



Job Description

Summary

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| Job title | Head of Communications and External Affairs |
| Division | Social Sciences Division |
| Department | Oxford Internet Institute |
| Location | 1 St Giles, with a planned move to the Schwarzman Centre in Autumn 2025 |
| Grade and salary | Grade 9: £52,815 - £61,198 per annum – with an Oxford University Weighting of £1,500 per year (pro rata) to be applied with effect from 1 August 2024 (due to be implemented in the September 2024 payroll and backdated to 1 August 2024) <i>Further details of how these changes to pay will be applied will be shared with the successful candidate in due course.</i> |
| Hours | Full time |
| Contract type | Permanent |
| Reporting to | Head of Administration and Finance |
| Vacancy reference | 173942 |
| Additional information | <i>This role will require some overseas travel, attendance at events both in Oxford and other venues, some of which may involve working during the evenings and weekends (for which time off in lieu will be given), and some cover during fixed closure periods to oversee social media outputs.</i> <i>Some remote working is possible in agreement with Head of Administration and Finance.</i> |



The role

This is an outstanding opportunity to join the Oxford Internet Institute (OII), an interdisciplinary research and teaching department within the Social Sciences Division at the University of Oxford, dedicated to the social science of the Internet. The Head of Communications and External Affairs is an exciting and senior role within the OII, working closely with the Director, the Head of Administration and Finance, the OII's Senior Executive Team (SET) and the Advisory Board. You will lead the department's external relations and communications team and generate impact and revenue through executive education, our visiting policy fellowship programme and engagement with industry, policy, alumni and civil society. You will also play an important role in engaging with the OII's forthcoming move to the Schwarzman Centre in Autumn 2025.

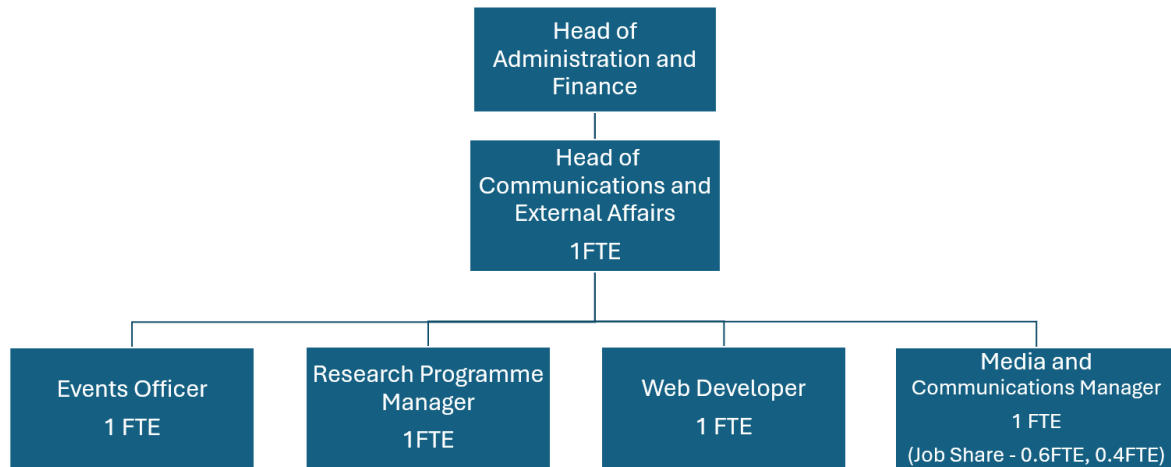
You will have the opportunity to work and build networks with a vast range of partners and potential partners across sectors and international boundaries. You will be able to think strategically and creatively, have strong leadership skills, the ability to communicate effectively and to develop and manage important relationships on behalf of the OII.

You will be able to work independently and act decisively while working in collaboration with colleagues and as part of the wider team. You must be able to demonstrate the department's values through your leadership and encourage the same in others. You will be keen to ensure your team's work aligns with the priorities of the department's equality, diversity and inclusion(EDI) strategy.

Key relationships:

- Director
- Head of Administration and Finance (HAF)
- Senior Executive Team (SET) comprising Director, HAF, Director of Research and Director of Graduate Studies
- Senior Administration Team (SAT) comprising OII's Professional Services Team Leads
- Academics and researchers
- Students and alumni
- Chair and members of the Advisory Board
- External donors and stakeholders
- Visiting Policy Fellows
- Head of Development, Social Sciences Division
- Head of Communications, Social Sciences Division
- Public Affairs Directorate

You will report to the Head of Administration and Finance and manage a team of five colleagues as follows:



Responsibilities

The main areas of activity for the Head of External Affairs are:

External Affairs strategy

- Together with the Director, lead on the implementation of the OII's External Relations and Communication Strategy (2023-2026), and review and develop future strategies in close consultation with key constituents and in line with departmental governance.
- Provide strategic advice to the Director on brokering and managing high-profile relationships with, for example, donors, policymakers and other key partners.
- Identify opportunities to diversify the department's external activities and its funding portfolio.
- Lead the External Affairs team comprising four roles (including one job share); provide outstanding leadership to motivate and support the team to deliver the External Relations and Communications Strategy and provide dedicated, high-quality services. Support the development of colleagues to enable them to succeed and thrive in their roles. Place emphasis on ensuring the team prioritises diversity in its content and output.
- Oversee the Department's relationship with its major donor, a European foundation, and the partnerships which have stemmed from this gift, working closely with the Research Programme Manager.
- Support academic leads and the Graduate Studies Team in developing a marketing and outreach strategy to support student recruitment activities.
- Act as an ambassador for the OII and represent the department's views in University consultations related to the external affairs portfolio.
- Act as the Secretary to the OII's Advisory Board comprising external members and work closely with the Chair and Director to support the Board and its work.
- Manage budgets and forecasting across the external affairs portfolio, to enable the efficient and effective delivery of services within agreed budgets and targets, and contribute to the wider financial planning of the department.

Policy engagement

- Work closely with the Director of Research, the Research Facilitation team and academic colleagues to promote and disseminate the OII's research and its impact, engage with policy makers and oversee related engagement activities.
- Contribute to the work of the OII's Research Committee on departmental research impact and communication policies.
- Support OII colleagues to engage with the policy process, in collaboration with the Oxford Policy Engagement Network.
- Track and report on engagement activities through regular benchmarking and analysis.
- Lead the Department's Visiting Policy Fellowship Programme, to attract practitioners from government and civil society, industry and other policy relevant institutions across the world to visit the OII. Manage relationships with existing fellows and recruit new fellows that enhance the research output and diversity of the OII community.

Communications and Events

- Oversee all communications channels, including social media, and work closely with the Media and Communications Managers to build partnerships to ensure greater visibility.
- Ensure peer-reviewed, journal-published articles are promoted and shared as widely as possible.
- Oversee internal communications with a focus on ensuring positive staff engagement around the move to a new building.
- Oversee the OII's external and internal events and work closely with the Events Officer to consider future initiatives. Attend events both in Oxford and at external venues, some of which may involve working during the evenings and occasional weekends.
- Own the OII's website and take overall responsibility for all website content to ensure that impact is demonstrated across all activities. Review the OII's website and intranet and have oversight for design and content, working closely with the Web Developer.
- Oversee staff, student and alumni newsletters, and lead on/provide advice and guidance to the Director and other colleagues on internal and external communications, including drafting key messages on their behalf.
- Be responsible for the OII's branding policy and branding requests.
- Support the OII's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) priorities by ensuring and enabling diversity of speakers, visitors and delegates participating in events, talks, programmes and other external engagement activities, measuring and tracking diversity data.

Alumni relations

- Oversee and manage existing alumni relations and further develop and implement communications strategies to increase engagement e.g., creation and circulation of alumni newsletters, webpages, social media channels and alumni events.
- Continuous review and mapping of departmental contacts for external engagement, impact and alumni.

Business development

- Identify and design new business development opportunities and models for external engagement, products and services to increase revenue for the OII and mitigate financial risk, in line with University policy and risk management.
- In particular, build on the OII's executive education offering and commitment to explore future executive education opportunities.
- Maintain existing and build new partnerships with external organisations to support fundraising and business development initiatives that are mutually beneficial and in line with the OII's values and objectives.
- Maintain existing and develop new initiatives to build, external stakeholder and alumni networks.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

1. Educated to degree level or equivalent relevant work experience.
2. Demonstrable experience in external engagement including communications and stakeholder engagement.
3. Proven ability to represent a public-facing organisation and develop and manage important relationships with donors, partners and other critical stakeholders.
4. Excellent interpersonal skills and proven success of developing long-term collaborative links between different groups at national and international level, and developing and leading networks.
5. The ability to manage and prioritise a broad portfolio in a deadline intensive environment and to work across both strategic projects and operational management tasks simultaneously.
6. Proven experience of leading, motivating and supporting a team.
7. Demonstrable ability to work with, and gain the confidence of, a wide range of people, including academics, researchers, students, professional services colleagues and others across, and external to, the University.
8. Excellent communications skills to convey complex ideas or information clearly and effectively and have a track record of negotiating and influencing to drive change and improvement successfully.
9. Ability to identify and lead on business development opportunities to increase engagement and income generation.
10. Proven ability to identify future demands and opportunities and develop longer-term plans, coordinating the work of others to maximise performance and use of resources, and ability to consider impact of decision-making.
11. Motivation and commitment to review activity from a continuous improvement perspective, adapting services and activities to support the department and build the OII's reputation and external affairs activities.

Desirable selection criteria

1. Experience of higher education, research or public science.
2. Understanding of the key issues in technology policy.
3. Strong understanding or experience of national and international policy-making.
4. Experience of an institution/organisation which is both international and complex.
5. Experience of managing budgets.

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 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, and the offer of employment will be subject to a successful outcome of this assessment.

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

- Lone Working – some lone working possible around events.
- Open food handling – some food handling may be expected to support events.
- Travel outside of Europe or North America on University Business is unlikely but may be required.

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 Oxford Internet Institute (OII)

The Oxford Internet Institute – founded in 2001 - is a multidisciplinary research and teaching department of the University of Oxford, dedicated to the social science of the Internet. Digital connections are now embedded in almost every aspect of our daily lives, and research on individual and collective behaviour online is crucial to understanding our social, economic, and political world.

Research: We have unprecedented access to a huge volume of rich social data, and are developing new theories, concepts and methods to analyse it.

Teaching: Our Masters and doctoral programmes bring students from all over the world, to work with our faculty at the cutting edge of their fields.

Policy: We provide the empirical data and conceptual analysis that is so needed to design policy solutions to societal problems.

Our academic faculty and graduate students are drawn from many different disciplines: we believe this combined approach is essential to tackle society's 'big questions'. Together, we aim to positively shape the development of our digital world for the public good.

The OII aims to operate at the cutting edge in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies that cut across disciplines and topics. The core of our activity is to develop rigorous peer-reviewed research and disseminate the outputs in high-quality journals, while ensuring that research helps inform and shape policy and practice.

Our research focuses on areas critical to the public interest and has already delivered significant impact. Our faculty were among the first to draw the world's attention to "fake news" and defined the concept of "big data". They have undertaken ground-breaking research into technology and wellbeing using real-time industry data and persuaded major global firms to adopt a new methods and practices. And OII researchers have developed the first global ratings system for firms operating in the gig economy and had a significant role in influencing the online harms debate in the UK.

Our four teaching programmes graduate around 80 students a year across our two MSc programmes in addition to around five doctoral students. Many of our talented alumni go on to perform important roles and achieve significant accomplishments in the world of policymaking, technology development, civil society and academia.

In 2025, the OII is expected to take up residence in the new Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, moving from our current location across three sites on St Giles.

For more information about the Oxford Internet Institute please visit <https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/>.

Social Sciences Division

The Oxford Internet Institute is a department within the Social Sciences Division, one of four academic Divisions in the University, each with considerable devolved budgetary and financial

authority, and responsibility for providing a broad strategic focus across its constituent disciplines.

The Social Sciences Division represents the largest grouping of social sciences in the UK. It is home to outstanding departments and to the internationally ranked Law Faculty; all are committed to research to develop a greater understanding of all aspects of society, from the impact of political, legal and economic systems on social and economic welfare to human rights and security. That research is disseminated through innovative graduate programmes and enhances undergraduate courses.

For more information please visit <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/>

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 Ornella Sciuto, OII HR Manager, via Ornella.sciuto, via HR@oii.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, flexible working options, 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 [benefits](#).

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more at [Health Assured](#).

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 <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 [Visa Loan Scheme](#).

Family-friendly benefits

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector. Our Childcare Services team provides guidance and support on childcare provision, and offers a range of high quality childcare options at affordable prices for staff. In addition to 5 University nurseries, we partner with a number of local providers to offer in excess of 450 full time nursery places to our staff. Eligible parents are able to pay for childcare through salary sacrifice, further reducing costs. See [childcare](#). 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 [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 at the [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 at [Oxford Staff Society](#).