

## Job Description



### DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

<b>Job title</b>	Research Assistant in Development Economics
<b>Division</b>	Social Sciences
<b>Department</b>	Economics
<b>Location</b>	Department of Economics, Manor Road Building and the Blavatnik School of Government
<b>Grade and salary</b>	Grade 6: £29,176 - £34,804 per annum
<b>Hours</b>	Full time (37.5 hours/week), (a minimum of 0.5 FTE will be considered)
<b>Contract type</b>	Fixed-term for 1 year, externally funded
<b>Reporting to</b>	Professor Stefan Dercon and Dr Noam Angrist
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	150090

## The role

Key aim: Conduct research activities to support a programme on human capital and development economics. This includes human capital research linked to the World Bank Human Capital Index as well as a new human capital initiative supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and led by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), one of the largest and oldest economics think tanks in Africa. This will also include research on scale-up of evidence-based health and education programs in partnership with one of the largest NGOs in Southern Africa, Young 1ove, which conducts randomized controlled trials and scales-up results in partnership with governments.

The Department of Economics is seeking a Research Assistant to support ongoing work by development economists at the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE).

Led by Professor Stefan Dercon, CSAE is a research centre jointly hosted by the Department of Economics and the Blavatnik School of Government. Under the supervision of Dr Noam Angrist, the Research Assistant will support ongoing work by development economists at the intersection of development economics and human capital, which aims to facilitate research that can translate into policy.

A successful candidate will possess excellent data analysis and statistics/econometrics skills, with a clear knowledge of impact evaluation. They should have excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to manage their own research and administrative activities effectively. A first degree in economics, public policy, or development studies (with a focus on development economics), experience of development economics and behavioural economics, and flexible can-do approach to work are essential. A Master's degree in economics, public policy, or development studies (with a focus on development economics) is desirable.



The managers of the team undertake to create a supportive research environment, provide structures and mentorship to facilitate the long-term career development of staff, and structure work to maximise the potential for autonomy, creativity and personal growth.

## **Responsibilities / Duties**

The postholder is required to perform the following duties to the satisfaction of the PI:

- to develop and manage research projects as part of the overall research agenda in the ERC grant. This research should be of a quality commensurate with publication in leading international economics journals
- Manage own academic research and administrative activities. This involves small scale project management, to co-ordinate multiple aspects of work to meet deadlines, co-operating in the administration of the research project
- to work collaboratively with the principal investigator and other members of the research team including other researchers and research assistants
- Adapt existing and develop new research methodologies and materials
- Prepare working theories and quantitative data from a variety of sources, reviewing and refining theories as appropriate
- Collaborate in the preparation of research publications, and book chapters
- Present papers at international conferences or public meetings including research workshops
- Play a full role in the intellectual life of the Department including taking part in the seminars and workshops of the Econometrics group
- Act as a source of information and advice to other members of the group on methodologies or procedures
- 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
- Manage academic research and administrative activities, within guidelines provided by the Principal Investigator;
- Clean data to be ready for in-depth analysis and enable replication of results;
- Conduct data analysis with relevant insights under supervision on randomized controlled trials and/or large-scale administrative datasets;
- Undertake comprehensive and systematic literature reviews and write up the results;
- Collate data from existing databases (such as the World Bank Human Capital Index, Afrobarometer, or RCT databases);

- Compile and structure data from text information (such as legal statutes on education reforms) into data;
- Contribute to discussions and share research findings with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups;
- Contribute to research publications, book chapters and reviews.

## **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/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/).

## **Selection criteria**

### **Essential**

- Undergraduate degree in economics, public policy, or development studies with a focus on development economics;
- Strong written and oral communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively to relevant academic and non-academic audiences using a range of media;
- Ability to manage research and administrative activities, with a systematic, thorough and well-organised approach to work;
- Fluency with Stata;
- Quantitative data analysis skills, understanding of statistical methods, and experience in manipulating large datasets;
- Ability to innovate and take the initiative on developing new methodologies;
- Excellent interpersonal skills including experience of working collaboratively within a successful team;
- A flexible can-do approach, self-motivation, resilience and a willingness to adapt to the changing needs and priorities in your team.
- Experience of, and an interest in, development economics and behavioural economics.

### **Desirable**

- Master's degree in economics, public policy, or development studies with a focus on development economics;
- Excellent skills in statistics/econometrics;
- Knowledge of impact evaluation;

## 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. Income from external research contracts in 2016/17 exceeded £564m and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. 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](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation).

## The Department of Economics

The Department is one of the largest and most diverse groups of academic economists in Europe with a permanent faculty of nearly 50 including 11 statutory (established) professors, and around 25 early career researchers on fixed-term appointments of 3 or 4 years. Our members include some of the world's most distinguished academic economists.

We aim to produce first-class research across the range of the discipline, organised within nine Research Groups, covering all the major sub-fields as well as more specialist areas such as Economic History and Behavioural Economics. The Research Groups promote and support high-quality research and interaction, and provide an active and supportive research environment for faculty and research students in their field, including regular seminars/workshops. The Department is also home to several specialised economics research centres, including the world-renowned *Centre for the Study of African Economies*. In the most recent assessment of the research output of UK universities, REF 2014, Oxford had more research in economics and econometrics graded world-leading in terms of its originality, rigour and significance than any other UK institution.

Members of the Department provide economics teaching for three undergraduate programmes (including Oxford's flagship *Philosophy, Politics and Economics* degree) and five graduate programmes including the *MPhil* and *DPhil in Economics*, with a total of around 1000 undergraduate and 330 graduate students.

For more information please visit: [www.economics.ox.ac.uk](http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk).

The Department of Economics holds a bronze Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

## Centre for the Study of African Economies

The Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at the Department of Economics and the Blavatnik School of Government is a leading research centre in development economics. You will have the opportunity to engage with the large community of development economists at the Centre of the Study of African Economies and in the broader Oxford community.

You will work directly with Stefan Dercon, his academic collaborators and implementation partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bangladesh. We structure work to maximise the potential for autonomy, creativity and personal growth in both research and policy environments.

<https://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/>

## Social Sciences Division

The University's academic departments and faculties are organised into four large groups, known as Academic Divisions (Social Sciences, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS), Medical Sciences, and Humanities). The divisions are responsible for academic oversight of the teaching and research of their constituent departments and faculties, for strategic and operational planning, and for personnel and resource management. The Head of the Social Sciences Division is Professor Sarah Whatmore, who is a member of the University's Council.

The Social Sciences Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences, with activity spanning fourteen departments and faculties and one cross-divisional unit, and strong interdisciplinary links within and beyond the university. The results of REF 2014 confirmed Oxford as the UK powerhouse in the social sciences, with more world-leading (4\*) research than any other institution.

Academic and research staff and research students are engaged in world-leading research, challenging current ideas and theories and tackling major challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, migration, governance, poverty and development, and justice. Researchers engage actively in many spheres from innovation in public policymaking to practitioner communities such as law, business, education, social welfare and NGOs. The division has an extensive portfolio of external funders and collaborators, with competitively-awarded external research income exceeding £40million per year

The division delivers an exceptional range of high quality educational programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research), underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics. Programmes range from widely recognised undergraduate degrees such as Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), and graduate programmes providing rigorously academic research training, through to professionally-oriented graduate provision in areas such as business, law and education.

For more information please visit: <http://www.socsci.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](#).

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. Please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will also be asked to upload a CV, a cover letter, and a writing sample of approximately 5,000-10,000 words (this can be a subset of a longer paper or brief). 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).

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 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).*

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email [recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk). Further help and support is available from the [University’s Recruitment support webpage](#). To return to the online application at any stage, please go to the [University’s Job Search webpage](#).

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/](http://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/](http://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. The University has adopted an EJRA of 30 September before the 69<sup>th</sup> 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/acrelretire8+/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/).

For **existing** employees, any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/acrelretire8+/).

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 [employee benefits and discounts](#) also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums.

## 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.

## 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.

There is also a [visa loan scheme](#) to cover the costs of UK visa applications for staff and their dependents.

## 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.

## Childcare

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries. Full details, including how to apply and the costs, can be found on the [University's Childcare Services website](#)

## Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. Further details on the support for disabled staff, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, can be found on the [University's Support for disabled staff webpage](#).

## 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 on the [University's Equality and Diversity Unit 'Networks' webpage](#).

## 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.