



Job Description

Summary

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Associate
Division	Social Sciences Division
Department	Sociology
Location	42-43 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1JD
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £39,424 - £47,779 per annum (with a discretionary range to £53,483)
Hours	Full time (0.8 FTE would be considered)
Contract type	Fixed-term for 3 years
Vacancy reference	187326

The role

This postdoctoral research position supports a project called “Falling into Cybercrime: The Socio-Economic Factors of Youth Hacking and Cybercrime”. The project is led by Associate Professor Jonathan Lusthaus, and also includes Dr Lindsay Richards. This 3-year project is focussed on understanding the drivers of youth hacking and the risk factors associated with hacking populations falling into cybercrime. It takes both a global and local approach. At the global level, it seeks to explain why some countries are more likely to produce significant numbers of hackers and what risk factors make these populations more likely to fall into cybercrime. At the local level it takes the UK as a case study, to understand the same question in a more granular way: what drivers explain why British youths become hackers and why do a proportion of this group become involved in criminal hacking. The project is based in the Department of Sociology and is supported by The Hacking Games.

Working with the PI and CI, and alongside a doctoral researcher, the postholder will take a key role in carrying out this research, and helping to coordinate it. The post is intended for a strong mixed methods researcher, with a research background in cybercrime, criminology, sociology, education or related fields. Those with past research experience in life course criminology are particularly encouraged to apply. Applicants should be comfortable with carrying out data collection. This includes, for example, involvement in survey design and deployment, as well as accessing secondary datasets and creating/curating new datasets based on public and other sources. There may be some engagement with youths and members of the hacking community. While some qualitative skills are an



asset, the emphasis of the post is on quantitative elements. The postholder should begin the post with at least intermediate statistical skills (e.g. conducting well thought out regressions). The postholder should also be comfortable dealing with a range of stakeholders from industry and government.

The post is to start as soon as possible, preferably by October 2026, but with some flexibility for a later start date if required. We are seeking a full-time postholder but are open to applicants seeking part-time arrangements. For informal inquiries about the post, please contact jonathan.lusthaus@sociology.ox.ac.uk or lindsay.richards@sociology.ox.ac.uk. Given the challenges of communication over the summer period, any inquiries are best made during July.

Responsibilities

- Manage own academic research and administrative activities. This involves small scale project management, to co-ordinate multiple aspects of work to meet deadlines
- Adapt existing and develop new research methodologies
- Prepare working theories and analyse quantitative data, along with qualitative data, from a variety of sources, reviewing and refining theories as appropriate
- Assist the PI and CI with project management and coordination, as well as funder/partnership liaison
- Perform mixed methods research to meet the project aims
- Take the lead in performing and reviewing quantitative analysis across the project
- Contribute ideas for research streams
- Develop ideas for generating research income, and present detailed research proposals to senior researchers
- Collaborate in the preparation of research publications, and book chapters
- Present papers at conferences or public meetings
- 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
- The post holder may have the opportunity to undertake ad-hoc paid teaching (this includes lecturing, demonstrating, small-group teaching, tutoring of undergraduates and graduate students) and supervision of master's projects in collaboration with principal investigators. Permission must be sought in advance for each opportunity.

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

- Hold a relevant PhD/DPhil, together with relevant experience, with respect to cybercrime, criminology, sociology, education or a related discipline
- Possess strong mixed methods skills, with an emphasis towards quantitative methods
- Experience carrying out data collection
- Possess sufficient specialist knowledge about cybercrime, hacking, youths, education, employment, or other fields related to this project
- Ability to manage own academic research and associated activities
- Previous experience of contributing to publications/presentations
- Ability to contribute ideas for new research projects and research income generation
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write for publication, present research proposals and results, and represent the research group at meetings

Desirable selection criteria

- Experience working in the field of life course criminology
- Experience working with stakeholders from industry and government
- Experience of independently managing a discrete area of a research project
- Experience of actively collaborating in the development of research articles for publication

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. If you have previously worked for the University we will also verify key information such as your dates of employment and reason for leaving your previous role with the department/unit where you worked. 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>

Department of Sociology

Sociology at Oxford has a strong analytical, empirical and comparative orientation. Our focus is on rigorous description as well as on developing and testing explanatory theories to account for significant social regularities. Particular strengths include the statistical analysis of observational data, social demography, crime (including organized crime), family, gender, social mobility and inequalities, health, political and social attitudes, the collection, management and analysis of complex data. The Department of Sociology was established in 1999 to provide a renewed focus for sociological research and teaching in the University.

The international reputation of Oxford Sociology remains widely recognised. Sociology is currently ranked second in the world (and first in Europe) according to QS Rankings by Subject 2022, first in the sociology UoA in the REF and has been highly successful, given its size, in generating external research income. Oxford has a long and distinguished history of sociological research.

As well as undertaking cutting-edge research, the Department carries out the full range of postgraduate teaching and research, provides teaching and support for undergraduate courses administered by other departments, and has about 40 staff and around 100 graduate students and academic visitors.

The Department offers two taught courses: a one-year MSc in Sociology and a two-year MPhil in Sociology and Demography, which together have an intake of about 35 students per year. In addition, about 15 doctoral students are admitted each year. The Department of Sociology also offers teaching for the undergraduate degree programmes in Human Sciences, and Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE).

Academic staff have access to the Social Sciences library, which is housed in the Manor Road Building and also to the library in Nuffield College. There is a very strong research culture within the Department, with two weekly Sociology seminar series running during term.

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

For more information please visit: www.sociology.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 strategy and operational planning, oversight of the teaching and research of their constituent departments and faculties, and for personnel and resource management. The social sciences at Oxford are distinctive both for their depth and breadth, with over 1,100 academic and research staff working across fifteen departments, faculties and schools. The Head of the Social Sciences Division is Professor Timothy Power.

The Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences. The University of Oxford has regularly received top placement for social sciences subjects globally in recent Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings.

More than 800 researchers were returned to Main Panel C (Social Sciences) for REF 2021 across a diverse range of subject area 'units of assessment' – from geography and business to archaeology and law. Over 55% of the research submitted from the Division was judged to be world-leading (4*, the highest score available). More than two-thirds (69%) of the research's impact was also recognised as world-leading (4*). Research from across the Division was also submitted to subject areas across Panels A (Medicine, health and life sciences), B (Physical sciences, engineering and mathematics), and D (Arts and Humanities), highlighting the enormous breadth and diversity of research expertise across the Division.

Our academic and research staff and students are international thought leaders, generating new evidence, insights and policy tools with which to address some of the major global challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, poverty and forced migration, effective governance and justice. Particular research highlights in recent years have included [COVID-19](#) and [Climate Change](#). As well as active interdisciplinary links with researchers in other divisions at Oxford, we engage and collaborate extensively with other universities and a wide range of governmental and non-governmental practitioner communities such as law, business, public health and welfare, international development and education around the world. The Division has an extensive portfolio of external funders, partners and supporters, with competitively-awarded external research income exceeding £50 million per year and philanthropic income over £25 million a year.

As part of our commitment to equality of opportunity, thirteen of our departments have achieved Bronze awards under the Athena Swan Charter (a UK accreditation scheme recognising organisations' commitment to equality and diversity, particularly in gender). Our School of Geography and the Environment and our Department of

Economics hold Athena Swan Silver awards. In February 2023, for the first time, the University as a whole was awarded an institutional Athena Swan Silver award, acknowledging the progress that has been made in addressing a number of gender gaps across the University over the last five years.

The Division delivers an exceptional range of high-quality educational programmes all underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics. The student body is made up of over 2,000 undergraduate students, nearly 3,000 students studying postgraduate taught programmes and 1,200 postgraduate research students. The programmes we offer are wide-ranging, often interdisciplinary and include professionally-oriented provision in areas such as business, law and education. The Division is home to several of Oxford's most widely recognised teaching programmes, such as Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at undergraduate level; and at the Masters level programmes such as the Bachelor in Civil Law (BCL), Environmental Change and Management, International Relations, and Social Data Science.

For more information, please visit: www.socsci.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 internal candidates

If you currently work at the University please note that:

- as part of the referencing process, we will contact your current department to confirm basic employment details including reason for leaving and information about your performance.
- although employees may hold multiple part-time posts, they may not hold more than the equivalent of a full time post. If you are offered this post, and accepting it would take you over the equivalent of full-time hours, you will be expected to resign from, or reduce hours in, your other posts(s) before starting work in the new post.

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-faqs>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly at hr@sociology.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.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Oxford is committed to equal opportunity, and to being a place where everyone belongs and is supported to succeed. We recognise how the diversity of our community enriches our ability to deliver on our academic mission.

We welcome applications from individuals from all backgrounds, including those under-represented within higher education. No applicant or members of staff shall be unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined according to personal merit and the application of criteria related to the duties and conditions of the post. In all cases, the primary consideration will be the ability to perform the job.

As stated in the University's Equality Policy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, our commitment to equality and diversity goes hand in hand with our commitment to academic freedom and free speech.

Benefits of working at the University

Employee benefits

University employees enjoy 38 days' paid holiday, generous pension schemes, flexible working options, support for [sustainable travel](#) and other discounts. Staff can also 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 a confidential employee assistance programme, available 24/7 for 365 days a year. Find out more at <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/thriving-at-oxford>

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

Please see our Life in Oxford webpage for information on relocating to and settling into the Oxford area. The website offers valuable guidance, including information on where to find more details about housing, transportation, finances, healthcare, and other key aspects of living in Oxford and the surrounding region. See [Life in Oxford | Oxford University Jobs](#)

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 (see <https://hr.web.ox.ac.uk/family-leave>). 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/>.

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>