
Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Geofacilities Laboratories Manager
Division	MPLS
Department	Earth Sciences
Location	South Parks Road, Oxford
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44,263 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Permanent, upon successful completion of a one-year probationary period
Vacancy reference	170713
Additional Information	Interviews will take place in person at the Department.

Job description

Overview of the role

The Geofacilities Laboratories Manager will be responsible for the management of facilities and collections that support geological research and teaching in the Department. You will be a highly skilled technician with responsibility for the management, smooth running, maintenance, safety and security of the laboratory facilities. You will line-manage a Technician and, together, you will provide technical services, training, support and advice to staff and students from the Department.

The laboratories forming the Geofacilities constitute a Small Research Facility (SRF) within the Department and comprise:

- The optical light microscope laboratory with research-grade reflected and transmitted light microscopes and digital imaging.
- The rock cutting, and the thin section preparation and polishing laboratories.
- The rock crushing and mineral separation facilities.
- The palaeontological and sedimentological preparation laboratory; a (chemical) preparation laboratory with fume extraction and sample washing and drying facilities
- A rock store containing active research collections.

The Department's collection of optical light microscopes used for teaching comprise ~40 transmitted petrological microscopes, ~15 petrological microscopes with both transmitted and reflected light and ~10 binocular light microscopes. The Department has an extensive collection of geological research and teaching materials comprising rocks, fossils and maps and works closely with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History to ensure appropriate long-term curation of the most important collections.

With the support of the academic staff, you will seek to develop a wide circle of contacts in the sample preparation and microscopy worlds, both within academia and the commercial sector, enabling you to keep up-to-date with the latest techniques and equipment development.

You will seek to establish and develop strategic alliances with other departments, institutions and the commercial sector (including equipment manufacturers and suppliers), to further the aims of the Department with respect to the Geofacilities laboratories. You will be encouraged to develop your understanding of research in the Department and associated geologic materials, and work towards establishing collaborations with researchers. Whilst your primary output will always be towards research and teaching, you will also be expected to seek other external customers to provide income to the Geofacilities SRF.

You will be joining an experienced team of laboratory managers and technical support staff working closely with Departmental academics and expected to have a significant input into the direction and strategy of the SRF and to research projects.

Responsibilities/duties

Technical support

- Provide expert technical support in two or more of the following areas: (i) thin section making and polishing of rocks, minerals and biofragments; (ii) optical light microscopy and microscope maintenance; (iii) rock preparation (e.g. cutting, crushing) and mineral separation; (iv) archiving and curation of research and teaching materials
- Ensure that the Geofacilities team (the manager and the Technician) can between you provide expertise, guidance and training in all of the following areas (i) thin section making and polishing of rocks, minerals and biofragments; (ii) optical light microscopy and microscope maintenance; (iii) rock preparation (e.g. cutting, crushing) and mineral separation; (iv) archiving and curation of research and teaching materials

Laboratory management

- Working with relevant committees, senior Departmental staff, and other technical staff, set the direction and strategy for the Geofacilities Laboratories, including equipment replacement and working practices, and help establish strategic alliances with other University departments and external companies as appropriate.
- Manage the day-to-day running, safety and security of the Geofacilities

- Maintain sufficient levels of consumables and order stock as appropriate.
- Ensure that all laboratory equipment is properly maintained, service contracts renewed (where appropriate), and that safe operating procedures are prepared and followed. Inform any trained users of new, efficient procedures and processes.
- Repair (where possible) and replace equipment as needed. Perform quality checks and contribute to the general cleanliness and upkeep of the laboratory space.
- Ensure that all microscopes are well maintained and serviced annually, and that any repairs are undertaken in a reasonable timeframe.
- Manage the budget for the Geofacilities, producing and reconciling monthly reports, reporting usage to the finance team and monitoring the budget. Work with the finance team to set charging levels for the various facilities for internal and external users.
- Prioritise and plan the work in the laboratories, or arrange for the work to be outsourced to a third party as appropriate. Liaise with the finance team to ensure accurate records are kept, and payment is made in a timely manner for work undertaken by a third party
- Collaborate with principal authors by helping to write up results, which would occasionally require contributing to small sections (methodology, tables) of publications.
- Establish and maintain good working relationships with external providers to allow outsourcing of work should demand necessitate, monitor workload and make necessary arrangements as appropriate.
- Monitor developments in sample preparation protocols, establishing links with other Universities and organisations and initiate appropriate changes as required.

Curation and collections

- Collate, catalogue and archive departmental teaching and research materials for future use
- Curation, cataloguing and archiving of geological materials in co-operation with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History
- Work with the relevant academic staff to facilitate the production and curation of standard petrological thin sections for undergraduate mapping projects and for the undergraduate teaching collections
- Undertake other duties, as appropriate to the role and grade of the post.

Health and Safety

- Responsibility for ensuring that Health and Safety and COSHH regulations are observed by all users of the laboratories
- Maintain a central register of laboratory documentation including but not limited to training records, risk assessments and COSHH forms

- Perform regular Health and Safety inspections of the laboratory and ensure that recommended actions are carried out
- Keep up to date with and advise on matters relating to Good Laboratory Practice (GLP), Health and Safety, COSHH sheets and other regulations relevant to the post.

Training

- Provide training to Departmental users (Faculty, Researchers, Postgraduate Research Students, 4th year Undergraduate project students) in the proper use of equipment and most appropriate laboratory techniques and support, with due regard to University and Departmental Health and Safety policy and Risk Assessments
- Plan, oversee and supervise the work of any visitors to the laboratories, with due regard to University and Departmental Health and Safety policy and Risk Assessments
- Maintain and update your own knowledge and techniques, attending appropriate training courses and conferences as required, and networking with external organisations to compare techniques

External and Commercial Work

- Promote and publicise the services of the Geofacilities laboratories within the Department, other University departments and external clients to generate revenue for the Department, ideally establishing long term working relationships.
- Undertake and coordinate external and commercial work in the Geofacilities laboratories, including specialist non-standard requests from external clients, which may involve considerable collaboration, where appropriate.
- Ensure that external clients are charged appropriate rates, which for commercial clients should as a baseline be the full economic cost, and that the finance team is kept fully up to date with charging.
- It is expected that the post holder will carry out technical tasks as appropriate, such as the making of thin sections, or other rock preparation (crushing, cutting and grinding), where demand exceeds available time of other staff or where particular expertise is required.

Line Management

- Line management of a Technician (*position to be advertised*).
- Responsible for undertaking performance reviews and the professional development of the Technician

Other Duties

- Organise and minute the termly SRF Manager's meetings and liaise directly with the Chair of that committee with regard to actions
- Use the University's Oracle Financials to raise requisitions
- Identify strategies to improve service levels across the Geofacilities section
- Undertake other duties, as appropriate to the role and grade of the post.

This job description should be regarded only as a guide to the duties required and is not intended to be definitive. It may be reviewed in the light of a change in circumstances, following consultation with the post holder.

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 (OHS), and the offer of employment will be subject a successful outcome of this assessment.

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

- Lone Working
- Driving on University business
- Regular manual handling
- Work with allergens, e.g. mineral and rock dust etc.
- Work with any substance which has any of the following pictograms on their MSDS:



Selection criteria

Essential

- Substantial practical experience in at least **two** of the following areas: -
 - i) Rock preparation and mineral separation
 - ii) Thin section making and polishing
 - iii) Optical microscopy and microscope maintenance
 - iv) Archiving and curation of research and teaching materials
- Hold a PhD or equivalent experience / Higher National Diploma/Certificate in Laboratory Management or Practice, or equivalent experience.
- Significant experience of delivering technical support in the Earth Sciences or a similar discipline (e.g. engineering/materials, archaeology, geography, biology, physics).
- Evidence of an ability to liaise with both students and senior members of the Department in a technical capacity, delivering excellent service supporting a community of users with varying levels of expertise and knowledge.

- Evidence of an ability to work independently to plan, set and achieve goals.
- Experience of budget management.
- A positive open mind with a pro-active approach to managing the laboratories, open to change and leading by example, and dealing effectively with change.
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills with the ability to build and maintain relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Staff management experience and the ability to motivate others.
- Evidence of an ability to troubleshoot problems with experiments and arrive at an appropriate solution.
- Strong attention to detail, with the ability to organise samples and record results in a clear and organised fashion.
- Evidence of an ability to organise your own workload effectively, and to organise and delegate to others, where appropriate.
- Excellent Health and Safety knowledge of regulations in a laboratory environment.
- Strong IT skills including a knowledge of MS Office including Word, Excel (i.e. database) and PowerPoint programs.
- Commitment to engaging with, and promoting awareness of, equality, diversity and inclusion and embedding these into your work.

Desirable

- Experience of teaching or training others in technical skills.
- A knowledge of the major principals of the following areas: -
 - v) Rock preparation and mineral separation
 - vi) Thin section making and polishing
 - vii) Optical microscopy and microscope maintenance
 - viii) Archiving and curation of research and teaching materials

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 Earth Sciences

The Department of Earth Science conducts research across a broad range of disciplines. This work can loosely be divided into the following themes:

- Geophysics and geodynamics
- Planetary evolution and materials
- Oceanography, climate and palaeoenvironment
- Palaeobiology and evolution
- Geodesy, tectonics, volcanology and related hazards
- Earth resources

The department has a national and international reputation for research excellence. It ranked highly in the UK for Earth and Environmental Sciences during the 2021 REF exercise (based both on overall grade, or on the fraction of research judged to be 4*).

The department presently consists of 28 academics (i.e. Associate Professors and Professors) 47 research staff, and 32 support staff.

Thirty-five undergraduate students are admitted each year to read for a BA (3 years) or M. Earth Sci. (4 years) in Earth Sciences. The course provides a broad overview of the earth sciences and requires A levels (or equivalent) in maths and either physics or chemistry to enter. It attracts students of a very high calibre with A level grades of AAA* or higher. The final year of the M. Earth Sci. course includes a substantial research project during which students are embedded in department research groups.

Between 15 and 20 graduate students join the department every year to study for a D. Phil. They can be admitted directly to the department, or through the cross-University NERC Doctoral Training Programme in Environmental Research (<http://www.environmental-research.ox.ac.uk/>).

The department is housed in specialist new Earth Sciences building completed in late 2010. The building features a wing with 4 floors of dedicated services laboratories. These contain a wide range of analytical equipment enabling cutting-edge research in a broad range of earth science disciplines. Of these laboratories, 6 are designated as Small Research Facilities (SRFs):

- Cleansuite SRF
- Electron Microanalysis SRF
- Geofacilities SRF
- Multi-collector Mass Spectrometers SRF
- Stable Isotope SRF
- Trace Metal Analysis SRF
- Workshop SRF

Each of these SRFs are run by at least one full time permanent member of staff

For more information about the department please visit: www.earth.ox.ac.uk

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

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

[www.ox.ac.uk/about the university/jobs/research/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/research/)

<http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk>

MPLS Division

The Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division is one of the four academic divisions of the University. Oxford is widely recognised as one of the world's leading science universities and the MPLS Division is home to our non-medical sciences, with 10 academic departments that 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 tackles major societal and technological challenges – whether developing new energy solutions or improved cancer treatments, understanding climate change processes, or helping to preserve biodiversity, 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.

REF 2021 comprised 34 Units of Assessment in total and the University submitted to 29 of them, 7 of these within Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division (MPLS). The REF 2021 results show that Oxford's submission had the highest volume of world leading research*.

MPLS is proud to be the home of some of the most creative and innovative scientific thinkers and leaders working in academe. Our senior researchers have been awarded some of the most significant scientific honours and we have a strong tradition of attracting and nurturing the very best early career researchers who regularly secure prestigious fellowships and faculty positions. MPLS continues in its work to support diversity in its staffing, seeing that it will bring benefits to all, and we are pleased to note that all academic departments in the Division hold Athena Swan Awards.

We have around 7,000 full and part-time students (including approximately 3,500 graduate students) and play a major role in training the next generation of leading scientists. Oxford's

international reputation for excellence in teaching is reflected in its position at the top of the major league tables and subject assessments. MPLS academics educate students of high academic merit and potential from all over the world. Through a mixture of lectures, practical work and the distinctive college tutorial system, students develop their ability to solve diverse mathematical, scientific and engineering problems.

MPLS is dedicated to bringing the wonder and potential of science to the attention of audiences far beyond the world of academia. We have a strong commitment to supporting public engagement in science through initiatives including the Oxford Sparks portal (www.oxfordsparks.ox.ac.uk) and a large variety of outreach activities; these are crucial activities given so many societal and technological issues demand an understanding of the science that underpins them. We also bring the potential of our scientific efforts forward for practical and beneficial application to the real world and our desire, aided by the work of Oxford University Innovation and Oxford Sciences Innovation, is to link our best scientific minds with industry and public policy makers.

For more information about the MPLS division, please visit: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk

How to apply

Before submitting an application, you may find it helpful to read the 'Tips on applying for a job at the University of Oxford' document, at www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/supportandtechnical/.

If you would like to apply, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously. Please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will also be asked to upload a CV and a supporting statement. 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).

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

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename. **Please do not attach any manuscripts, papers, transcripts, mark sheets or certificates as these will not be considered as part of your application.**

All applications must be received by **midday** 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).

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk. Further help and support is available from [www.ox.ac.uk/about the university/jobs/support/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/support/). 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 e-recruitment system to confirm receipt of your application. **Please check your spam/junk mail** if you do not receive this email.

Important information for candidates

Pre-employment screening

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. 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/.

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: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/privacynotices/job/. The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at:
www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/universitypolicyondataprotection/.

The University's policy on retirement

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in posts at **Grades 1-10** 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. The University may not request staff at these grades to take retirement at a particular age, nor suggest that they consider doing so. It is for individual members of staff to decide when they wish to retire.

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/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 www.sport.ox.ac.uk/oxford-university-sports-facilities.

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 www.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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/permits/reimburse&loanscheme/.

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 My Family Care, 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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/family/mfc/.

Childcare

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/.

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/staff.

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/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.