

Job Description



Summary

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Officer
Division	Social Sciences Division
Department	Department of Social Policy and Intervention
Location	Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2ER
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44,263 p.a.
Hours	Full time (37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed Term until 30 September 2024
Reporting to	Professor Lucie Cluver
Vacancy reference	171344

The role

This new role at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention will report to Prof Lucie Cluver and working closely with Professor Andrew Thompson as part of a wider team of academics that is co-led with the University of Cape Town, provide research support to two new related initiatives: **the Nuffield Humanitarian Forum, and the Global Commission of Modern Slavery**. Professor Thompson is a Co-Director of the Forum, and a member of the Global Commission. The person appointed to this role will work with Professor Thompson to support the research components of both new initiatives. The successful candidate will work partly with major international organisations and other international civil society groups, but also in the historical archives relating to these organisations.

The candidate will collaborate with academic, policy and NGO partners, within and beyond the UN system. The goals are to (i.) further develop the work of the Nuffield project, "The Long Humanitarian Century: the past, present and future of international NGOs" to address the above issues, and to involve a number of other key stakeholders in government, the media and business; and (ii.) to explore how far and how effectively major international NGOs, operating in crisis contexts, are addressing the question of human trafficking and modern slavery.

You will work directly with Professor Thompson and indirectly with the Co-Director of the Nuffield Humanitarian Forum (Professor Sir Mike Aaronson) and with former Prime Minister, Theresa May, and her office (who is the Chair of the Global Commission). It is expected that you will be part of the planning team for the Forum (which comprises of Professors Thompson and Aaronson, as well as a research administrator at Nuffield College), and that you will engage with other members of the Global Commission (including the Commission's Director and Deputy-Director, and the Office of Theresa May, as requested).



This is an excellent opportunity to work on and contribute to two major new public policy initiatives, and to bolster their respective research and evidence basis, as well as to conduct research on and to engage with some major international organisations, particularly but not exclusively in the humanitarian sphere. The post holder will be an experienced historical researcher, with expertise in the nineteenth and / or twentieth centuries, and preferably with some experience of working on the history of international organisations and / or some of the research topics set out above. The candidate does not need specific experience in either humanitarian history or public policy engagement, although either would be an advantage. The post holder may be asked to contribute to: academic papers and a new book manuscript that Professor Thompson is working on; short policy briefings and papers; and new grant proposals.

Key research topics for the Forum will include: how donor governments can work together with UN agencies and international NGOs to increase genuine empowerment and ownership of development programmes by local actors and be held to account for that while maintaining accountability to their taxpayers; what narrative can best link the pursuit of strategic interests and global poverty eradication in order to build greater domestic support for development; how new forms of partnership can be developed between traditional humanitarian actors and e.g. the private sector and new, internet-enabled, civil society movements, to enhance the reach and effectiveness of ODA; how individual organisations and the various components of the wider relief and development sector can develop a better sense of their comparative advantage, so that each can concentrate on what it does best and overall impact can be enhanced; what constitutes 'legitimacy' in the context of relief and development work in states with 'authoritarian'/one party state governments, and with whom should outside interveners partner in such situations; and how momentum for global development can be maintained against a backdrop of challenges to Western universalism and growing geopolitical contestation, and whether there is scope for genuine collaboration with other powers, including, especially, China and the so-called 'Global Middle Ground'.

The role will be based in Oxford, although there may be possibility for travel to some archives, for example, those in Geneva. Some level of remote working may be possible, so please do enquire. We welcome applications from individuals with caring responsibilities and therefore in need of flexible working arrangements.

Responsibilities

- Undertaking advanced historical research into the history and present-day practice of major international organisations broadly, and international aid agencies specifically.
- Designing and producing research and policy materials such as questionnaires and policy briefs; and preparing materials for policy and academic meetings.
- Supporting Professor Thompson with the preparation for the next meeting of the Humanitarian Forum.
- Working with Professor Thompson to input into the international civil society working group of the global Commission.
- Contributing to the development and drafting of funding proposals to secure further funding for research.
- Other appropriate duties that may arise under the direction of Professor Thompson

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold, or be close to completion of, a Doctorate (PhD or DPhil) in a relevant humanities or social science discipline, likely to be either History or if not historically-based.
- Experience in conducting independent historical research.
- Strong communication skills and experience building collaborative relationships.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills and ability to work to tight deadlines.
- Excellent intercultural communication, presentation and writing skills in English.

Desirable selection criteria

- Co-authored publications or papers accepted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals.
- Strong historical research skills in the archives of major international organisations.

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 spinouts, 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.

Department of Social Policy and Intervention

The Department of Social Policy and Intervention is a multidisciplinary, social science centre of excellence for research and teaching in comparative social policy and evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation. In the UK-wide 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF), it was a top-five scoring department in the country, across all subjects and universities, with 62 per cent of the Department's research activity classified as 'world leading' (4*) with a further 30 per cent classed as 'internationally excellent' (3*). In the most recent QS World University Rankings by Subject (2022) the Department ranked second in Social Policy and Administration globally.

The Department has undergone substantial transformation in recent years. This renewal includes the expansion of graduate teaching and supervision in policy evaluation and comparative social policy; significant expansion in research income; and the creation of new research groups and areas of research expertise.

The Department's teaching is largely devoted to graduate students. It offers master's degrees in Comparative Social Policy (CSP) and in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation (EBSIPE). Students may study for either a one-year MSc or a two-year MPhil. The Department also offers supervision for doctoral degrees in Social Policy or in Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation. The graduate intake is highly international with students drawn from the United Kingdom, EU member states, and many countries across the world.

Research within the Department is largely organised under the auspices of two main research groups:

- The Centre for Evidence-Based Intervention (CEBI)
- The Oxford Institute of Social Policy (OISP)

More information about the department can be found at www.spi.ox.ac.uk.

Social Sciences Division

The University's academic departments and faculties are organised into four large groups, known as Academic Divisions (Social Sciences, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS), Medical Sciences, and Humanities). The divisions are responsible for academic strategy and operational planning, oversight of the teaching and research of their constituent departments and faculties, and for personnel and resource management. The social sciences at Oxford are distinctive for both their depth and breadth, with over 1,000 academic and research staff working across fifteen departments, faculties, and schools. The Head of the Social Sciences Division is Professor Timothy Powers, who is a member of the University's Council.

The Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences. The Times Higher Education (THE) University Rankings placed the University of Oxford as number one in the world for Social Sciences in 2018 and 2019. REF 2014 confirmed Oxford as the UK powerhouse for research in the social sciences, accounting for more 4* research than any other institution. Our academic and research staff and students are international thought leaders, generating new evidence, insights, and policy tools with which to address some of the major global challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, poverty and forced migration, effective governance, and justice. As well as active interdisciplinary links with researchers in other divisions at Oxford, we engage and collaborate extensively with other universities and a wide range of governmental and non-governmental practitioner communities such as law, business, public health and welfare, international development, and education around the world. The Division has an extensive portfolio of external funders, partners, and supporters, with competitively awarded external research income exceeding £50 million per year and philanthropic income over £25 million a year. As part of our commitment to equality of opportunity, eight of our departments have achieved bronze Athena SWAN awards: the Blavatnik School of Government, Economics, Education, International Development, Law, Geography & the Environment, Anthropology & Museum Ethnography, and the Saïd Business School, with all our other departments either in the process of applying or scheduled to do so shortly.

The Division delivers an exceptional range of high-quality educational programmes all underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics. The student body is made up of over 2,000 undergraduate students, nearly 3,000 students studying postgraduate taught programmes and 1,200 postgraduate research students. The programmes we offer are wide-ranging, often interdisciplinary and include professionally oriented provision in areas such as business, law, and education. The Division is home to several of Oxford's most widely recognised teaching programmes, such as Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at undergraduate level; and at the master's level programmes such as the Bachelor in Civil Law (BCL), Environmental Change and Management, International Relations, and Social Data Science.

For more information, please visit: www.socsci.ox.ac.uk.

How to apply

Applications are made through our e-recruitment system and you will find all the information you need about how to apply on our Jobs website <https://www.jobs.ox.ac.uk/how-to-apply>.

Your application will be judged solely based on 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

Help and support is available from: <https://hrsystems.admin.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support>

If you require any further assistance please email recruitment.support@admin.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 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

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 all academic posts and some academic-related posts. The University has adopted an EJRA of 30 September before the 69th birthday for all academic and academic-related staff in posts at **grade 8 and above**. The justification for this is explained at: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>

For **existing** employees, 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 **grades 1–7** 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.