BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Senior Policy Manager for the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE)
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 8: £45,585 - £54,395 per annum (depending on relevant experience)
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed term for two years, with possible extension depending on funding
Reporting to	Executive Director (substantive), Head of Evidence Translation (interim)
Vacancy reference	171228
Additional information	The closing date for applications is 12 noon (UK time) on Monday 25 March 2024

The role

The Blavatnik School of Government is looking for a strategic, collaborative and implementation-focused Senior Policy Manager to support, facilitate, and drive delivery as part of the Senior Leadership Team of the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE) – a new £30m, six-year global research project and policy initiative.

The WWHGE is an international partnership aiming to dramatically increase learning outcomes for children in developing countries by generating new evidence and working with policymakers and NGOs to deliver the best education at scale. It is a collaboration of excellent and highly committed academics working on education-related research; developing country governments who are keen to champion improvements domestically; grassroots organisations who both deliver education and advocate for change; and the international education community, from UN agencies to the Gates Foundation. The Hub will work closely with education and finance ministries around the

world, as well as the main funder, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. The Hub has three main pillars:

1. Evidence Synthesis. Making available to governments the best existing evidence on what works on education (pillar1)
2. Evidence Ecosystems. Supporting governments to generate and use evidence for bold, large-scale reform (pillar 2)
3. Implementation Science. Catalyse a new focus on implementation science within education research, taking existing evidence on what policies work and trying to understand how governments can implement those policies at the scale necessary for transformative outcomes (pillar 3)

We are now looking for a highly experienced Senior Policy Manager to build out our policy engagement and government support function. Working closely with the WWHGE Senior Leadership Team, the postholder will take overall responsibility for managing the implementation of the development of evidence ecosystems and engagement work for and in the 11 countries, the global education community, and/or on policy areas.

This will include working across all the ways we envisage supporting Low- and Middle-Income country policy makers: education labs (EdLabs); executive programmes; case studies; fellows programmes; bespoke policy briefings' the creation of policy products, and others.

In addition, as time and funding allow, in future it is possible that the postholder would work across the wider Blavatnik School of Government, collaborating with its network of faculty and Fellows of Practice to maximise lessons from the WWHGE to strengthen the School's wider policy engagement practice.

This senior role comes on board as the WWHGE is in its implementation phase, meaning that the postholder will have significant opportunity to shape, grow and deliver this highly innovative model of working hand-in-glove with governments as they use the lessons delivered by research.

The postholder will be expected to nurture a powerful network of policymakers and practitioners from across the 11 WWHGE countries and others and the international education community. They will become fluent in all aspects of the WWHGE's research, able to clearly explain the key questions and debates, and the emerging findings, in a variety of contexts: in writing, in presentation, and in 1:1 discussions.

They will also act as an ambassador for the WWHGE's work; be passionate about using the highest-quality evidence to inform and shape policy products; be highly experienced in understanding policy makers' daily challenges and incentives; will have a history of working on, with or in close proximity to national or sub-national policymaking processes; and have excellent written and verbal communication skills with strong abilities to 'read the room'.

Responsibilities

1) Partnership engagement and communications
- Co-lead WWHGE policy engagement with education ministries, education implementers, the global and local education communities, and others to support in-country evidence ecosystems.
- Lead engagement and work with six in-country EdLabs.

- Build and support networks of senior policy makers in the education sector.
- Oversee the communication unit and the delivery of the communication strategy. This includes promote the WWHGE's thinking, evidence and stories to a broad audience, including policymakers worldwide; working strategically with partners to ensure those opportunities are taken advantage of such that the WWHGE is quickly known as the go-to place for excellence on learning outcomes.
- Support the WWHGE communications team on dissemination and engagement issues.
- Consult with and support WWHGE strategic and consortium partners on policy engagement issues.
- Represent the WWHGE at high-level evidence to policy events, such as the BE2 gatherings, FCDO and donor flagship events, Education World Forum, and more.
- Travel globally, including to WWHGE countries, in coordination with local partners.

2) Strategy and policy development
- Build the international policy- and practice-engagement strategy ensuring it is in service of overall WWHGE goals.
- Co-develop and co-implement the flagship activities of the WWHGE's pillar 2 including the Fellow of Practice programme, executive education programmes, community of practice, EdLabs, and case studies.
- Develop, write and contribute to excellent policy pieces – including policy memos – on scaling foundational learning, based on the highest-quality evidence.

3) Collaboration and integration
- Lead pillar 2, collaborating closely with the Executive Director.
- Connect with pillar 1 (synthesis and evidence translation) and pillar 3 (primary research on implementation science) to ensure that pillar 2 is fully integrated into the WWHGE to maximal effect. A central goal of pillar 2 is to build on the implementation science efforts of the hub, connecting the dots between evidence, policy, and practice.
- Catalyse policy outreach and engagement across the Blavatnik School of Government more broadly, working on the 'implementation' angle of policy engagement with the School's Chief Operating Officer, academic faculty, and Fellows of Practice.
- Make a substantial, collegial contribution to the life of the WWHGE and of the School.

4) Leadership and line management
- Have direct line-management responsibility for at least one Research and Policy Officer, including line-management responsibilities for their work and outputs.
- Provide excellent management and personal development opportunities to junior members of the team.
- As a senior member of the WWHGE hub and wider partnership, help create a high performing, collaborative and happy team, in line with the mission and values of the Hub and the School.

5) Other

- Any other engagement initiatives and duties that are commensurate with the nature of this post.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a Master's degree in a relevant subject. For instance public policy, international development, economics, education, or a related discipline.
- Experience of working at a senior level in the public policy, international development or not-for-profit sectors in an institution with global reach.
- Experience in, and strong understanding of, working across the research-practice divide and of policy engagement grounded in robust evidence, with demonstrable evidence of leading successful policy-practice engagement strategies for new projects.
- First-class stakeholder management skills, with extensive experience of working at all levels (senior and mid-range) and in a range of different country contexts.
- Ability to initiate, develop and sustain professional relationships through first-rate interpersonal skills and an authoritative command of the relevant subject matter, and to nurture these relationships to unlock mutual benefits.
- Strong political nous: able to 'read the room' and act and engage accordingly;
- An enthusiastic networker, and able to act as an effective ambassador for the WWHGE and the Blavatnik School.
- Excellent project management skills with a proven ability to deliver an ambitious programme of activity on time and on budget, to an exceptional standard.
- Skilled in turning conceptual discussions or notes into concrete project activities, and ultimately into results.
- Excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing, with the ability to synthesise complex issues for a non-expert audience in a compelling way.
- Excellent team working skills with a flexible can-do approach, self-motivation, resilience and a willingness to adapt to the changing needs and priorities of the WWHGE team and across the Blavatnik School with energy and initiative.
- Ability to motivate and mentor others to unlock excellent performance whilst maintaining overall staff wellbeing.
- Motivated by the mission of the WWHGE and the Blavatnik School, with a strong commitment to public policy.

Desirable selection criteria

- Familiarity with the current state of global education and foundational learning issues, research, and key players.
- Familiarity with and passion for connecting global education research with policy impact.

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. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit where you worked. 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

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 140 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. 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)

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** of 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 including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme which is available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It 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 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 have excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as places at many other private nurseries. See https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/

We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities for dependants of all types. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care

Supporting disability and health-related issues (inc menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support. For information about how we support those going through menopause see https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBT+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is 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.

Research staff

The Researcher Hub supports all researchers on fixed-term contracts. They aim to help you settle in comfortably, make connections, grow as a person, extend your research expertise

and approach your next career step with confidence. Find out more https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researcher-hub

Oxford's Research Staff Society is a collective voice for our researchers. They also organise social and professional networking activities for researchers. Find out more https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society