



Job description and selection criteria

Job title	Senior Communications Officer
Division	Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS)
Department	Computer Science
Location	Wolfson Building, Parks Road, Oxford.
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024 - £44,263 per annum pro-rata
Hours	Part-time with 0.7 FTE Remote working will be considered (the majority of the team work 2 days a week in the office and there is a weekly anchor day). A flexible working pattern will be considered.
Contract type	Fixed-term for 1 year
Reporting to	Strategic Communications Manager
Vacancy Reference	171797

Overview of the role

The Senior Communications Officer supports the Strategic Communications Manager to help the Department of Computer Science build on its reputation for world-leading research and teaching in computer science. This role is responsible for developing effective external communications strategies with a focus on promoting the department's activities and achievements, tailoring for different audiences and measuring the effectiveness of campaigns.

The Senior Communications Officer is the lead for external communications in the departmental Communications team. The post holder will join the dots between the channels to ensure communications delivery is strategic, informed by data and achieves best practice. This post holder will develop and implement effective external communications strategies that align with departmental priorities, in conjunction with the Strategic Communications Manager and senior departmental stakeholders.

The post holder will create high quality external content for multiple channels. This will range from working with the University's Public Affairs Directorate to create press releases ensure top research



stories are covered by the media; writing and editing fundraising brochures; to creating alumni newsletters. This work should be strategic and involve high-level stakeholders. This post will also act as a point of contact for media enquiries (working with the Public Affairs Directorate) and offer guidance to members of the department who are involved in media relations.

Responsibilities/duties

The main duties of the successful candidate will include:

- Work with the Strategic Communications Manager to deliver the external communications aspects of the department's communications strategy.
- Act as the external communications specialist in the Communications teams and join the dots between the channels to ensure communications delivery is strategic, informed by data and achieves best practice. Act as a supportive team member, supporting less experienced team members.
- Act as the external communications specialist in the department, deliver tailored communications training to members of the department as required. Provide specialist communications advice to colleagues.
- Write, edit and proofread a range of external communications materials for broad audiences from news items, long form research communications articles, departmental brochures to alumni newsletters. Gather and process technical information quickly and making it understandable to a wide range of audiences.
- Identify and engage with a range of stakeholders and audiences, providing timely and relevant information to them as appropriate.
- Lead in writing high quality news articles for non-specialist audiences. Act as a primary point of contact for media queries at the department, liaising with the communications/news teams at divisional and central university level. Contribute to University of Oxford publicity campaigns as appropriate.
- Ensure that departmental communications follow the University guidelines on branding, and encourage others to use them. As the owner of the department's brand, maintaining an oversight of all departmental external publications and communications, ensuring consistency in terms of presentation, style and the effective communication of the organisation's core values and key messages.
- Be an active member of the University's Communications Community and/or other relevant networks/groups in order to share information, promote best practice and ensure cross-University communications are coordinated.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience.
- Extensive experience in external communications including experience of devising and implementing successful external communications 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.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including diplomacy and the ability to inspire the confidence of senior colleagues.
- Excellent research and analytical skills, including the ability to interpret complex data.
- Ability to work independently in a complex environment, balancing multiple requests or projects taking initiative when necessary and prioritising effectively to meet deadlines.
- Proficiency working with a range of computer-based and online applications, including website content management systems, newsletter software, and customer relationship management systems.

Desirable

- Professional qualification in public relations or marketing.
- Experience working in higher education.
- Experience of day-to-day task allocation and guidance for less experienced colleagues.
- Knowledge or interest in Computer Sciences.

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 Computer Science

The Department of Computer Science is consistently recognised as the internationally leading centre of research and teaching across a broad spectrum of computer science, ranging from foundational discoveries to interdisciplinary work with significant real-world impact.

We are proud of our history as one of the longest-established computer science departments in the country, as we continue to provide first-rate undergraduate and postgraduate teaching to some of the world's brightest minds. We enjoy close links with other University departments and Oxford research groups and institutes.

Our greatest asset is our people. We consistently attract the best staff and students and, thanks to them, we have been ranked as the world's leading university for computer sciences for six years in a row by the *Times Higher Education*.

Find out more information on our website <https://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/>

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 and the MPLS Division is home to our non-medical sciences, with 9 academic departments that 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 tackles major societal and technological challenges – whether developing new energy solutions or improved cancer treatments, understanding climate change processes, or helping to preserve biodiversity, 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 and we have a strong tradition of attracting and nurturing the very best early career researchers who regularly secure prestigious fellowships and faculty positions. MPLS continues in its work to support diversity in its staffing, seeing that it will bring benefits to all, and we are pleased to note that all academic departments in the Division hold Athena Swan Awards.

We have around 7,000 full and part-time students (including approximately 3,500 graduate 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 diverse 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 (www.oxfordsparks.ox.ac.uk) 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 bring the potential of our scientific efforts forward for practical and beneficial application to the real world and our desire, aided by the work of Oxford University Innovation and Oxford Sciences Innovation, is to link our best scientific minds with industry and public policy makers.

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

How to apply

Applications are made through our online recruitment portal. Information about how to apply is available 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 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

Application FAQs, including technical troubleshooting advice is available at:

<https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-support-fags>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly (hr@cs.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 online recruitment portal 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 very senior research posts at **grade RSIV/D35 and clinical equivalents E62 and E82** of 30 September before the 70th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>. For **existing** employees on these grades, 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 other grades 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, flexible working options, travel discounts including salary sacrifice schemes for bicycles and electric cars and other discounts. Staff can access a huge range of personal and professional development opportunities. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits>

Employee Assistance Programme

As part of our wellbeing offering staff get free access to Health Assured, a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-assured-eap>

University Club and sports facilities

Membership of the University Club is free for University staff. It 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 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 dependants. See <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Family-friendly benefits

We are a family-friendly employer with one of the most generous family leave schemes in the Higher Education sector. Our Childcare Services team provides guidance and support on childcare provision, and offers a range of high quality childcare options at affordable prices for staff. In addition to 5 University nurseries, we partner with a number of local providers to offer in excess of 450 full time nursery places to our staff. Eligible parents are able to pay for childcare through salary sacrifice, further reducing costs.

See <https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/> . We also subscribe to the Work+Family Space, a service that provides practical advice and support for employees who have caring responsibilities for dependants of all types. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care>

Supporting disability and health-related issues (inc menopause)

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including those experiencing negative effects of menopause. Information about the University's Staff Disability Advisor, is at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support>. For information about how we support those going through menopause see <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/menopause-guidance>

Staff networks

The University has a number of staff networks including for research staff, BME staff, LGBT+ staff, disabled staff network and those going through menopause. Find out more at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks>

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club is 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.

Research staff

The Researcher Hub supports all researchers on fixed-term contracts. They aim to help you settle in comfortably, make connections, grow as a person, extend your research expertise and approach your next career step with confidence. Find out more <https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/researcher-hub>

Oxford's Research Staff Society is a collective voice for our researchers. They also organise social and professional networking activities for researchers. Find out more <https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/connecting-other-researchers/oxford-research-staff-society>