



University of Oxford Department of Computer Science

Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Part-Time Public Relations Assistant
Division	MPLS
Department	Computer Science
Location	Wolfson Building, Parks Road, Oxford.
Grade and salary	Grade 5: Salary £24,057 – £28,695 p.a.
Hours	Part Time (60% FTE)
Contract type	Permanent
Reporting to	Publicity & Schools Liaison Officer
Vacancy reference	118192

Introduction

The University

The University of Oxford is a complex and stimulating organisation, which enjoys an international reputation as a world-class centre of excellence in research and teaching. It employs over 10,000 staff and has a student population of over 22,000.

Most staff are directly appointed and managed by one of the University's 130 departments or other units within a highly devolved operational structure - this includes over 6,500 'academic-related' staff (postgraduate research, computing, senior library, and administrative staff) and over 2,700 'support' staff (including clerical, library, technical, and manual staff). There are also over 1,600 academic staff (professors, readers, lecturers), whose appointments are in the main overseen by a combination of broader divisional and local faculty board/departmental structures. Academics are generally all also employed by one of the 38 constituent colleges of the University as well as by the central University itself.

Our annual income in 2012/13 was £1,086.9m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £436.8m p.a., and more than 80 spin-off companies have been created.

For more information please visit www.ox.ac.uk/staff/about_the_university.html

The Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences Division (MPLS)

The Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division is one of the four academic divisions of the University. Oxford is widely recognised as one of the world's leading science universities. The disciplines within the MPLS Division regularly appear at the highest levels in world rankings. In the results of the six-yearly UK-wide assessment of university research, REF2014, the MPLS division received the highest overall grade point average (GPA) and the highest GPA for outputs. We received the highest proportion of 4* outputs, and the highest proportion of 4* activity overall. More than 50 per cent of MPLS activity was assessed as world leading.

The MPLS Division's 10 departments and 3 interdisciplinary units span the full spectrum of the mathematical, computational, physical, engineering and life sciences, and undertake both fundamental research and cutting-edge applied work. Our research addresses major societal and technological challenges and is increasingly focused on key interdisciplinary issues. We collaborate closely with colleagues in Oxford across the medical sciences, social sciences and humanities, and with other universities, research organisations and industrial partners across the globe in pursuit of innovative research geared to address critical and fundamental scientific questions.

MPLS is proud to be the home of some of the most creative and innovative scientific thinkers and leaders working in academe. Our senior researchers have been awarded some of the most significant scientific honours (including Nobel prizes and prestigious titles such as FRS and FR.Eng) and we have a strong tradition of attracting and nurturing the very best early career researchers who regularly secure prestigious fellowships. The Division is also the proud holder of eight Athena Swan Awards (4 Silver and 4 Bronze) illustrating our commitment to ensure good practice and to encourage women in science at all levels in the division.

We have around 6,000 students and play a major role in training the next generation of leading scientists. Oxford's international reputation for excellence in teaching is reflected in its position at the top of the major league tables and subject assessments. MPLS academics educate students of high academic merit and potential from all over the world. Through a mixture of lectures, practical work and the distinctive college tutorial system, students develop their ability to solve major mathematical, scientific and engineering problems.

MPLS is dedicated to bringing the wonder and potential of science to the attention of audiences far beyond the world of academia. We have a strong commitment to supporting public engagement in science through initiatives including the Oxford Sparks portal (<http://www.oxfordsparks.net/>) and a large variety of outreach activities; these are crucial activities given so many societal and technological issues demand an understanding of the science that underpins them. We also endeavour to bring the potential of our scientific efforts forward for practical and beneficial application to the real world and our desire is to link our best scientific minds with industry and public policy makers.

For more information about the MPLS division, please visit: <http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/>

Department of Computer Science

The Department of Computer Science was established in 1957, making it one of the longest-established Computer Science departments in the country. It is one of the UK's leading Computer Science Departments (ranked first in a number of international rankings). The Research Excellence Framework (REF) in December 2014 resulted in 74 members of the Department having 53% of their research activity ranked in the top category of 4* (world-leading). Overall, we received an average of 3.34 across the department (3* being internationally excellent). A significant majority of the Department are active in externally sponsored research, with both government and industrial funding. At present there are 69 members of academic staff and almost 100 research staff.

The Department has close links with government, industry, and other departments within the University. Among the latter are Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Statistics and a number of life sciences departments. The Department is housed across multiple sites within the University's South Parks Road Science area, facilitating strong collaborative links with research groups and institutes in closely allied areas (including the Oxford Internet Institute and the Oxford e-Research Centre). This is an essentially inter-disciplinary activity which is at present attracting major funding from a number of sources. At present the Department holds over £50m in external research contracts.

Research in the Department is currently managed in seven themes:

- *Programming Languages and Software Engineering* (led by Professor Jeremy Gibbons, and including Professor Jim Davies) works on a wide variety of areas including model-driven development, functional programming, and static analysis;
- *Security* (led by Professor Bill Roscoe) specialises in cybersecurity (Professor Sadie Creese leads a new Cybersecurity Centre), protocol analysis, trusted computing, networking, and human-centred computing;
- *Automated Verification* (led by Professor Marta Kwiatkowska) covers probabilistic and software model checking (Professor Daniel Kroening), time and concurrency (Professor Joel Ouaknine, Professor James Worrell, and Professors Roscoe and Lowe), and hardware (Professor Tom Melham);
- *Computational Biology* (led by Professor David Gavaghan, and including Professors Kevin Burrage, Helen Byrne, and Blanca Rodriguez) is one of the world's leading groups building computational models of biological systems, and is particularly well-known for its work on the heart;
- *Foundations, Logic and Structures*, (leader Professor Samson Abramsky) which includes groups working on quantum information and computation (Professors Samson Abramsky and Bob Coecke), game semantics and verification (Professor Luke Ong), and constraints (Professor Peter Jeavons);
- *Information Systems* (led by Professor Ian Horrocks, and including Professors Michael Benedikt, Nando de Freitas, Boris Motik, Georg Gottlob, and Michael Wooldridge) has groups working on databases, knowledge representation and reasoning, multi-agent systems, and computational linguistics (Professor Stephen Pulman);
- *Algorithms* (led by Professor Leslie Ann Goldberg, and including Professors Paul Goldberg and Elias Koutsoupias) covering computational complexity, algorithmic game theory, and constraint satisfaction.

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

Summary of the University's Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. 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. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Job description

Overview of the role

The Computer Science Department aims to build on its reputation for world-leading research, by better communicating the scope, nature, and crucially the impact of its activities.

This is a new role and the remit may change over time. But our priority is to promote and explain our research within the higher education and industry sectors, as well as the wider University. To broaden our engagement with society by improving our communications with various stakeholders, including funders, businesses, and the general public, professional associations, governmental bodies and NGOs.

We are looking for you to help foster a culture of engagement across the Department, creating opportunities for research scientists to participate in public engagement activities, including embedding advocacy, training, support and recognition for their public engagement activities.

The post holder will be skilful at gathering and processing technical information quickly and making it understandable to a wide range of audiences. You will be able to think strategically about how to communicate in order to deliver agreed objectives and key messages and to create and execute plans efficiently.

You will be key to delivering improved, consistent, and up-to-date content for existing digital and print channels, including managing the editorial process of the departmental newsletter. Writing and curating new content such as blog posts, video content, podcasts, infographics, case studies, or white paper pieces, etc.

You will be the key point of contact with the media. You will be responsible for all seeking out news stories, drafting content, seeking review on content, and distributing stories as relevant. You will work closely with the Publicity and Schools Liaison Officer and Research Facilitator and colleagues across the Department, plus the University's News and Information Office, to generate positive coverage for the Departments' wide range of activities. You will providing specialist media advice to colleagues across the Department and contribute to raising the University's profile, particularly in the national & international media.

The post holder should have an interest in the business of higher education and an interest in new technology. Specialist technical knowledge is not required. The role may involve occasional out-of-hours work, but on a day-to-day basis working-hours and patterns are intended to be highly flexible.

Responsibilities/duties

Media & communications

- Assisting in the development and implementation a media & communications strategy for the Department, taking into consideration audience requirements, existing communication vehicles and the need to establish new channels, under the direction of the Marketing and Schools Liaison Manager.
- Initiate and manage specific PR and marketing-related projects. Work both reactively and pro-actively with journalists from print, broadcast and on-line media from all sections of the media spectrum, including the national and specialist.
- Developing a network of media contacts and enhancing good relations with local, national, international and specialist media, with particular emphasis placed on technology, research and education. Monitor media outlets to identify and exploit news opportunities. Liaise closely with the University's News and Information team.
- Write (and support researchers to write), publish and distribute news releases and stories on all aspects of the work of the Department, but particularly research and its impact. Coordinate the delivery of this content in various forms - print, broadcast and digital. This will include, but isn't limited to: the production and publication of case studies, comment pieces, briefings, news items, podcasts and videos and blog posts. Contribute to University series such as Oxford Impacts, Oxford Today, and co-ordinate with the University's News and Information Office around big stories.
- Act as a key point of contact for media queries at the Department. Respond in an efficient and timely manner to incoming enquiries from the media, including those requesting assistance in sourcing professional expertise to comment on other media stories. Provide specialist advice and support to colleagues on media handling and media relations. Advise on public relations approach in dealing with potentially sensitive issues.

Publications & marketing collateral

- Managing the editorial process for the Department's twice-yearly Inspired Research newsletter, under the guidance of the Publicity Officer and the editorial board.
- Develop and manage the Department's image library.
- Contribute to the development of departmental marketing and promotional materials as needed, namely copywriting and proof-reading. Including, collaborating with the Alumni and Development Manager to produce written and digital case-studies of departmental alumni, development of course brochures, etc.
- Provide cover for the execution of social media activities when required. (Currently Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr.)
- To lead in maintaining and developing the news section of the Department website, including the homepage "splashes". Support and encourage owners of other sections of the website – especially those related to research – to keep information up-to-date. From a marketing and communications perspective, provide advice and practical support to website (re-) development projects.
- Work with researchers and Research Facilitator to identify and secure funding for their public engagement projects, and help to advise PIs (Primary Investigators) on the public engagement sections of their grant applications.

Events

- Working with the Research Facilitator, and Alumni and Development Manager, and Publicity and Schools Liaison Officer, to provide support for events that showcase Computer Science research, including the Department's Industry Day.

- Provide support and guidance to the Software Engineering Programme Manager regarding the promotion of Software Engineering programme, for example, with promoting open days to industry contacts, and facilitating trade-fair attendance as well as identifying and evaluating new opportunities.

Other

- Contribute to the REF (Research Excellence Framework) submission process (or current equivalent) as required, especially relating to impact.
- Represent the Department at internal University meetings/networks, such as the Communications Officers' network.
- Develop other internal communications initiatives designed to support the evolving culture of the Department.
- Undertake regular CDP activities.

Selection Criteria

Essential:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent experience, in a relevant discipline.
- Experience in communications, marketing, journalism, public relations, copywriting or similar, preferably science-related, and/or in the Higher Education sector.
- Excellent communications skills and interpersonal skills; verbally, whether on the phone, in person, or delivering presentations, and in writing, whether through reports, newsletters, or other publicity material. Attention to detail and accuracy are fundamental requirements.
- Demonstrable track record in delivering positive media profile for a complex organisation. Proven experience of working with regional/national media. Experience of devising and implementing successful media strategies
- Strong awareness of the news agenda and innovative approach to generating positive coverage.
- Excellent writing skills and attention to detail, with a proven ability to communicate complex ideas to a non-specialist audience. Demonstrable ability to assimilate complex information and ideas quickly and make them accessible to a wider audience. Any proof reading experience is helpful.
- First rate written skills with the ability to develop high quality, accurate and consistent communications materials, newsletters, leaflets, briefings etc. for non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate a confident, enthusiastic, personable and diplomatic approach employing tact and initiative in liaising with academic, research and administrative staff, particularly with regards to managing expectations. Ability to handle potential difficult issues with great tact and diplomacy.
- Show evidence of being able to work independently using own initiative. Strong organisational and project management skills, developed in an environment where multiple projects are managed simultaneously. Proven ability to prioritise a heavy and varied workload and to keep track of a large volume of on-going projects. Ability to stay calm under pressure.
- Self-motivated: looking for a challenge, and looking to make an immediate impact.

Desirable:

- Postgraduate or professional qualification in science communication or other relevant subject.
- Experienced proof-reader.
- Experience of delivering or commissioning training in public engagement or working with the press.
- An inquisitive mind, particularly an interest in the business of higher education and more importantly, new technologies and science.

Working at the University of Oxford

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/supportandtechnical/

Salary and Benefits

The post, which is a part-time appointment, is department-funded, is available on a permanent basis, and has a salary on the University grade 05S scale (currently £24,057 - £28,695 p.a.). This includes membership of the University Superannuation Scheme (USS) and has an annual leave entitlement of 38 days per year (inclusive of all public holidays and university closed periods).

How to apply

If you consider that you meet the selection criteria, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a user. You will then be required to complete a number of screens with your application details, relating to your skills and experience. When prompted, please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them at this stage. You will also be required to upload a CV and supporting statement. The supporting statement should describe what you have been doing over at least the last 10 years. This may have been employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependant, or travel for example. Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that that you meet the selection criteria outlined above and we are happy to consider evidence of transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Please save all uploaded documents to show your name and the document type.

All applications must be received by **midday** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

To return to the online application at any stage, please click on the following link www.recruit.ox.ac.uk

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic e-mails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all e-mails.