

## BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

### Summary

<b>Job title</b>	Senior Research and Policy Officer (Economic Policy Network)
<b>Division</b>	Social Sciences
<b>Department</b>	Blavatnik School of Government
<b>Location</b>	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6GG
<b>Grade and salary</b>	Grade 7: £38,674 - £46,913 per annum, dependent on experience
<b>Hours</b>	Full-time; Applications for part-time work can be considered
<b>Contract type</b>	Fixed-term until 30 November 2026
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	176659
<b>Reporting to</b>	CSAE Director
<b>Additional information</b>	The closing date for applications is 12 noon (UK time) on Monday, 13 January 2025

### Overview

African policymakers are in need of independent, impartial, trusted, context-sensitive, high-quality research-informed advice and support to deal with some of the global and local challenges they are facing: including the debt and macroeconomic growth crisis following COVID and the changing geopolitical situation; the impact of climate change and required energy transition; and the need for more effective government to overcome the governance and implementation deficit in a world with scarcer resources. With this in mind, the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at the Blavatnik School of Government has recently established the Economic Policy Network.

The Centre for the Study of African Economies [CSAE] is an internationally renowned development economics research centre at the University of Oxford, with researchers based in the Department of Economics, the Blavatnik School of Government [BSG], and the Oxford Department for International Development [ODID].



The CSAE Economic Policy Network focuses on three main activities: 1) supporting existing key networks of African Policy Makers, in particular, the CSAE-convened Central Bank Governors network, and the Chief Economic Advisors of Government network; 2) providing pro-bono support to key policymakers in selected governments in collaboration with local institutions and researchers; and 3) increasing capacity to provide capability enhancement opportunities through courses and exchanges. We are largely focusing on sub-Saharan Africa with close links in countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Sierra Leone and South Africa; we also have engagements outside Africa in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The postholder will have an exciting opportunity to engage with the large community of researchers at the CSAE, the broader Oxford academic community, and with other researchers at universities and international organisations working on similar areas, while also developing their own research portfolio. Oxford provides a vibrant environment for researchers in the social sciences. Many previous Oxford postdoctoral fellows have moved on to permanent faculty positions at leading universities in the US and Europe, or in leading public policy organisations.

## The role

The Senior Research and Policy Officer will work closely with the EPN Director, Professor Stefan Dercon and the EPN Coordinator, Pascal Mensah.

The role involves driving progress in multiple workstreams simultaneously, combining rigorous quantitative analysis with excellent policy-relevant communication. It will also require breadth of knowledge and, more importantly, intellectual flexibility. The post holder will be involved with projects at every stage, driving progress through their own work and intellectual contributions and overseeing research assistants.

Many projects will begin with country and sectoral development analysis, where the post holder will be expected to collate research (both academic and policy) and relevant country—and sector-specific facts and effectively synthesize them into reports and realistic recommendations, relevant for politically complex settings.

Diagnostic analysis, especially quantitative work, will be a major part of the role. The postholder will be willing to work at the most granular level to establish and check the context's fundamentals. They will be required to use their quantitative background to produce charts, reports, and databases. Given the lack of high-quality data in many of these contexts, creativity and proactive searching for alternative data are essential.

After analysis and consulting with experts and stakeholders, the postholder will write propositional reports in close consultation with EPN leaders. They will have ample scope to argue their conclusions and deliver recommendations, not only internally, but also often to leaders themselves.

In terms of likely content, themes will include growth and structural transformation, sector-specific development dynamics (e.g., in Agriculture and Health), social protection, and macroeconomic policy. Africa and Southeast Asia will be the main geographies of interest (and experience working in these is desirable).

Finally, given the role's policy focus, political understanding and instinct are also very important. The post holder should be able to think not only economically but also politically.

## Responsibilities

The main duties of the post are as follows:

- Contribute to the design, management and delivery of inter-departmental and complex projects that influence African economic policy capacity-building and decision-making.
- Source, monitor, and manage demand for independent advice from African governments at Oxford-CSAE-BSG in conjunction with the EPN Coordinator; help source suitable projects and support the team of specialists and advisors.
- Contribute to EPN policy advice including the collation of databases, the writing of preliminary macro analyses and writing-up.
- Lead on dissemination to research and policy audiences.
- Foster networks of African policymakers. Strengthen peer networks at the CSAE–Central Bank Governors (CBG) and Chief Economists of Government (CEoG); and link African policymakers to our network of institutions, academics and practitioners.
- Build and nurture relationships with key stakeholders, including BSG, CSAE, funder(s), domestic philanthropic partners, and government partners.
- Manage any research assistants as required.
- Contribute to the development of the CSAE Economic Policy Network strategy.
- Contribute to design, development, budgeting, and fundraising for related initiatives.
- Coordinate with internal stakeholders at Oxford, BSG, and CSAE to develop strategic proposals, complete with a communications framework and presentation materials.
- Contribute to the development economics research community, including contributing to the organisation and attendance of seminars, and workshops, contribute through mentoring of students, and other activities consistent with further developing the vibrant development economics community at Oxford

The post holder will report to CSAE Director regarding overall project management and will be encouraged to take on increased responsibility over time.

## Selection criteria

### Essential selection criteria

Applications will be judged only against the criteria that are set out below.

1. Graduate degree in economics, public policy, development studies with a focus on development economics or political economy. A doctoral degree (DPhil/PhD) is desirable but not essential provided relevant work experience.
2. Strong quantitative skills with solid theoretical foundations able to source, collate and analyse large datasets and distil the results into clear messages. Strong IT skills including use of Excel and Stata (or R).

3. Excellent writing skills and proven experience in the form of papers and research projects of research in themes linked to the post, and a clear continuing interest in pursuing these themes further;
4. Professional experience of working on developing countries, especially those on the African continent, including on communicating evidence from research;
5. Experience of working in or with multilateral organisations and international financial institutions, governments, civil society organisations, academic networks and/or think tanks;
6. Evidence of the ambition and ability to develop a track record of internationally excellent publications in highly-ranked, peer reviewed academic journals, as well as policy-focused outlets, commensurate with the candidate's career stage;
7. Experience of conducting research on developing economies, with strong preference for experience in research on and policy engagement in Africa. Experience of research in South Asia outside India is an additional bonus.
8. Ability to innovate and work effectively with colleagues, as part of building and contributing to a research community.
9. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, especially those necessary to communicate effectively to relevant academic and non-academic audiences using a range of media.

#### Desirable selection criteria

1. Strong networks and experience of working in the Global South
2. Demonstrable ability in networking and relationship building
3. Fluency in additional languages besides English

## 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>

## 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](http://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 around eight doctoral students a year. We also accept a small group of students for our MSc in Public Policy Research.

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.

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## 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).

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## 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 HR team directly on [recruit@bsg.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruit@bsg.ox.ac.uk)

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://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 70<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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 (including 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, LGBTQ+ 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](http://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>