BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Communications Officer (Climate Change Impacts on Early Childhood Health and Development project)
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £34,982 - £35,632 per annum. Pro-rata for part-time appointments.
Hours	Part time (30 hours per week / 80% FTE)
Contract type	Fixed term to 29 February 2028
Reporting to	Head of Research Communications and Principal Investigator
Vacancy reference	177963
Additional information	The closing date for application is 12:00 noon (UK time) on 14 March 2025. We anticipate holding interviews week commencing 24 March 2025.

Overview

This is an exceptional opportunity to be the communications lead for a new Oxford University research project that will generate evidence on the impact of climate change on children's health and development, and help communities adapt.

If you are a communications professional who cares about the issues and is able to work quickly, collaboratively and flexibly with complex ideas, this is the job for you.

The Climate Change Impacts on Early Childhood Health and Development project

There is incontrovertible evidence that early childhood health and development has long-term consequences for life chances, and there has been global progress in this area in recent decades. Yet this progress risks being stalled or reversed by climate change, with nearly one billion children living in countries at high risk from the impacts of a warming planet.

There is a lack of rigorous research and policy on the effects of climate change on early childhood health and development, especially in the world's poorest countries. The Climate Change Impacts on Early Childhood Health and Development project will begin to remedy that.

The project will advance the emerging science of event attribution and develop novel spatial-temporal epidemiological models to explore how climate risks affect early childhood health and development outcomes in low- and middle-income countries. It will use this evidence, working directly with affected communities, to achieve policy outcomes through local, national, regional and international mechanisms.

The project has been co-created through transdisciplinary partnerships between climate scientists and early childhood health and development experts at Oxford University, UNICEF, the International Center for Equity in Health (Brazil), and regional early childhood networks in the Asia-Pacific region (ARNEC) and Africa (AfECN). The project is coordinated from the Blavatnik School for Government at Oxford University, where this role is based.

The project runs March 2025 to February 2028 and is funded by the Wellcome Trust.

The role

You will communicate the project's mission and findings to a range of audiences. This will involve establishing and running a website, creating and disseminating content, and coordinating closely with partners and other relevant bodies, as well as offering a range of hands-on support as part of a tight project team.

You will spend the majority of your time sitting with the project team and working to the project's Principal Investigator, Professor Alan Stein, but you will also spend up to a day a week in the School's nine-person communications and events team, within which you will have dotted-line reporting into the School's Head of Research Communications (Ruth Collier), who will provide senior guidance and support on the communications elements of the role.

You must be a self-starter who is confident working in a matrix style, can cope with complexity and ambiguity, and can define, schedule and drive your own objectives and activities based on a strong understanding of the project objectives. The role also demands excellent writing skills, digital fluency, and facility with complex concepts and networks.

Flexible working

Where it is operationally possible, the School's flexible working policy provides individuals the opportunity to work remotely for up to 40% of their working hours (which translates to two days per week for full-time positions)

About you

You will be a communications professional who wants to make a contribution on important global issues. You're always ready to muck in and support the wider activities going on around you, whether or not it's technically your job, while still ensuring you

deliver on your core duties. You can get your head around research and policy ideas easily, and are comfortable working with academics, responsive enough to deliver fast on their priorities and win trust but assured enough offer ideas about more effective or efficient ways to deliver their objectives.

Responsibilities

<u>Understanding and relationships</u>

- Rapidly develop a strong understanding of the individuals and organisations involved in the project, how they link, and how they should be referenced and credited. Establish trusting working relationships with key academic colleagues, with the school communications team, and with your counterparts in partner organisations.
- Rapidly develop an understanding of the global climate community and the global early childhood development community: the key institutions, networks, vocabulary and acronyms, and which platforms are influential.
- Rapidly familiarise yourself with communications channels, processes and colleagues in the Blavatnik School and the wider University.

<u>Communications</u>

- Work with the School's Head of Research Communications to set a communications strategy and annual plan for the project. This should cross-reference the project's engagement strategy.
- Establish, manage and populate the project's digital presence, including a website. This will involve coordinating and synthesising all inputs, commissioning and managing external developers and other providers, and managing and driving the project. Guidance will be available from the School's Head of Research Communications.
- Rapidly develop agreed communication assets about the project (key messages, short texts, easy-to-understand graphics, templates, core PowerPoint slides, suitable images). Keep these updated over time. Work with the project's researchers to advise on how best to share data and its key messages with stakeholders.
- Create and disseminate content that drives awareness of the impact of climate change on childhood health and development and, in due course, the project's findings and recommendations.
- Make efficient use of a communications budget that can be used for web development, external providers, images, etc, procuring and managing all providers.
- Establish any necessary processes, tools and systems, for example mailing lists.

<u>Project support</u>

- Provide support to project colleagues in your areas of specialist skill, personally and/or by commissioning external providers. This may include:
  - Typesetting and design
  - Visual assets including photography, graphics and video.
  - Proofreading, copy-editing and/or copywriting.
  - Professionalising slide sets
  - Certain types of compliance for external communications work (e.g. accessibility, data protection, copyright)
- Support academics and project partners to communicate the project with consistency, so that when they talk to their influential networks or speak at major

events and meetings, they use agreed messaging, branding and credits. You will need to do this with a light touch and full respect for academic autonomy.

- Contribute to a range of tasks beyond communications as part of a tight project team, some of which may be administrative and repetitive. This will include supporting twice-yearly strategic advisory board meetings, partners' meetings, and other major meetings or events.

School role
- Contribute to communicating the wider work of the school in the area of climate and health, including offering insight and content in these areas.
- Ensure the School's role in the project is always visible.
- Attend all-School meetings, communications and events team meetings, and meetings of communications professionals from different projects.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Outstanding written communication skills, with a concise, compelling style, strong written accuracy, and an ability to closely tailor your writing to the audience, eliminating jargon and acronyms.

- Astute, intellectually sharp and quick to learn, showing incisive thinking, good judgement, and strength in mastering complex issues quickly.

- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to listen actively, to collaborate, and to inspire confidence at all levels, particularly from senior academics.

- Professional communications experience, including:

  o Writing for a range of global audiences

  o Website content creation and management, including using content management systems. (More advanced web experience such as commissioning new websites and/or full back end and front-end management of a website are desirable but not essential.)

  o Procuring, commissioning and managing external providers (e.g. designers, web developers)

  o Using social media channels to achieve objectives

  o Typesetting and design: for example, creating and using Word templates; creating attractive assets in Canva or similar. (More advanced skills including InDesign or similar are desirable but not essential.)

  o Working with brand kits

  o Finding and using images, with good understanding of credits and copyright

- Digitally fluent, and able to adopt and use new platforms and software with ease.

- Able to define, schedule and drive your own objectives and tasks based on a strong understanding of the project objectives, while also being highly responsive to requests.

- The confidence and maturity to work in a matrix style with light-touch line management.

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience of working with academic researchers

- Experience of working in multi-partner projects, especially those with partners based in multiple countries.

- Experience of communicating research or policy in one or more of the areas relevant to the project: climate change, early childhood development, health and development in low- and middle-income countries

- Advanced design skills

- Advanced web management skills

- Experience of organising events

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 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.

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. This should be in your own words and provide 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.

If you currently work for the University, please note that:

- as part of the referencing process, we will contact your current department to confirm basic employment details including reason for leaving.
- although employees may hold multiple part-time posts, they may not hold more than the equivalent of a full-time post. If you are offered this post and accepting it would take you over the equivalent of full-time hours, you will be expected to resign from, or reduce hours in, your other posts(s) before starting work in the new post.

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 HR team directly on 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, 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 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, 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

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector (see https://hr.web.ox.ac.uk/family-leave). 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 https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/.

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