

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Research Assistant in Economics and Public Policy
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £32,332- £39,347 per annum, dependent on experience
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term for 15 months
Reporting to	Clare Leaver (Professor of Economics and Public Policy) İrem Güçeri (Associate Professor of Economics and Public Policy)
Vacancy ID	170924
Additional information	The closing date for applications is 16:00 (UK time) on Thursday 22 February 2024 The anticipated start date of this post is 1 April 2024

The role

The Blavatnik School of Government is seeking a Research Assistant to work with Dr İrem Güçeri and Professor Clare Leaver on a portfolio of projects in Economics and Public Policy. In the first instance, the Research Assistant will support research on:

- Tax policy using large administrative datasets, in particular from the UK's HM Revenue and Customs.
- Innovation policy using large company-level patent portfolio information.
- Education policy using randomised controlled trials in developing countries, including work on a follow up project to this [paper](#).

The post will give the Research Assistant a unique opportunity to work with multiple teams and gain experience in: (i) working with large administrative datasets on policy issues surrounding tax and investment policy; (ii) running randomized controlled trials (RCTs); (iii) working in both high- and low-income country contexts; (iv) designing research projects and writing academic papers; (v) guiding public policy through research.



Candidates wishing to pursue advanced study in fields related to public policy or economics are likely to find this post particularly useful in terms of acquiring further methods training and developing potential thesis topics. The contract is for 15 months or would end in July 2025, whichever date is the soonest. This time scale has been chosen to ensure that the post is suitable for candidates who hope to make an application to graduate school for the academic year 2025/26. Dr Güçeri and Professor Leaver are committed to supporting the successful candidate in making such an application, should this be of interest.

You would be based at the Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford, but some of the work may be done remotely. You must have the right to work in the UK. Where necessary, the Blavatnik School will provide guidance and financial support relating to a visa application.

For work in the HMRC Datalab, travel to the HMRC Datalab in Stratford, London will be required. For work relating to education RCTs, travel to Washington DC will be required.

Responsibilities

- Manage own research and administrative activities, within guidelines provided by supervisors;
- Gather, analyse, and present quantitative data from a variety of sources;
- Contribute to research publications;
- Manage data to ensure adherence to ethical standards and enable replication of results;
- Organise all project documentation (including data) in an efficient and transparent manner;
- Contribute to discussions and share research findings with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups.
- Represent the research work at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a Bachelor's degree in economics, public policy, or development studies with a quantitative focus;
- Demonstrable ability to carry out independent quantitative research, including excellent practical proficiency in the use of R or Stata, and a willingness to work in either;
- Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in economics to work within established research programmes;
- A systematic, thorough and well-organised approach to work, with high levels of accuracy and attention to detail and the ability to take responsibility for delivery of research tasks to specific deadlines;
- A committed and collaborative team-player, with the ability to work constructively and effectively with research partners;
- Flexibility and a willingness to spend a period of time working from the US, and from London; Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to write text that can be published;
- Demonstrated interest in public policy.

Desirable selection criteria

- Hold, or be close to completion of, a Master's degree in economics, public policy, or development studies with a quantitative focus.

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>

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](#).

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 and a supporting statement (max. two 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). The supporting statement should also outline your research interests, and any dissertation/extended essay that you have produced to date. Please also explain any constraints around availability (e.g., term dates, thesis deadlines, notice periods, future commitments, etc.) As part of the selection process, a select pool of applicants will then be required to complete a data test.

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.