

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Job title	Policy and Partnerships Director (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 9: £55,636 - £64,228 per annum (pro rata for part-time appointments)
Hours	0.5 FTE – 1 FTE
Contract type	Fixed term to 30 April 2026
Line manager	Chief Operating Officer Academic Director for WWHGE
Vacancy ID	178351
Closing date	12pm UK time on Monday 28 April 2025

Overview of the role

The Blavatnik School of Government is looking for a strategic, collaborative and implementation-focused Policy and Partnerships Director to lead the policy work, support effective partnerships, and drive delivery on evidence use as part of the leadership team of the [What Works Hub for Global Education](#) (WWHGE) – a new £30m, six-year global research project and policy initiative. The WWHGE is an international partnership aiming to dramatically increase learning outcomes for children in developing countries by generating new evidence and working with policymakers and NGOs to deliver the best education at scale. It is a collaboration of excellent and highly committed academics working on education-related research; developing country governments who are keen to champion improvements domestically; grassroots organisations who both deliver education and advocate for change; and the international education community, from UN agencies to the Gates Foundation. The Hub will work closely with education and finance ministries around the world, as well as the main funder, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. More details on the Hub can be found in the [Strategic Plan](#).



The Hub has three main pillars:

1. Evidence Synthesis. Making available to governments the best existing evidence on what works on education (pillar 1)
2. Institutionalising Evidence Use. Supporting governments to generate and use evidence for bold, large-scale reform (pillar 2)
3. Implementation Science. Catalyse a new focus on implementation science within education research, taking existing evidence on what policies work and trying to understand how governments can implement those policies at the scale necessary for transformative outcomes (pillar 3)

The Policy & Partnerships Director will have strong technical policy leadership - with the skills, experience and networks to identify talent, inspire collaboration and build strong relationships including with the strategic partners. This role should be able to catalyse political leadership and bring a vision for how change can happen via the Hub. They will identify political opportunities and secure new partnerships at the global and country level, and deliver and communicate to different political audiences. They will also be highly collaborative – the Hub works in a flexible and matrixed way with people working across pillars, requiring substantial collaboration.

As a senior professional in the Blavatnik School of Government, the post-holder will also be expected to operate in line with the overall mission and values of the School and take every opportunity for collaboration with School faculty, professional services and other research centres. Where time and funding allow, the Policy & Partnerships Director may also be able to take on School-wide projects with a strong link to the Hub and/or contribute to the activities of the School by sharing their professional expertise with our students, faculty and professional services staff (e.g. through mentoring or teaching). This also includes helping to develop strategic thinking on how the School can further develop its teaching, research and engagement on economic development and education policy implementation.

The successful candidate will be mission-focused, flexible, have can-do approach to work, self-motivated, resilient and will proactively seek to drive improvement and adaptation within the team.

Responsibilities

Leadership

- Be a collaborative member of the WWHGE senior leadership team, bringing strong policy and partnership expertise to decision making and strategic planning.
- Play a senior leadership role, alongside the Academic Director, Director of Evidence Translation, and Programme Director in continuing to develop the hub as a great place to work and an impactful and efficient delivery partner.

Partnerships

- Co-leading strategic partner engagement to bring wider collaboration, cohesion and impact to the WWHGE, working closely with the FCDO implementation roles.
- Partnerships strategy & cultivation -- representing the Hub and School at key meetings, convening relevant advisory groups, regular touch points and collaboration with partners including Strategic Partners, FCDO, Gates, and other donors. Bring strong credibility of working in government (ideally in LMICs) and on policy to representation with key international politicians and policy makers.
- Representation at high-level events, especially in the UK, and beyond.

- Writing or overseeing production of high-impact documents and strategic presentations on high-level strategies, plans, guidance notes, reports, and proposals, bringing in key stakeholder inputs.
- Work with the WWHGE and School development teams on proposal development such as grants and reports, as well as helping to identify and bring on board relevant partners/ funders with strategic alignment.

Policy

- Overall lead on the Institutionalising Evidence Use (pillar 2), working across hub pillars collaboratively, ensuring the programme uses the best public policy approaches, reflects the realities of working in government and adds up to more of the sum of its part in terms of policy impact and overall goals. Close collaboration with the Director of Evidence Translation who will lead particular areas of work which intersect across pillars.
- Line management of Institutionalising Evidence Use team members, working in a matrixed style that allows for flexible and agile working across the Hub. Oversee the effectiveness and value for money of the resources allocated to the Institutionalising Evidence Use pillar.
- Lead or/advise on particular policy initiatives e.g. the fellowships programme, executive teaching, case studies, enhancement fund, Hub Community of Practice, or Ed Labs programme, in order to enhance their impact and implementation.
- Lead policy development on key strategic issues such as equity.

Selection criteria

Applications will be judged only against the criteria that are set out below. Applicants should ensure that their application shows very clearly how their skills and experience meet these criteria.

Essential

Leadership

- Collaborative leader with a flexible can-do approach, self-motivation, resilience and a willingness to adapt to the changing needs and priorities of the WWHGE team and across the School with energy and initiative.
- Ability to lead and manage high performing and happy teams, both directly and as part of a collaborative matrix and partnership structure
- Experience of being part of a senior leadership team, responsible for collectively overseeing programme delivery through a policy lens with strong people management and development skills.
- Well-developed organisational skills and the ability to combine attention to detail with a view of strategic priorities.

Policy development and implementation

- Hold a graduate degree in a relevant subject. For instance, public policy, international development, economics, education, or a related discipline.
- Experience of successfully leading policy development in complex, high profile international development or national level public policy programmes.

- Ability to facilitate conceptual discussions with the Academic Director, Programme Director, and Director of Evidence Translation, and to turn those ideas into concrete programme plans, project activities and outcomes.
- Deep understanding of how to influence politicians and public sector leaders to integrate evidence and research into the policy making and implementation process.

Partnerships and Engagement

- First-class stakeholder engagement skills, with extensive experience of working at all levels (senior and mid-range) and with people from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives, and the ability to initiate, develop and sustain trusting relationships with key partners
- Experience of strategic engagement with and convening of a broad array of strategic partners, including leading academics, policymakers, and civil society leaders, and organisations such as the World Bank, UNICEF, and the Gates Foundation.
- Excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing, with the ability to convey technical material persuasively with a high degree of accuracy.

Other

- Motivated by the mission of the WWHGE and the School, with a strong commitment to public policy.

Desirable

- Experience working within governments, especially in LMICs.
- Experience working on FCDO-funded, complex projects.
- Experience working in or with large decentralised multi-country consortiums.
- Familiarity with and passion for global education, including world-class research and policy, and implementation science.

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).

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>