

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Net Zero Governance Systems), Oxford Martin Programme on Net Zero Policy and Regulation
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44,263 (with a discretionary range to £48,350) per annum, dependent on experience
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term for three years
Reporting to	Professor Thomas Hale and Dr Thom Wetzer
Vacancy reference	168411
Additional information	The closing date for applications is 12 noon (UK time) on Tuesday 31 October 2023

The role

The Blavatnik School of Government is looking for a talented postdoctoral researcher to join the Oxford Martin Programme on Net Zero Policy and Regulation. This is an exciting role at the centre of a critical new research endeavour.

The Oxford Martin Programme on Net Zero Policy and Regulation is a collaboration between the Blavatnik School of Government and the Oxford Sustainable Law Programme, supported by the Oxford Martin School that forms part of the University's Oxford Net Zero strategic cluster. Achieving net zero at speed and global scale requires radical innovation to address the complex "ecosystem" of multi-actor, multi-domain, multi-jurisdiction governance around it. The Programme is a world-leading centre of expertise on aligning the rules that structure the economy to achieve climate goals. Combining insights from law and political economy, and rooted in climate science, finance, ethics, and economics, the Hub tracks, analyses, and advances the frontier of best practice in regulating for net zero.

Based in the Blavatnik School of Government, and reporting to the Programme's Principle Investigators ([Professor Thomas Hale](#) and [Dr. Thom Wetzer](#)), the post-holder will conduct world-leading research, both independently and in collaboration with the Programme research team. In addition, the post-holder has responsibility for leading the programme's work on net zero governance systems.

We need to deepen our understanding of the dynamics that drive the complex governance system emerging around net zero, so that we can better understand how institutional and regulatory innovation could materialise or be held back. Critical questions include: How do rules and institutions interact, influence each other, contest for authority, and diffuse? Will best practices from one regulatory domain or one jurisdiction spread to others? How and when do voluntary standards convert into mandatory rules, and when do they not? Can we expect rules to update over time, or are we instead likely to see entrenchment and path dependence? The literature on complex governance systems in political science, law, geography, and beyond offers some insights into these questions, but they need to be interrogated in the context of net zero governance. Moreover, new conceptual frameworks are needed to inform how best to intervene in complex governance systems.

Once we understand the shortcomings of current net zero regulation and the interactions between different rules, we can articulate what it takes to develop a system fit to deliver the ambition of the Paris Agreement. The key challenge is to better understand what steering mechanisms, both domestic and international, exist for coordinating this complex governance ecosystem and the ways through which, and conditions under which, they work. How should national institutions build coherence across different regulatory domains, and how (if at all) does or should this exercise relate to international governance mechanisms, such as those established under the Paris Agreement? What role can international organisations play, and do transnational industry or civil society groups have a role to play in driving rigour and coherence?

In this work, the post holder provides guidance to junior members of the research group including research assistants, PhD students, and/or volunteers.

Responsibilities

- Manage own academic research and administrative activities. This involves small scale project management, to co-ordinate multiple aspects of work to meet deadlines. This will include working with the Programme research team to conceptualize and produce cutting-edge work to assess and improve the governance of net zero;
- Adapt existing and develop new research methodologies and materials;
- Prepare working theories and analyse qualitative and/or quantitative data from a variety of sources, reviewing and refining theories as appropriate, particularly around net zero governance systems;
- Contribute ideas for new research projects;
- Develop ideas for generating research income, and present detailed research proposals to senior researchers;
- Collaborate in the preparation of research publications, and book chapters.
- Present papers at conferences or public meetings;
- Act as a source of information and advice to other members of the group on methodologies or procedures;

- Represent the research group at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone;
- Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold, or be close to completion of, a relevant PhD/DPhil together with relevant experience in the field of law, political science, international relations, or related disciplines;
- Strong subject area knowledge of governance systems and a capacity for bold and innovative research;
- Effective project management and organisational skills;
- Ability to manage own academic research and associated activities;
- Previous experience of contributing to publications/presentations;
- Ability to contribute ideas for new research projects and research income generation;
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write for publication, present research proposals and results, and represent the research group at meetings.

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience of independently managing a discrete area of a research project;
- Experience of actively collaborating in the development of research articles for publication.

Pre-employment screening

Standard checks

If you are offered the post, the offer will be subject to standard pre-employment checks. You will be asked to provide: proof of your right-to-work in the UK; proof of your identity; and (if we haven't done so already) 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 for which you may need us to make appropriate adjustments.

Please read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures at: <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks>

Hazard-specific / Safety-critical duties

This job includes 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 and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, and in recent years we have spun out 15-20 new companies every year. 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.

The Blavatnik School of Government

Our vision is of a world better led, a world better served and a world better governed. We are a global school committed to improving the quality of government and public policymaking worldwide, through three routes: teaching current and future leaders; applied research; and engagement with government and practitioners.

The School was founded in 2010 and our founding dean is [Professor Ngaire Woods](#). We admitted the first 38 Master of Public Policy (MPP) students in 2012 and we currently accept around 120 MPP students and five doctoral students a year.

The Blavatnik School of Government holds a bronze Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. You can find more information on the [Blavatnik School of Government's website](#).

The Oxford Sustainable Law Programme

The Oxford Sustainable Law Programme (SLP) is a world-leading centre operating at the intersection of law and sustainability with the mission to advance a just and sustainable world by leveraging law for people and nature. Based at the University of Oxford, the SLP is a partnership between the Faculty of Law and the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment. We are impact-oriented thinkers who see the law as a tool to catalyse the sustainability transition.

We focus on research, education, and engagement and our work is characterised by its multidisciplinary and impact-focused approach. Currently, the programme focuses on climate change litigation, the relationship between scientific development and the law, the governance of climate finance, and the transition towards net zero emissions. In addition to producing cutting edge research in these areas, we also educate the leaders of today and tomorrow and engage actively with governments, the private sector, NGOs, and beyond to translate our insights into impact.

For more information please visit: <https://www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/programme/oxford-sustainable-law-programme>

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available on our Jobs website <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply>.

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

As part of your application you will be asked to provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will be asked to upload a CV, supporting statement and one sole-authored writing sample (max. 20 pages). The supporting statement must explain how you meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants).

If, for any reason, you have taken a career break or have had an atypical career and wish to disclose this in your application, the selection committee will take this into account. The selection committee will also be mindful of the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic may have had on candidates' careers as a result of additional caring responsibilities or other factors.

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

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 department(s).

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 via recruit@bsg.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 dependents. 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.