



University of Oxford Department of Computer Science

Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Finance Officer
Division	MPLS
Department	Computer Science
Location	Wolfson Building, Parks Road, Oxford.
Grade and salary	Grade 6: Salary £27,057 – £32,277 p.a.
Hours	Full Time
Contract type	Permanent
Reporting to	Senior Finance Officer
Vacancy reference	118464

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 11,000 staff and has a student population of over 22,000.

Our annual income in 2013/14 was £1,174.4m. Oxford is one of Europe's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities: income from external research contracts exceeds £478.3m p.a., and more than 80 spin-off companies have been created.

Oxford is a collegiate university, consisting of the central University and colleges. The central University is composed of academic departments and research centres, administrative departments, libraries and museums. There is a highly devolved operational structure, which is split across four academic divisions, Academic Services and University Collections and University Administrative Services. For further information, please see:

www.ox.ac.uk/staff/about_the_university/new_to_the_university/structure_of_university.

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

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/>

Job description

The Department of Computer Science currently holds approximately 125 research projects with a total value of approximately £45m, a third of which have a value of £500K per project. The research awards come from one or more of the UK or European Research Councils, UK or overseas governmental organisations, the EU, UK and US charitable and commercial organisations.

This post sits within the Grants team, which forms part of a larger Finance team which is managed by the Finance Manager. Reporting to the Senior Finance Officer, the Finance Officer will manage a portfolio of research projects, many of which are complex and can be time consuming. The Finance Officer will monitor each project, communicating with internal and external stakeholders and providing accurate financial advice.

Main Responsibilities – General

- Check documents (RPF1, RPF2 etc.) received from Research Services match the project contract and that these have been correctly setup on Oracle Financials by Research Accounts.
- Reconcile contractual documents to Oracle Financials, ensure compliance with financial arrangements and agreements from set up to closure of the grant.
- Prepare RPF3 forms for projects which are jointly held with other Oxford University departments from information supplied by the Administrator and Research Facilitator and submit this to Research Accounts for action. Monitor that the change has been implemented.
- Prepare documentation to update and adjust project budgets and dates in line with Sponsor terms and conditions.
- Correspond and meet with Principal Investigators to report on grant balances and support them in achieving maximum benefits within the rules and regulations laid down by the University and the funding bodies, and provide advice and responses to queries from them
- Create task numbers for individual projects for the project Pre-Award account for your portfolio when required.
- Check and clear the departments project Pre-Award and Suspense accounts for your portfolio on a monthly basis.
- Check periodic and end of project expenditure reports as requested by Central Finance Research Accounts Section.
- Approve availability of budget and eligibility of costs, in line with contracts, proposals, applications, sponsor terms and conditions and University regulations.
- Cover for the other Finance Officer or Senior Finance Officer when required.
- Monitor the end dates of projects and remind the Principal Investigators when the final reports are due. Alert the Senior Finance Officer if the final report is still outstanding within a month of the reporting deadline.
- Ensure smooth management of projects shared between more than one department/research group.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of sponsors' terms and conditions and ensure that they are adhered to.
- Assist the Senior Finance Officer in standardising the grant management processes across the department, identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes to procedures accordingly.

- Regular liaison with the Senior Finance Officer, Finance Manager, Departmental Administrator, Research Facilitator and other relevant members of the team in order to ensure the efficient running of the research grants within the Department.
- Monitor receipt and periodically chase timesheets. Check against payroll and deal with any queries that may arise including employees, auditors and Research Accounts section.
- Assist with other duties which the Senior Finance Officer, Finance Manager or Departmental Administrator may require you to do from time to time that are commensurate with the grade and responsibilities of the post.

Internal Reporting

- Obtain monthly reports from Oracle Financials for projects that you will be responsible for and forward these reports on a monthly/quarterly basis to the Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators ensuring that an up to date forecast is provided.
- Investigate any variances and correct where appropriate and/or necessary, informing the Senior Finance Officer if necessary.
- Provide detailed expenditure breakdowns to the Principal Investigators and/or project administrators, when required and assist with the interpretation of these Oracle reports.
- Input any journals and correcting journals for the projects.
- Using X5, the University's costing and grant application software, to prepare forecasts, re-forecasts and costing scenarios, which can determine future employment decisions.
- Proactively achieve full utilisation of all funds.

External Reporting

- Preparation of interim and final financial reporting, including actual expenditure and forecasts, in line with sponsor requirements.
- Work in conjunction with Research Accounts, Finance Division, to ensure that reports are submitted as per sponsor deadlines.

Audits

- Sole responsibility for audit preparations for your own portfolio of projects, i.e. creation of audit file, preparation of responses to external auditor

Management of individual grant portfolio

- Gain a full understanding of both financial risk and financial gain, e.g. foreign currency exchange rate effect and budget virements at varying reimbursement levels, and the ability to calculate and identify their impact on the Department. Reporting any risk to the Senior Finance Officer, Finance Manager and Departmental Administrator, as and when necessary.
- Liaise and correspond with external funding bodies – UK Research Councils, European Commission, UK and non-UK governmental, charitable and commercial organisations.
- Confirming availability of funds and eligibility of costs prior to expenditure being incurred.

Selection Criteria

Essential:

- Significant experience in the management of high volume, complex financial projects
- A good understanding and practical experience of the principles of accounting and financial controls.
- A proven track record of working in adherence to an individual sponsor's financial terms and conditions, keeping up to date with any updates
- Flexible and adaptable approach required, mainly due to conflicting demands of individual Principal Investigators and internal and external deadlines
- Able to communicate effectively in English both orally and in writing.
- Expertise in preparing, maintaining and manipulating complex financial spreadsheets (using MS Excel)
- The ability to explain complex financial information in a way which can be understood by non-financial staff is essential
- The ability to effectively manage and prioritise a demanding and deadline driven workload, whilst maintaining strict attention to detail and generate accurate work.
- Able to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.
- Experience of managing confidential information in compliance with internal procedure and legislation
- Ability to make sound, informed decisions, and recognise when to escalate problems or issues which cannot be resolved.

Desirable:

- A relevant accountancy qualification or part thereof
- Previous experience of using Oracle Financials in relation to the management of grants
- Previous experience of working research grants and funding bodies.
- Familiarity with the University Financial Regulations and Guidelines and the ability to explain them to non-financial staff
- Sufficient specialist knowledge to deal with questions from academic staff about the many differing sets of rules from the different project awarding bodies.
- Experience of preparing financial audit reports

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.

Salary and Benefits

The post, which is a full-time, permanent appointment, has a salary on the University grade 06S scale (currently £27,057 to £32,277 p.a.). This includes membership of the Universities

Superannuation Scheme (USS) and has an annual leave entitlement of 38 days per year (inclusive of all public holidays and university closed periods).

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. All applicants must read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/>.

All academic and related posts (any grade above grade 5) are subject to the University's retirement policy. The University operates an employer justified retirement age, for which the retirement date is the 30 September immediately preceding the 68th birthday. Applicants should be aware that any employment beyond the University's retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures outlined at:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire/ejra/.

Working at the University of Oxford

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

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

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.

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk. 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.