

## Job description and selection criteria

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Joint Head of Finance (Job share role)</b>
<b>Division</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>
<b>Department</b>	<b>Blavatnik School of Government</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG</b>
<b>Grade and salary</b>	<b>Grade 9: £55,636 - £64,228 per annum (with discretionary range for suitably qualified candidates to £70,029) (pro rata)</b>
<b>Hours</b>	<b>Part-time (60-70% FTE)</b>
<b>Contract type</b>	<b>Fixed-term for two years</b>
<b>Reporting to</b>	<b>Chief Operating Officer</b>
<b>Vacancy ID</b>	<b>178998</b>
<b>Closing date</b>	<b>12 noon UK time, Tuesday 6 May 2025</b>

## Message from the Chief Operating Officer

Thank you for your interest in this role at the Blavatnik School of Government.

This is an exciting opportunity to join the School and contribute to our vision of a world better led, better served, and better governed. You will be joining a community of staff and students driven by public purpose. You will be using your financial experience to provide insight and advice that helps the School deliver its research, teaching, and engagement. We are looking for candidates with the drive and tenacity to make a difference, excited to be part of the Blavatnik School and Oxford University and committed to a job-share role.

We welcome qualified candidates from all backgrounds. We strive for excellence in all that we do, bringing together people from diverse disciplines and backgrounds to contribute their best. We will provide opportunities and support to get to know and be part of the School, the Social Sciences Division, and the wider University, and enjoy the opportunities for development that they provide.

If you share our vision and commitment and are excited to use your experience in this new joint Head of Finance role, we would be delighted to hear from you.

## Overview of the job share role

The School is committed to fostering an inclusive and flexible work environment, as demonstrated by its support for this job share role. By embracing job sharing, the School is seeking to enable talented individuals to balance professional ambitions with personal responsibilities, while ensuring continuity,

collaboration, and high standards in performance. This approach reflects the School's broader dedication to innovative working practices that promote equity, diversity, and excellence across all roles.

Offering a unique, flexible working, senior leadership opportunity, the joint Head of Finance will play a critical role in the next exciting phase of the Blavatnik School of Government. The post-holder will support the School's Dean and Chief Operating Officer in analysing, planning and managing the School's finances and its growing budget and research portfolio. They will contribute to key strategic decisions about the School's development and management. They will co-lead the finance and research support teams (nine people) ensuring that they provide a customer-focussed, responsive service to its stakeholders, and that management and decision-making is informed by high quality financial data and analysis.

The post holder will provide assurance to the Dean, the Chief Operating Officer, the School's Management Board and the Division that the School's financial projections are robust and well-grounded. Priorities include managing reliable costing models for the School's wide range of activities, using financial data effectively to provide input and challenge to the School's strategic planning, and bringing financial acumen to bear in developing viable financing plans for new revenue streams such as executive programmes and online courses. The Head of Finance will also provide leadership in financial planning activities, particularly in the preparation of the School's annual budget.

In addition, the post holder will be responsible for the continued development of effective and resilient financial processes and controls. They will take the lead in financial reporting and monitoring, ensuring the School's financial position is closely monitored and that timely, accurate management information is provided to management and others. The post holder will co-manage the School's finance and research support professionals and will be expected to recruit, train and manage any additional finance staff.

The post will suit a highly motivated individual with proven flexibility and initiative who is excited about helping to shape this new joint role and way of working for the School. The post holder should hold an accounting qualification and have substantial experience of working in a financial management role, ideally in a fast-moving environment. Experience of the use of financial data to drive strategic decision-making in a proactive way will be particularly helpful. Candidates should be able to demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate complex financial issues to a non-financial audience, and be able to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Financial strategy and planning**

- Provide proactive financial leadership in support of financial planning and budgeting both for the School and for research projects.
- Contribute to the development and revisions of the School's strategic plan, and the associated financial plan.
- Set and manage the annual budget, in agreement with the Dean and Chief Operating Officer and in consultation with budget holders.

- Provide costings for new and existing initiatives, and model different funding scenarios. Analyse the financial and non-financial implications of pursuing new funding opportunities. Provide recommendations to the Dean and Chief Operating Officer using risk-based analysis. Where requested, support commercial negotiations for new opportunities.
- Ensure that the financial performance of the School's key revenue streams are understood (including the development of robust methodologies for research overhead allocation).
- Present financial analytics to a wide audience including the School's main decision-making body, the Strategy and Resources Group (SRG) and the School's International Advisory Board (IAB).
- Develop key performance indicators for the School.
- Contribute to financial elements of the School's Risk Register.

### **Financial control**

- Act as the key School contact for all finance related matters, including with the Divisional Financial Controller and other Finance Division Officers, academic colleagues, other academic departments and external parties (e.g. suppliers, colleges).
- Oversee the budgets of research programmes, monitoring their finances, and ensuring compliance with financial regulations with support from the Senior Research Finance Officer.
- Oversee the administration of research grant income from first application through to closure of the award, liaising with principal investigators and funding bodies to ensure proper monitoring and reporting, and to ensure that the School maximises grant income and overhead recovery with the support of the Senior Research Facilitator and the research support team.
- Maintain and develop effective and resilient financial processes and controls, which ensure compliance with University requirements and other, external terms and conditions. Monitor and document as appropriate.
- Ensure changes to University policies and procedures are understood and effectively communicated.
- Ensure the University's month-end, quarter-end and year-end deadlines are met.
- Promote the importance of cost control and maximising cost recoveries throughout the School, proactively identifying opportunities and advising and challenging staff to achieve best practice.
- Be responsible for the stewardship of resources from the School's trust funds. Maintain a close scrutiny of available trust fund balances. Advise on the setting up of new funds where necessary. Service the committees for trust funds that have boards of management, and seek annual financial statements and other information as required. Advise the Dean, Chief Operating Officer and SRG on the use of trust funds. Ensure compliance with the requirements of the University's Trust Management Board.

### **Financial reporting and management information**

- Develop and own (with support from the Management Accountant) the month-end, quarter-end and year-end reporting processes, ensuring the School's financial position against budget is effectively monitored and appropriate investigative or corrective action taken.
- Ensure that accounting structures facilitate the generation of robust financial reporting as quickly and efficiently as possible
- Develop and implement systems to share management information with key stakeholders, ensuring timely, accurate data is provided and key issues are identified for consideration.
- Prepare quarterly forecasts and analyses of variances in support of Divisional and University-wide reporting requirements.
- Prepare financial reports for donors/sponsors and other parties, as required.

- Assist the Dean, Chief Operating Officer, and others in interpreting or analysing financial data, as required.

### Management

- Provide leadership and management for nine staff (with three direct line management reports) across the Finance and Research Support teams, maintaining their strong performance and professional development.

### Other

- Explain complex financial principles and persuade and negotiate with senior staff.
- Member of Staffing Committee and Senior Professional Services Team.
- Develop strong networks with key contacts in the Social Sciences Division, Central Finance, other academic departments and elsewhere.
- Other comparable duties, as required.

## Selection criteria

### *Essential*

1. **Accounting knowledge:** Strong accounting knowledge, evidenced by an ACA, CCAB or CIMA qualification.
2. **Financial experience:** Experience of managing a finance function, including the implementation of processes and controls, ideally in a fast-changing environment. Experience of research project finance as well as experience of financial planning and analysis.
3. **Communication:** Demonstrable ability to understand the information needs of others and communicate complex information in an understandable way, both orally and in writing, to a diverse range of audiences.
4. **Interpersonal skills:** Experience of forging strong relationships with key partners, and ability to do so across the University and with wider stakeholders. Ability to make complex judgment calls with appropriate consideration of potential risks.
5. **Self-motivation:** Track record of setting and meeting objectives and standards on own initiative; committed to continuous self-development.
6. **Teamwork:** Flexible, co-operative, helpful; respectful of ideas and expertise of others; appreciative of own strengths and weaknesses.
7. **Organisation:** Evidence of ability to work systematically, use time efficiently, meet priorities and deadlines with a minimum of supervision.
8. **Response to change:** adaptable; interested in learning and developing to meet changing situations.
9. **Analysis, creativity and problem solving:** considers various perspectives and the overall picture to evaluate financial and business risk; actively seeks pragmatic solutions and develops and implements plans successfully.

10. **IT skills:** strongly developed IT competence across standard Microsoft Office packages with advanced Excel skills.

#### *Desirable*

11. **Strategic direction:** experience of using financial data effectively to inform and challenge an organisation's strategic choices.
12. **Professional experience:** experience of working in the Higher Education sector and/or of operating within a large organisation with established practices and procedures.
13. **Software skills:** experience of working with a large accounting system (e.g. Oracle, SAP).

#### **Location**

The role is based at the School's contemporary purpose-built building in Oxford, part of the University's Radcliffe Observatory Quarter. It is a short walk from the town centre and railway station. Full time staff are expected to work at the School Building on average 3 out of 5 days per week (60%), to be part of the life of the School. We encourage and support flexible working in ways that are consistent with this, including to support family and other responsibilities.

#### **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 Blavatnik School of Government is a global school pursuing a vision of a world better led, better served and better governed. The School was founded in 2010 by our founding dean is [Professor Ngaire Woods](#) with an initial £75 million donation by American philanthropist Sir Leonard Blavatnik. Uniquely, the School is anchored across all four of the academic divisions of the University: the social sciences; humanities; mathematics, physical and life sciences; and medical sciences. The School's goal is to improve the quality of government and public policy-making worldwide, so that citizens can enjoy more secure and more fulfilled lives. It is pursuing this goal through:

- **Teaching** transformative programmes that combine deep expertise with analytical thinking and practical skills.
- **Research** which is fiercely independent, rigorous, and applied, and addresses urgent policy challenges, often in collaboration with others.
- **Engagement** with leaders in governments, in public services, and in multilateral institutions which forges networks that enable policy leaders to learn from each other as well as from scholars, and collaboratively to generate solutions and to share best practice.

#### **Teaching programmes**

The School has four education programmes:

The [Master of Public Policy \(MPP\)](#) is an intensive one-year graduate degree, taking a broad view of how public policy is made, implemented and evaluated at local, regional and global levels. The School actively seeks out the smartest, most impactful future and current practitioners from every region of the world and builds a strong, purposeful community among them

The **MSc in Public Policy Research (MSc)** provides an additional year of study to those who have completed the components of the MPP, who learn how to conduct robust, applied and impactful research that can inform public policy-making – whether by clarifying the nature, extent and cause of major policy problems or by developing evidence-based strategies for their mitigation.

The **Doctorate in Public Policy (DPhil)** is a full-time three-year applied research degree. The School seeks scholars keen to pursue academically rigorous applied research on a public policy issue.

The School's **executive programmes**, workshops, and fellows' programmes offer opportunities for senior professionals and policymakers to access cutting edge research, to reflect on their own experience, and to develop a community of practice with peers from other countries.

For further details, visit <http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/study>

### **Research Programmes**

The School is continuing to appoint outstanding scholars who are leading dynamic research programmes in areas including: economic growth and resilience; governance, democracy, cooperation and law; health, education, welfare and well-being; science, technology, climate change and public policy; security and conflict. The School also draws on extensive intellectual networks both within Oxford and internationally to ensure it keeps at the cutting edge of inter-disciplinary and global knowledge and on cross-sector partnerships with individuals and organisations to remain practice-oriented and solution-focused.

The School recognises that there are many different forms of leadership, a range of views about democracy, and diverse cultures in which people operate. Equally, there is a variety of methods and disciplines which can be used to interrogate challenges of government. That is why the research in the School spans the local to the global, and several disciplines, in terms of the types of challenges addressed and the ways that in which they are approached.

The School's research reaches practitioners in a number of ways, for example:

- The School's academics regularly advise governments and agencies on how to address their policy challenges.
- The School's Policy Memo series aims to provide clear, succinct and timely recommendations for policymakers in the UK and internationally.
- The School shares latest research, opinions and insights of its academics with wide audiences through features and comments in the press, as well as its social media streams.
- Students are active and engaged in efforts to connect with other Oxford students, alumni, practitioners and others far beyond the Blavatnik School, as they seek to bring about positive change in their fields of interest.
- The School holds a wide range of events that allow the sharing and exchange of knowledge with specialist audiences and the wider public. For example, the “Improving Governance, Delivering Better Education” conference, hosted by the School, brings together academics, policymakers, and donors working in the field of education, as well as experts from other sectors.

For further details, visit <http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/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](#).

## 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).

## How to apply

Before submitting an application, you may find it helpful to read the 'Tips on applying for a job at the University of Oxford' document, at [www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/supportandtechnical/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/supportandtechnical/).

If you would like to apply, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously. Please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will also 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).

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

Please upload all documents **as PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **midday** 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 departments.*

*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)*

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email [recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk). Further help and support is available from [www.ox.ac.uk/about the university/jobs/support/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/support/). 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 be notified of the progress of your application by automatic emails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all emails.



## Important information for candidates

### Pre-employment screening

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. We advise all applicants to read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at: [www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/).

### 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: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/privacynotices/job/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/privacynotices/job/). The University's Policy on Data Protection is available at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/universitypolicyondataprotection/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/gdpr/universitypolicyondataprotection/).

### The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) for all academic posts and some academic-related posts. From 1 October 2017, the University has adopted an EJRA of 30 September before the 69<sup>th</sup> birthday for all academic and academic-related staff in posts at **grade 8 and above**. The justification for this is explained at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/).

For **existing** employees, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/).

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](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

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, 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>