

Job description and selection criteria

Post	Distinguished Public Service Fellow <i>NB: this post is eligible for the title 'Professor of Practice'. The title may be awarded by the University at the time of appointment for candidates with established standing at an appropriate level of distinction.</i>
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Blavatnik School of Government
Location	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	RSIV. Competitive.
Hours	Full-time (in extraordinary circumstances we could consider a part-time arrangement that would still allow necessary roles of the job to be fulfilled.)
Contract type	3 years fixed-term (with possibility of extension)
Responsible to	Dean of the School
Vacancy ID	178679
Closing date	12 noon UK time, Tuesday 22 April 2025 Interviews will be held in mid-to-late May 2025.

Overview of Post

The Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, is looking to appoint a Distinguished Public Service Fellow, a role that would be eligible for the title of *Professor of Practice* at the University.

The ideal candidate will have a track record of excellence at the top of government and/or the public sector, running a government department or agency or multilateral organisation; a deep passion for public service; and a commitment to improving the practice of governments around the world.

The postholder will work with outstanding scholars and practitioners to initiate, design, and deliver executive programmes that hone the leadership skills of senior



government officials from around the world. They will have the ability to teach effectively across a broad range of programmes, including executive teaching, and a demonstrable commitment to improving government through the highest quality of professional teaching and education. They will have the opportunity to deepen their own thought-leadership and professional network, drawing on their professional practice and taking advantage of a worldclass research community and the convening potential of the University of Oxford.

Initially, the post is fixed-term for three years, and can be structured as a secondment.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. To lead in the preparation and delivery of executive programmes aimed at senior leaders in public organisations.
2. To provide practice-focused teaching on the degree and executive programmes taught in the School, including design and delivery of courses.
3. To lead a programme of work that enhances the School as a centre of excellence and produce influential outputs that lead the conversation in your domain of policy practice.
4. To develop materials relevant to the needs of policymakers and senior practitioners, such as articles in practitioner-orientated publications and other important knowledge-to-practice outputs.
5. To develop, and help raise the funding to support, a programme of impactful School engagement and collaboration with policy and practice communities.
6. To contribute to the leadership of the Blavatnik School in a cooperative and collegial way, including mentoring less experienced colleagues.

Person specification

The successful candidate will have:

- A track-record of excellence at the top of government and/or the public sector in any country, in a role of Permanent Secretary, Director General, Secretary General, Executive Director, or similar (experience may be as a career civil servant, political appointee, or elected official).
- An outstanding reputation in their field and be considered as a thought-leader on public policy or practice.
- Excellence in communicating and participating in policy debates, ability to engage in academic research and ideas, ability to think conceptually and draw on evidence to improve practice. This may include publishing for relevant expert audiences, for example in practice-oriented journals.

- Demonstrated excellence as, or potential to become an excellent teacher, with exceptional skills in explaining concepts, listening and responding to complex questions, and relating experience to general conceptual issues.
- Vision and passion for supporting talent and next generation of public sector leaders.
- Willingness to think globally and exceptional skills in facilitating dialogue and exchange of ideas among senior public sector leaders from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- Proven capability to contribute to administration and leadership within higher education and be able to demonstrate excellence in such work with the ability to collaborate and to work effectively as part of a team; and
- The desire and ability to treat students, faculty, research, professional staff and others with dignity and respect; and to be comfortable working with people from diverse backgrounds and with different perspectives.

NB: the conferral of professorial title is part of a separate University procedure, distinct from appointment to the post itself. We will support applicants of sufficient professional distinction through this application process, which begins only after appointment.

In exceptional cases of a candidate with somewhat less professional experience but a clear trajectory of excellence, we would consider appointment as a fellow of practice.

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. 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 **three** 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). **If, for any reason, you have taken a career break or have had an atypical career and wish to disclose this in your application, the selection committee will take this into account. The selection committee will also be mindful of the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic may have had on candidates' careers as a result of additional caring responsibilities or other factors.**

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 the recruiting department directly via 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 all academic posts and some academic-related posts. The University has adopted an EJRA of 30 September before the 69th birthday for all academic and academic-related staff in posts at **grade 8 and above**. The justification for this is explained at: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>

For **existing** employees, 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 **grades 1–7** 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>