

Job Description



Summary

Job title	Pre-doctoral Research Fellow in Economics
Division	Humanities
Department	Faculty of Philosophy
Location	Global Priorities Institute, Trajan House, Mill Street, Oxford, OX2 0AN, UK
Grade and salary	Grade 6: £30,502 - £36,386 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term (1 or 2 years depending on candidate preference)
Reporting to	Assistant Director (Economics) of the Global Priorities Institute
Vacancy reference	160271

The role

Reporting to the Assistant Director of the Global Priorities Institute (GPI), you will have responsibility for pursuing and producing global priorities research in economics, for helping to shape the economics research agenda within the Institute, and for providing research assistance to GPI researchers and faculty in the Department of Economics. For research assistance, we will try to match the successful candidate with a faculty member at the Department of Economics at Oxford with related research interests, or with another economist affiliated with GPI.

We expect the successful candidates to split their time roughly equally between: (a) research assistance work; (b) independent research directly related to GPI's research agenda; and (c) contributing to the planning of GPI's research and the organisational development of our research group. Work related to (c) would include writing literature reviews or conducting 'exploration research' on a topic that we think is promising to write a paper on.

The Global Priorities Institute is an interdisciplinary research centre which aims to determine how we can use our resources to do the most good. GPI formally sits within the Faculty of Philosophy. You will be a member of GPI's growing economics research team. GPI is located in Trajan House in central Oxford, a building shared with the Future of Humanity Institute (another research centre within the Faculty of Philosophy) and the Centre for Effective Altruism. You will have access to open plan desk space in the Department of Economics, one of the world's leading economics departments, in addition to workspace at GPI. You will also have the opportunity to attend seminars in economics, and to enrol in an Economics



MPhil graduate option class, subject to approval. The role offers an opportunity for those considering working towards a doctorate in Economics to build invaluable experience in research at a world leading Institution.

This is a full-time position at the University of Oxford for a fixed term of one or two years, depending on the successful candidate's preference. Subject to UK tax regulations and the availability of funding, a relocation allowance may be available to support with a move to Oxford. Applications are particularly welcome from women, black and ethnic minority candidates, as these groups are underrepresented in economics.

Responsibilities

- Manage own research and administrative activities, within guidelines provided by the Assistant Director of the Institute.
- Contribute to the planning of the Global Priorities Institute's economics research, including ideas for new research projects.
- Provide research assistance to GPI researchers and faculty in the Department of Economics.
- Gather, analyse, and present qualitative and/or quantitative data from a variety of sources.
- Undertake comprehensive and systematic literature reviews .
- Contribute to research publications and reviews, including the provision of research assistance to other GPI researchers.
- Represent GPI at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone and disseminate research outputs to advance knowledge in this area.
- Contribute to discussions and share research findings with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups.
- Support the organisational development of the economics research group within GPI and develop connections with academics from other institutions.
- Carry out other projects or tasks as directed by the Assistant Director of the Institute.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a first degree in economics or a closely related discipline together with some relevant knowledge of economics (students in the final year of their undergraduate degree are welcome to apply)
- Interest in pursuing research in economics at the doctorate level
- Outstanding academic ability
- Interest in and sufficient specialist knowledge of economics and global priorities research
- Ability to manage own research and administrative activities
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write text that can be published, present research at conferences, and represent the research group at meetings

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience of contributing to research publications
- Experience of working in a research team and contributing ideas for new research projects

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.

Faculty of Philosophy

The Oxford Philosophy Faculty has over 150 academic members, all of whom are undertaking teaching and/or research in Philosophy at Oxford. Of these, around 60 hold permanent posts within the Faculty or the colleges; many distinguished philosophers hold posts elsewhere in the University. Oxford thus contains the largest group of philosophers in the UK, and one of the largest in the world. It has a vigorous research culture which is further enhanced by its four large research centres: the Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics; the Future of Humanity Institute; the Global Priorities Institute; and the Institute for

Ethics in AI. The Faculty performed outstandingly in the most recent UK Research Excellence Framework, achieving the highest volume of world-leading (4* ranked) philosophy research of any unit in the country.

Each year, many distinguished philosophers from around the world visit Oxford to give lectures and seminars. There are over fourteen hundred students studying Philosophy at undergraduate level, always in combination with at least one other subject, and around 150 graduate students, about half of whom are studying for the BPhil or the specialist MSt courses in Ancient Philosophy, Philosophy of Physics and Practical Ethics, and the rest for the DPhil. A list of current Faculty members and their research interests can be found on the Philosophy Faculty website at:

<http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/faculty-members>.

Further information about the Faculty can be found on its website at:

<http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk>.

The Global Priorities Institute

The Global Priorities Institute is an interdisciplinary research centre conducting foundational research to inform the decision-making of individuals and institutions seeking to do as much good as possible with their limited resources. It prioritises topics which are important, neglected, and tractable, and uses the tools of multiple disciplines, especially philosophy and economics, to explore the issues at stake. It is part of the Faculty of Philosophy. However, you will also have an affiliation with the Department of Economics.

The research agenda for the Global Priorities Institute is collectively set by the researchers at the centre. It focuses around the question of what we should do with a given unit or resources if our aim is to do the most good. This covers a wide variety of topics in economics, including: growth theory; the economics of climate change and other catastrophic risks; discounting; game theory and mechanism design; estimating indirect effects; forecasting; Bayesian updating; and causal identification and external validity.

GPI is planning to significantly increase its economics capacity in the next few years, and employ multiple researchers at various levels of seniority. Researchers at GPI will have the opportunity to contribute significantly to this growth, and to influence the research direction of the Institute.

More information on the research agenda and the Institute's published work to date is available from the website (<http://globalprioritiesinstitute.org/>). Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to consult this additional information before applying, in order to assess their fit to and interest in the Institute.

As described in our research agenda, GPI currently has a particular focus on longtermism and is keen to hire researchers who share this interest and would be enthusiastic about contributing to this research program. In the near future, GPI aims to explore new research avenues related to artificial intelligence as a potential existential risk, as well as issues concerning the nature, distribution, and measurement of mental states that are constitutive of wellbeing or otherwise morally significant for priority setting. We are keen to hire researchers with expertise in these areas who would be enthusiastic about contributing to the development of research agendas that address these themes. Candidates whose research skills and/or interests lie in other areas of global priorities research are also strongly encouraged to apply.

Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the following faculties: Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Oriental Studies; Philosophy; Theology and Religion; the Ruskin School of Art. The Division has over 500 members of academic staff, approximately 4,100 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), 1,000 postgraduate research students and 720 students on postgraduate taught courses.

The Division offers world-class teaching and research, backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums, including the famous Bodleian Libraries, with their 11 million volumes and priceless early book and manuscript collections, and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology. Such historic resources are linked to cutting-edge agendas in research and teaching, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study. Our faculties are among the largest in the world, enabling Oxford to offer an education in Arts and Humanities unparalleled in its range of subjects, from music and fine art to ancient and modern languages.

The Humanities Division has embarked on a major building project on the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, following the recent announcement of the £150 million gift to create the [Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities](#).

The Schwarzman Centre will serve as a dynamic hub dedicated to the Humanities. The building will bring together seven Humanities faculties, the Humanities Divisional Office, a new library and significant cultural and public engagement spaces in a space designed to encourage experiential learning and bold experimentation through cross-disciplinary and collaborative study. The Faculty of Philosophy will move to the Schwarzman Centre upon the completion of the project.

For more information please visit: www.humanities.ox.ac.uk

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.

Applications must include:

- A CV and a supporting statement or cover letter. The supporting statement / cover letter should be 300-400 words in length, including at least 100 words that demonstrate your knowledge of and interest in global priorities research. The supporting statement must also 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).
- A writing sample of your best, most polished work in economics or a related discipline, that demonstrates your research ability. A single-authored piece of research (for example a thesis, dissertation or other research paper or proposal) is preferred, but this may also be co-authored research, an essay or other piece of academic writing that demonstrates academic ability. It is less important that the topic of the writing sample be relevant to the Institute's research agenda, provided that sufficient evidence of your fit to the Institute is provided elsewhere in your application.

- The names and addresses of two referees. **Candidates should also ask their referees to send their references directly to gpi-references@philosophy.ox.ac.uk by the closing date for this post.** Reference letters may also be submitted via EconJobMarket (www.econjobmarket.org) web portal, though other application materials must be submitted via the University of Oxford portal. Candidates should supply each referee with a copy of these further particulars. The Faculty of Philosophy wish to take this opportunity to thank in advance those referees who write on behalf of applicants.
- An academic transcript for your undergraduate degree, and any subsequent degrees.

Please upload all documents as **PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename. Our online application portal can only handle PDF files and so documents in other formats may not be accepted as part of your application.

Details on the selection process

Longlisted candidates will be invited to complete a written questionnaire concerning the extent and nature of their interest in global priorities research and/or effective altruism.

Shortlisted candidates will then be invited:

- To submit a research proposal (of no more than 1,000 words) prior to interview;
- To participate in a short work task; and
- To participate in an interview by video link (around 30 minutes in length)

We aim to notify longlisted candidates within three weeks of the closing date for applications, and to further notify shortlisted candidates within two weeks of submitting the questionnaire. We anticipate holding final interviews in early February.

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

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 by email gpi-office@philosophy.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**, which with effect from 1 October 2023 will be 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, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for all University staff. The University Club 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 website 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 dependents. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Family-friendly benefits

With one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector, and a range of flexible working options, Oxford aims to be a family-friendly employer. We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities. The service offers a free telephone advice line, and the ability to book emergency back-up care for children, adult dependents and elderly relatives. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care>

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including the Oxford Research Staff Society, BME staff network, LGBT+ staff network and a disabled staff network. You can find more information at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is an organisation 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.