



Summary

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Division	Social Sciences Division
Departments	Politics and International Relations, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ)
Location	Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ), 13 Norham Gardens, Oxford, OX2 6PS
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £32,817 to £40,322 per annum
Hours	Full time (37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed term until 31 August 2023
Reporting to	Prof Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Director (RISJ) and Dr Richard Fletcher, Head of Research (RISJ)
Vacancy reference	149419

Research topic	Misinformation, Science and Media
Principal Investigator / supervisor	Prof Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Director (RISJ) and Dr Richard Fletcher, Head of Research (RISJ)
Project team	
Project web site	https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk
Funding partner	The funds supporting this research project are provided by the Oxford Martin School grant
Recent publications	



The role

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) is seeking to appoint a post-doctoral Research Fellow to work on the interplay between misinformation, news, and social media with an emphasis on public understanding of science, health, and public affairs more broadly.

The position is part of the Misinformation, Science and Media project pursued as collaboration between the Oxford Internet Institute (OII), the RISJ, and the Oxford Martin School. It involves researchers and partners from across Oxford and beyond.

We are looking for a colleague who can play a leading role in developing and delivering on empirical work using online experiments and survey research to advance our understanding of the efficacy of various types of interventions against misinformation as well as the role of news in increasing resilience against misinformation. The role also involves working with the principal investigators and RISJ colleagues on connecting research and practice through engagement with journalists, industry stakeholders, and policymakers.

The position is an exceptional chance to be part of a project tackling a pressing problem and part of one of the most dynamic centres of research on digital media and journalism.

The project output will include both academic publications and publications oriented primarily at professional and policymaker audiences and will emphasise public engagement as well as research.

The individual appointed will be working with one of the principal investigators behind the project, RISJ Director Professor Rasmus Kleis Nielsen and Dr Richard Fletcher, Head of the RISJ research team and benefit from the larger collegial environment across the RISJ, the Oxford Internet Institute, the Oxford Martin School, and the University of Oxford.

Responsibilities

The duties of the researchers are:

- To work with other team members and the PIs on developing methodological approaches.
- To arrange and conduct empirical research and data collection.
- To work with colleagues on analysing and interpreting the data.
- To interpret the results in light of contextual background provided by the wider project and other people's research.
- To liaise with other team members, the PIs, and other partners on getting advice and input on the research design, data analysis, and conclusions.
- To develop academic publications and other project output based on the research done, working closely with the PIs to finalize output.
- To prepare a range of presentation materials suitable for external events, conferences, and workshops.
- To represent the project at external events/conferences, either with the PIs or alone.
- To develop ideas for further research (including ideas for generating research income) and to present detailed research proposals to the principal investigators for future work in this area.
- To work with other team members, the project coordinator, and the principal investigators on other aspects of the wider project, and work with the rest of the RISJ staff as part of the everyday life of the institute.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- A completed doctorate (or evidence of imminent completion) or equivalent experience in a substantive area of social science including journalism/media studies, sociology, political science, or social data science;
- Experience working with relevant, quantitative, and/or computational methods;
- Familiarity with existing work on misinformation, public understanding of science and technology, health communication, science communication, news media, and digital media;
- A record of relevant research involving survey experiments and/or general survey research;
- A record of relevant research and writing achievement at an international level, including peer-reviewed publications;
- Excellent written, editing and verbal communication skills to demonstrate a potential to write and present at an international level. The candidate should be able to distil information rapidly from a wide range of sources and use initiative in writing, research and collaboration with other partners;
- The skills, flexibility and commitment to be a fully participating member of the project team and to be willing to help build its international presence and research output.

Desirable selection criteria

- Detailed knowledge of existing research on misinformation and work on public understanding of science, health communication, news, and digital media;
- Familiarity with the existing literature and work in the field of comparative/international media research;
- Documented active involvement in relevant international academic communities;
- A record of published work on misinformation, health communication, and/or the public understanding of science;
- Experience of combining different relevant methods;
- An interest in public engagement and international comparative research that bridges academic, practitioner, and policy communities;
- Proficiency in several languages.

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.

Department of Politics and International Relations

The study of politics, government and international relations at Oxford has a long and distinguished history. We are proud to be recognised internationally for our rigorous and valuable research, as educators of leaders and professionals in a wide variety of fields and as trainers of the next generation of teachers and researchers.

The Department of Politics and International Relations at Oxford is one of the largest units for research and teaching in international relations, politics, government and political theory. Our work is directed to advance these disciplines. We create theoretical frameworks for the analysis of new objects of study using advanced research methods and we develop techniques for gathering, handling, processing and analysing data. We achieved top scores in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, confirming the excellence of our research.

This focus on the future has a deep foundation in the inception of the disciplines of political science, history and philosophy in the UK. The study of government was institutionalised in Oxford in 1912 with the establishment of the Gladstone Chair in Government; the Chichele Chair in Social and Political Theory was established in 1944, and International Relations developed as an autonomous field of study with the establishment of the Montague Burton Chair of International Relations in 1930.

The department is responsible for the syllabus, provision of lectures and for the examination of undergraduate students, who are taught mainly by tutorials organised by college tutors. The MPhil degree now is a terminal degree for a range of students who proceed to further professional training and to careers in public or private organisations. For many students, the MPhil also forms the first two years of a four-year doctoral programme. The MPhil gives students advanced scholarly and theoretically sophisticated substantial study of the subject, together with training in research design and associated methodological analysis and critique, and advanced training in research methods. Alumni of the MPhil and the DPhil have gone on to form a wide network of Oxford-trained academics with positions in university departments and research units worldwide, and have taken up positions of leadership in numerous public and private institutions across the globe.

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

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism was established in 2006 with core funding from the Thomson Reuters Foundation to bring to the University the study of journalism and its relationship to matters of public policy, politics and wider social and cultural trends.

The Institute is an integral part of the Department of Politics and International Relations. The Institute incorporates the Journalist Fellowship Programme which began in 1983 and is affiliated with Green Templeton College. The Institute is located in Green Templeton College premises in Norham Gardens and is supported by its own administrative staff. The Institute has a Steering Committee, which includes representatives outside the University from the world of journalism. It is accountable to the General Purposes Committee and to the Head of the Department of Politics and International Relations.

The Institute is committed to the rigorous, international, comparative study of journalism. It pursues this through:

- Research Programmes, which provide timely, accessible, and evidence-based independent analysis of issues facing journalism and news media around the world, and include a series of RISJ publications, as well as more specialised academic articles and book-length treatments of important topics.
- The Journalist Fellowship Programme, which brings high calibre mid-career practising journalists to Oxford and offers them a period of reflection and an opportunity to carry out a piece of relevant in-depth research, away from the pressure of tight deadlines.
- Leadership Programmes, which gather editors, executives, and journalists in leadership roles in small, intimate, off-the-record settings to engage with each other, exchange best practices and lessons learned, and benefit from current research relevant to the challenges they face.

Research:

The Institute is expanding its research activity and its research strategy is currently organised around three broad areas of focus:

- Relationships between Journalism and Democracy and Accountability – including journalism's role in holding power to account; issues around international news providers and the trust placed in them; the role of the media in societies undergoing radical political transformation; identifying the most important elements of journalism for the functioning of a democratic society; and examining the impact of different political systems on the ability of journalism to perform its role.
- The Business of Journalism – involving comparative assessment of the financial pressures on journalism in a range of countries, the responses to those pressures, and the implications of each for the long term future of quality journalism and its democratic functions. This area also includes work on regulatory frameworks for and different forms of intervention in journalism and media markets.
- The Evolving Practice of Journalism – including issues such as journalism as a profession and what that means in different countries; the impact of the rise of citizen journalism; blogging and social media; the particular issues posed by specific forms of journalism, e.g. business journalism; journalism and PR; and science and environmental reporting, where journalists often have to act as translators between specialists and a wider public.

The news media have, within the last decade or so, been disrupted by huge and fast-moving changes in the economic and technological models that had been in place for generations or more. The growth of social media, new players and new platforms has changed journalism forever as well as creating an existential threat to forms of news. The ability of billions of people to publish has created a vast amount of unreliable - and fake - news which now competes with more established forms of journalism. The RISJ must have a powerful voice in the debates around where journalism is going and how it is practised. In addition to chronicling these dramatic changes, RISJ should help illuminate the road ahead by communicating directly with communities of journalists who are at the sharp end of the digital revolution.

Further information about the RISJ can be found at: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk>

Social Sciences Division

Oxford is a world-leading centre for research across the disciplines of the social sciences. Characterised by a wide range of methodologies, themes and fields of scholarship, multi-disciplinary research and innovative ideas thrive in an environment underpinned by excellence across the disciplines of the social sciences.

Our approach to supporting research across the Social Sciences Division has been highly successful in the last ten years, with the volume of research awards continuing to rise and the development of a large number of research centres and groupings. Researchers at Oxford receive significant support and guidance in the development of their research, including career development, research and impact funding, research project design and management, and research outputs from academic and administrative colleagues across the University, division and departments.

More information please visit: www.socsci.ox.ac.uk

How to apply

Applications are made through our e-recruitment system and you will find all the information you need about how to apply 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 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).

Please provide a supporting statement of no more than two pages A4, a CV of no more than two pages A4, and a list of publications of no more than one page A4.

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

Help and support is available from: <https://hrsystems.admin.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support>

If you require any further assistance please email recruitment.support@admin.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 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: <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, 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 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 <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.