selection Criteria

Essential

- The candidate must hold a PhD/DPhil (or close to obtaining) in Theoretical Physics, or a closely related discipline
- The candidate must have the ability to manage their own academic research and associated activities.
- The candidate should demonstrate the ability to work independently as well as to contribute to the research undertaken by other members of the Centre.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to the wider programme of the Rudolf Peierls Centre assisting with the organization of seminars, workshops, web pages public lectures etc.
- The candidate should have an excellent background in theoretical physics.
- The candidate should have an exceptional publication record for their career stage.
- The candidate should have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to function as part of a team.
- The candidate should have the ability to write for publication, present research proposals and results, and represent the research group at meetings.

Desirable

- Familiarity with the process of making grant applications.

Hazard-specific / Safety-critical duties

This job may include hazards or safety-critical activities. If you are offered the post, you will be asked to complete a health questionnaire which will be assessed by our Occupational Health Service, and the offer of employment will be subject a successful outcome of this assessment.

The hazards or safety-critical duties involved are as follows:

- Travel outside of Europe or North America on University Business

About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge.

Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities. Income from external research contracts in 2016/17 exceeded £564m and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. We are also recognised as leaders in support for social enterprise.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation

Department of Physics

Oxford Physics is one of the largest and most eminent departments in Europe – pursuing forefront research alongside training the next generation of leaders in Physics.

With an academic staff of almost one hundred our activities range from fundamental particles to the furthest reaches of the universe to manipulating matter on an atomic scale. Oxford physicists are probing new ways to harness solar energy, modelling the Earth's atmosphere to predict the future climate, exploring computation on the quantum scale and executing calculations that reveal the fundamental structure of space and time.

Theoretical Physics Sub-department

The post-holder will be based in the Theoretical Physics sub-department, which is one of the six sub-departments that together make up the Department of Physics; these are Astrophysics, Atomic and Laser Physics, Atmospheric, Oceanic and Planetary Physics, Condensed Matter Physics, Particle Physics and Theoretical Physics, with a seventh function (Central Physics) providing administrative and technical support to these sub-departments. Members of all sub-departments take part in research, teaching and matters such as examinations, discussion of syllabi, lectures and liaison with undergraduates and postgraduate students.

For more information please visit: <http://www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/>

Mathematical, Physical & Life Sciences Division

The Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division is one of the four academic divisions of the University of Oxford.

The MPLS Division's 10 departments and 3 interdisciplinary units span the full spectrum of the mathematical, computational, physical, engineering and life sciences, and undertake both fundamental research and cutting-edge applied work. Our research addresses major societal and technological challenges and is increasingly focused on key interdisciplinary issues. We collaborate closely with colleagues in Oxford across the medical sciences, social sciences and humanities, and with other universities, research organisations and industrial partners across the globe in pursuit of innovative research geared to address critical and fundamental scientific questions.

For more information please visit: <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/>

Athena Swan Charter

The Department of Physics holds a silver Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

How to apply

If you would like to apply, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the onscreen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously.

Candidates will be asked to complete an online application and upload a cover sheet (PDF copy on web page), a CV and a two-page statement of their research plans. Candidates must also arrange for **one nomination letter** and **two supporting reference letters** to be sent by email to RPCReferences@physics.ox.ac.uk by the closing date. **The nomination letter should make specific reference to the candidate's potential as an independent researcher and be accessible to a general theoretical physics audience.** The name of the nominator and the referees should be provided on the Application Form. Documents submitted should be in PDF format and use the naming convention: APPLICANT SURNAME, FORENAME".

Please note that applicants will be considered only for the advertised recruitment. If they wish to be considered for any other similar positions advertised by the University, they must submit a separate application for each post.

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

All applications must be received by **midday (UK time)** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Information for priority candidates

A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment because they have been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing departments.

If you are a priority candidate, please ensure that you attach your redeployment letter to your application (or email it to the contact address on the advert if the application form used for the vacancy does not allow attachments)

If you need help

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at:

<https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-faqs>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly

recruitment@physics.ox.ac.uk

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our online recruitment portal to confirm receipt of your application. **Please check your spam/junk mail** if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to the University as part of the job application process will be processed in accordance with the GDPR and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the University's Privacy Notice for Job Applicants at:

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy>. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy>.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82**, which with effect from 1 October 2023 will be 30

September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at:

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>.

For **existing** employees on these grades, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>.

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at other grades have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. No applicant or member of staff shall be discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for all University staff. The University Club offers social, sporting, and hospitality facilities. Staff can also use the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road at discounted rates, including a fitness centre, powerlifting room, and swimming pool. See www.club.ox.ac.uk and <https://www.sport.ox.ac.uk/>.

Information for staff new to Oxford

If you are relocating to Oxfordshire from overseas or elsewhere in the UK, the University's Welcome Service website includes practical information about settling in the area, including advice on relocation, accommodation, and local schools. See <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/>

There is also a visa loan scheme to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependants. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities. The service offers a free telephone advice line, and the ability to book emergency back-up care for children, adult dependents and elderly relatives. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care>

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including the Oxford Research Staff Society, BME staff network, LGBT+ staff network and a disabled staff network. You can find more information at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is an organisation run by volunteers that aims to assist the partners of new staff settle into Oxford, and provides them with an opportunity to meet people and make connections in the local area. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.