

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

Job title	Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy – Global Priorities Institute
Division	Humanities
Department	Faculty of Philosophy
Location	Manor Road Building, Manor Road, Oxford, OX1 3UQ, UK
Grade and salary	Grade 8: £41,526 - £49,553 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term (4 years)
Reporting to	Director of Global Priorities Institute
Vacancy reference	143155

The role

You will be part of the Global Priorities Institute (GPI), which aims to develop and promote rigorous, scientific approaches to the question of how appropriately motivated actors can do good more effectively. You will conduct advanced research in Philosophy. At least 50% of your time will be spent on topics directly relevant to the Global Priorities Institute's research agenda, which you will help to set. You will report to the Director of the Global Priorities Institute.

We welcome applications from researchers simultaneously applying to other faculty jobs who might complete a one or two year position at GPI before giving their notice early and taking up a faculty position. GPI is currently located in the Manor Road building but we anticipate moving to a new office elsewhere in central Oxford within the next year. We particularly encourage applications from women, black and ethnic minority candidates, as these groups are underrepresented in philosophy in general and at GPI in particular.

Responsibilities

- Develop research questions within a specific context, conduct individual research, analysing detailed and complex qualitative and/or quantitative data from a variety of sources, and generate original ideas by building on existing concepts
- Develop and implement new research methodologies and materials
- Regularly write research articles at an international level for peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and reviews, as well as internal reports (both alone and in collaboration with other group members).

- Present papers at national and international conferences, and lead seminars to disseminate research findings
- Agree clear task objectives, organise, and delegate work to other members of the team and coach other members of the group on specialist methodologies or procedures
- Share responsibility for shaping the research group's plans
- Act as a source of information and advice to other members of the group on research expertise
- Represent the research group at external meetings/seminars, either with other members of the group or alone
- Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups
- Ad hoc teaching and supervision if and when the opportunity arises, insofar as this is beneficial to the postholder's career development
- Assist in the supervision of visiting graduate students
- Contribute as appropriate, in liaison with others in GPI and elsewhere in the Philosophy Faculty, to engagement with the Research Excellence Framework impact agenda

Pre-employment screening

All offers of employment are made subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post.

If you are offered the post, you will be asked to provide proof of your right-to-work, your identity, and 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 so that we can discuss appropriate adjustments with you), and a declaration of any unspent criminal convictions.

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/.

Selection criteria

- PhD awarded either in Philosophy or in a closely related discipline together with equivalent experience and expertise in Philosophy
- Experience of independent research
- Outstanding academic ability
- Genuine interest in global priorities research
- An excellent publication record in international peer-reviewed journals (relative to the applicant's career stage), and familiarity with the existing literature and research in the field.
- Possess sufficient specialist knowledge of and interest in Philosophy, global priorities research and effective altruism to develop research projects and methodologies within global priorities research
- Ability to independently plan and manage a research project, including a research budget
- Ability to contribute ideas for new research projects
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write for publication, present research proposals and results, and represent the research group at meetings

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience of supervising staff
- Experience of managing a research project
- Experience of actively collaborating in the development of research articles for publication
- Experience of and enthusiasm for interdisciplinary research

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.

The Global Priorities Institute shares an office with and works closely with the Future of Humanity Institute (www.fhi.ox.ac.uk), which is part of the Faculty of Philosophy, and the Centre for Effective Altruism (<https://www.centreforeffectivealtruism.org/>) which is an independent charity. This provides a stimulating environment where researchers have the opportunity to collaborate with world-leading academics from many different disciplines (including mathematics, computer science, philosophy, engineering, and neuroscience) and to ensure their work translates into impact, whether through philanthropy or policy making.

The research agenda for the Global Priorities Institute is collectively set by the researchers at the centre. It focuses around the question of what one should do with a given unit of resources if one's aim is to do the most good. Examples of the types of questions it includes are:

- How should we compare causes with very different types of benefits? For example, how do we decide whether to spend a fixed budget on (a) malaria reduction, (b) boosting school attendance, (c) corporate campaigns against factory farming, or (d) research on reducing risks from pandemics?
- What is the rational response to the fact that the vast majority of our actions' consequences are unknown (and in many cases unknowable) to us?
- Are deviations from standard decision theory required in cases that involve extraordinarily small probabilities of extraordinarily large payoffs?
- Do the most cost-effective altruistic interventions mainly involve influencing the course of the very far future, or instead focus on more immediate effects?

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 particularly keen to hire researchers who share this interest and would be enthusiastic to contribute to this research program. However, this focus is not exclusive: candidates whose research skills and/or interests lie in other areas of global priorities research are also strongly encouraged to apply.

About the University of Oxford

Oxford's departments and colleges 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.

Oxford's self-governing community of international scholars includes Professors, Associate Professors, other college tutors, senior and junior research fellows and over 2,500 other University research staff. Research at Oxford combines disciplinary depth with an increasing focus on inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary activities addressing a rich and diverse range of issues.

Oxford's strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, and in providing all staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that supports everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is a great strength, and vital for innovation and creativity, Oxford aspires to build a truly inclusive community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While Oxford has long traditions of scholarship, it is also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities. It consistently has the highest external research income of any university in the UK (the most recent figures are available at www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/finance-and-funding), and is ranked first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 spin-off companies created to date. Oxford is also recognised as a leading supporter of social enterprise.

Oxford admits undergraduate students with the intellectual potential to benefit fully from the small group learning to which Oxford is deeply committed. Meeting in small groups with their tutor, undergraduates are exposed to rigorous scholarly challenge and learn to develop their critical thinking, their ability to articulate their views with clarity, and their personal and intellectual confidence. They receive a high level of personal attention from leading academics.

Oxford has a strong postgraduate student body which now numbers over 10,000. Postgraduates are attracted to Oxford by the international standing of the faculty, by the rigorous intellectual training on offer, by the excellent research and laboratory facilities available, and by the resources of the museums and libraries, including one of the world's greatest libraries, the Bodleian.

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: Oxford's Faculty of Philosophy performed outstandingly in the 2014 REF, with 51% of overall research activity assessed at the top grade of 4*, ahead of all other UK philosophy departments. Each year, many distinguished philosophers from around the world visit Oxford to give lectures and seminars. There are over one thousand students studying Philosophy at undergraduate level, always in combination with at least one other subject, and around 100 graduate students, about half of whom are studying for the BPhil or the specialist MSt courses in Ancient Philosophy and Philosophy of Physics, 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>.

In August 2012, the Philosophy Faculty moved to the refurbished Radcliffe Infirmary building on the Woodstock Road, now known as Radcliffe Humanities. As well as housing the Philosophy Faculty, the Grade II* listed building also contains a combined Philosophy and Theology Library and the administrative offices of the Humanities Division. The move – which amongst other things enhances the quality and quantity of space available for the Faculty's graduate students – means that Philosophy

became the first academic unit to be located within the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, the site on which the integrated Humanities Centre (including new space for the Faculty) may be established in due course.

Further information about the Faculty can be found on its website at: <http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk>.

Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the faculties of Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Oriental Studies; Philosophy; and Theology, as well as the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. The division has responsibility for over 500 members of academic staff, for over 4,000 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), and for about 1600 postgraduate students.

The Division offers world-class teaching and research, backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums, including the famous Bodleian Library, with its 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.

The Division's 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.

For more information please visit: <http://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/>

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/.

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.

Applications must include:

- A CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement must include a description (and ideally evidence) of your knowledge of and interest in global priorities research of around 100 words. You should also explain briefly how you meet 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 philosophy, since we will use this sample primarily for assessing your academic ability. The writing sample should be single-authored. It is not 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 three referees. **Candidates should also ask their referees to send their references directly to gpi-office@philosophy.ox.ac.uk by the closing date of this role.** 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.*

Details on the selection process

Longlisted candidates will be invited to complete an oral questionnaire via video link, concerning the nature of their interest in effective altruism and global priorities research. These questionnaires will be recorded, to be passed on to the selection committee alongside the other application materials.

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 (involving no more than a few hours of preparation plus a 45 minute discussion); and
- To participate in an interview (again around 45 minutes).

Work tasks and interviews will be conducted remotely, via video link.

We aim to notify longlisted candidates within one week of the closing date for applications, and to further notify shortlisted candidates within two weeks of the closing date. We anticipate holding final interviews in early December. We will update our website with timings for the selection process:

<https://globalprioritiesinstitute.org/opportunities/>

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. 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.

Please note that you will receive an automated email from our e-recruitment system 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:

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/.

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 69th 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/revisedejra/revaim/.

For **existing** employees, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/revisedejra/revproc/

From 1 October 2017, 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, 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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/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 www.sport.ox.ac.uk/oxford-university-sports-facilities.

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 www.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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/permits/reimburse&loanscheme/.

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 My Family Care, 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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/family/mfc/.

Childcare

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/.

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/staff.

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 www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/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.