

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Summary

Job title	Communications Manager (What Works Hub for Global Education)
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £38,674 - £ 46,913 per annum, depending on experience (pro-rata for part-time appointments)
Hours	Full time 37.5 hours per week (we would welcome applications of a minimum of 0.8 FTE)
Contract type	Fixed term until 31 August 2027
Reporting to	Senior Fund Manager (Interim) Programme Director (substantive)
Vacancy reference	178142
Additional information	The closing date for applications is 12:00 noon (UK time) on Monday 17 th March 2025. We anticipate holding interviews on 31 st March – 1 st April 2025.

The role

This is an exceptional opportunity to be the communications lead at the heart of a £30m six-year global research and policy programme, focused on improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for children across the global south.

If you are a communications professional who cares about improving education and good government, and is able to work quickly, collaboratively and flexibly with complex ideas, this could be the job for you.



You will communicate the programme's mission and findings to a range of audiences – from policy makers in target countries, to leading global academics and international organisations. This will involve managing the Hub's website and social media channels, creating and disseminating content, overseeing briefings and events and coordinating with implementation partners in country. You will also offer hands-on support on a range of activities, as part of a tight project team. The role will involve working closely with our strategic and consortium partners, to ensure that communications and engagement activities are targeted effectively to different audiences and country contexts.

As Communications Manager, you will be based within the What Works Hub at the Blavatnik School of Government, as part of the Hub's central programme team. You will also have strong links into the Blavatnik School's corporate Communications and Events team, who will provide senior guidance and support on communications and engagement. You will be supported by, and line manage, a communications and projects officer.

The What Works Hub for Global Education

The What Works Hub for Global Education is an international partnership working out how to implement education reforms at scale, with the ultimate goal of increasing literacy, numeracy and other key skills in low- and middle-income countries.

The What Works Hub for Global Education focuses on synthesizing and generating new evidence on the “implementation science” of delivering education reforms at scale – working with governments in 11 countries and with a wide range of national and international partners.

The Hub works in partnership with academics, policymakers and education organisations across the world, to ensure that evidence is translated into policy and then implemented effectively, to improve learning outcomes. It is a large and diverse collaboration of leading academics; committed developing country governments; grassroots organisations who both deliver education and advocate for change; and the international education community, from leading NGOs to the World Bank. We work hand in glove with our funders, primarily the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and a range of strategic partners around the world.

The Hub promotes the uptake of evidence to inform policy and implementation at scale, including through a wide range of communications activities. Communications is pivotal to the success of the Hub's goals and this role provides an exciting opportunity to lead the delivery of a high profile, strategic communications strategy.

About you

You will be a communications professional who wants to make a contribution on important global issues and is passionate about improving education outcomes. You can get your head around research and policy ideas easily and are comfortable working with academic researchers. You are responsive enough to deliver fast on their priorities and win trust, but assured enough to offer ideas about more effective or efficient ways to deliver their objectives. You will be ready to support your team members and the wider activities going on around you; while still ensuring you deliver on your core duties.

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 work priorities, based on a strong understanding of the programme objectives. The role also demands excellent writing skills, digital fluency, and the ability to get to grips with complex concepts and networks.

You will be able to promote the Hub's thinking, evidence and stories to a broad audience, including policymakers worldwide, working strategically with partners to build the Hub's credibility as the go-to place for excellence on learning outcomes.

You will have excellent strategic thinking and interpersonal skills, experience of working with partners globally, experience of writing articles and copy for websites, and demonstrable editorial judgement. Strong project management, proven delivery skills and some event management experience, along with demonstrable expertise using social media in a professional communications capacity, are essential.

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)

Responsibilities

Understanding and relationships

- 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 education and foundational learning 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.

Communications

- Work with the Programme's Leadership Team and School's Head of Research Communications to develop, refine and drive forward the Hub's communications strategy, taking responsibility for delivery of the annual communications plan and identifying key opportunities for outreach and impact.
- Develop key communications about the programme and its findings, including leading on writing of high-profile strategic communications outputs, and designing and delivering compelling, informative and focused presentations.
- Manage and strengthen the project's digital presence, including the website and social media channels. This will involve coordinating and synthesising all inputs, commissioning and managing external developers and other providers, and planning and developing new content. Guidance will be available from the School's Head of Research Communications.
- Create and disseminate content that drives awareness of how to implement evidence-based policy, which improves foundational learning outcomes. Work with the programme's researchers

to advise on how best to share data and key messages with stakeholders at identified opportunities for influence.

- Support in-country partners to communicate effectively, in order to maximise opportunities for influence on policy and implementation.

- Work closely with Strategic Partners and the wider foundational learning community, to ensure that communications take advantage of the reach of our partners and share relevant content from others, in order to deliver our objectives.

- Manage and strengthen communications with diverse audiences, targeting key stakeholders and expanding the programme's reach.

- Liaise and develop relationships with national and specialist media, to maximise the programme's media coverage, as appropriate.

- Line manage the Communications and Project Officer, ensuring that they have opportunities to develop their skills and experience.

Events

- Oversee the delivery of events, including webinars and in person gatherings and conferences, as well as providing advice and support to events led by our partners.

Project support

- 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 needed, working as part of a tight project team.

School role

- Contribute to communicating the wider work of the School in related areas, including offering insight and content from the programme in these areas.

- Be an active member of the University's Communication Officers network and other relevant networks in order to share information, promote best practice and ensure cross-University communications are coordinated.

- 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 and engagement experience, including:
 - Writing and editing material, including technical, academic or specialist material, and reworking this into accessible and engaging language, for a range of global audiences.
 - 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.)
 - Procuring, commissioning and managing external providers (eg designers, web developers).
 - Using social media channels to achieve objectives.
 - Experience of organising events.
 - 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.)
 - Working with and overseeing the effective use of brand kits.
 - Finding and using images, with good understanding of permissions, credits and copyright.
- Excellent project management skills and commitment to working collaboratively and supportively with colleagues and partners around the world in a changing context.
- 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 programme objectives, while also being highly responsive to requests.
- The confidence and maturity to work in a matrix style with inputs from several senior people.

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 education in low- and middle-income countries.

- Advanced design skills.
- Advanced web management skills.

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.

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>