

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Programme Director 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 9: £52,815 - £61,198 per annum (depending on relevant experience)
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term to 30 June 2027
Reporting to	Chief Operating Officer (interim) / Executive Director (substantive) Technical dotted line to Academic Director
Vacancy reference	171281
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 Programme Director 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 (pillar 1)
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)

The Programme Director is a lynchpin role within the Hub – a member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for programme management, drawing together our 3 pillars into an integrated strategic delivery plan to achieve our mission.

The post-holder will ensure a cutting-edge approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning across the programme; grip financial management and operational delivery; facilitate the pillar and country leads in delivery of their programmes and plans; identify issues and risks and constructively and rapidly problem solve to overcome or mitigate them; and develop and maintain excellent stakeholder relationships with funders and partners.

The Programme Director will lead the Programme Management team of eight staff and multiple consultants, with direct line management responsibility for four to five staff members. As part of the Hub's Senior Leadership Team, they will also share responsibility for overseeing the culture and impact of the Hub team (which will grow to c30 people), and wider partnership, helping to get the best individually and collectively from a variety of partners with diverse personal and professional backgrounds.

As a senior professional in the Blavatnik School of Government, the post-holder will also be expected to operate in line with the overall mission and values of the School and take every opportunity for collaboration with School faculty, professional services and other research centres. Where time and funding allow, the Programme Director may also be able to take on School-wide projects with a strong link to the Hub and/or contribute to the activities of the School by sharing their professional expertise with our students, faculty and professional services staff (e.g. through mentoring or teaching).

The successful candidate will be educated to graduate level with a mission focused, flexible, can-do approach to work, self-motivation, resilience and will proactively seek to drive improvement and adaptation within the team.

Responsibilities:

1) Leadership and Management:

- As a member of the Hub Senior Leadership Team, help develop and deliver overall mission, strategy, culture and delivery for the whole team of c30 people and the wider partnership
- As a senior member of the School's professional services staff, work collaboratively to maximise links between the work of the Hub and the wider School.

- Lead, guide and inspire the project management team, including direct line management of the Project Manager, Fund Manager, Finance Manager, and Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MEL) Manager.
- Ensure that good human resource practices are in place for the whole Hub including staff planning, recruitment, on-boarding, appraisal, and development, working with the School's Human Resources team.

2) Strategic programme management

- Ensure there is an integrated strategic programme in place for the Hub, spanning the 3 pillars, that is regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect ongoing priorities and progress.
- Design and develop strategic milestones, plans, and systems in partnership with hub leadership & pillar leads to facilitate world-class research and policy impact.
- Design and develop frameworks and tools to enable a 40-partner consortium of leading academics, policymakers, and practitioners in global education.
- Maintain the right balance between stability of a deliverable overall programme and being agile in responding to new opportunities.
- Identify crosscutting issues and work with the rest of the Hub senior management to leverage opportunities and mitigate risks.
- Ensure the strategic programme plan is translated into ambitious but realistic project plans.
- Clearly communicate across the team and to partners the strategic programme plan and, as needed, individual project plans to create a shared understanding and support integration and collaboration.

3) Gripping and supporting financial management and delivery

- Ensure that programme and project activities and milestones enable research excellence and policy impact, and ensure plans are delivered on time, on budget and meet agreed quality criteria.
- Oversee and manage the WWHGE's budget, all third-party contracts, procurement, logistics, risk management.
- Lead reporting on project results, activities, recommendations, and lessons learned through putting in place a cutting-edge monitoring, evaluation and learning function.
- Develop the project management function, continuously improving systems and processes, adapting the structure based on project needs.
- Facilitate the pillar and country leads in delivery of their programmes and plans; identify issues and risks and constructively and rapidly problem solve to overcome issues or mitigate the risks.
- Lead discussions with FCDO (and other donors, such as Gates) on matters relating to contract amendments, changes in contract management practices, and costed annual workplans.

4) Partnership Engagement

- Lead discussions and presentations with internal audiences (team members and collaborators) and with external funders on topics relating to overall the strategic programme management, project management and operations of the Hub.
- Ensure approaches, tools and processes are in place to support excellent and integrated partner and stakeholder engagement across the 3 pillars. Ensure the programme management team are supporting senior Hub leads to maximise partners and stakeholder engagement.

- As needed, travel globally to support the activities of the WWHGE.

5) Other

- Any other duties which are commensurate with the nature of this post

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a graduate degree in a relevant subject. For instance, public policy, international development, economics, education, or a related discipline.
- Experience of successfully delivering complex, high-profile international development or public policy projects
- Experience of financial management, procurement, logistics, contracting and compliance, and human resources.
- Well-developed organisational skills and the ability to combine attention to detail with a view of strategic priorities.
- Ability to facilitate conceptual discussions with the Executive Director, Academic Director, and Pillar Leads, and to turn those ideas into concrete programme plans, project activities and outcomes.
- First-class stakeholder engagement skills, with extensive experience of working at all levels (senior and mid-range) and with people from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives, and the ability to initiate, develop and sustain trusting relationships with key partners including
- Excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing, with the ability to convey technical material persuasively with a high degree of accuracy.
- Collaborative leader 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 School with energy and initiative.
- Ability to lead and manage high performing and happy teams, both directly and as part of a collaborative matrix and partnership structure
- Motivated by the mission of the WWHGE and the School, with a strong commitment to public policy.

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience working on FCDO-funded, complex projects and understanding of FCDO compliance requirements.
- Experience working with a broad array of strategic partners, including other donors, such as the Gates Foundation, as well leading academics, policymakers, and civil society leaders
- Familiarity with and passion for global education, including world-class research and policy, and implementation science.

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>