



**NUFFIELD
COLLEGE**

Postdoctoral Research Officer (ESRC Brexit Project) – Centre for Social Investigation

Further particulars and selection criteria

College	NUFFIELD
Division	Social Sciences Division, University of Oxford
Location	The post will be based in the Centre for Social Investigation at Nuffield College
Salary	£30,478 per annum
Duration	18 months (fixed term)
Working hours	Full time (35 hours per week)

Overview

Nuffield College intends to appoint, with effect from 1 July 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter, a Postdoctoral Research Officer to work on a new ESRC-funded project on attitude formation and change in the run-up to Brexit. We hope to identify and attract a candidate holding, or reaching the end of, a doctorate in a relevant social science discipline who will be contributing to the data collection process and who will have the potential to produce high quality research. The project will run for 18 months and the post will be fixed-term for this period.

About the Project

This is a new ESRC-funded project: *Fixed, Crystallising or diverging: Attitude formation and change in the run-up to Brexit*. The primary objective of this research will be to produce high quality research outputs for policy-makers on citizens' preferences and expectations on Brexit outcomes.

Attitudes towards immigration and the economy were considered to be major drivers of the vote choice in the EU Referendum, as were issues of sovereignty and 'taking back control'. The government has also expressed clear intention to keep faith with the electorate, and will want to ensure that the post-Brexit immigration system and economic strategy meets with public approval. Yet voter preferences are going to be challenging to translate into policy. Public opinion is highly diverse: as well as varying across different sections of the public, some attitudes may be held more firmly than others and thus represent a real constraint on policy-making. Citizens may be willing to allow trade-offs, for example, accepting a certain level of immigration as a cost worth paying in order to keep trading options open. On the other hand there may be 'red lines' which sections of the public will not be prepared to cross.

Over the course of the project, we expect that public opinion will react to developments in EU negotiations, as well as to other social and economic events. As such we have the specific intention to provide regular outputs for policy makers in the form of new or updated evidence on changes in expectations and their drivers, and to do so in a timely manner. This objective has been the motivating factor for our choice of an internet panel to collect primary data that are fit for purpose, specific and targeted.

In terms of the focus of the research our goal is to go further than broad description of public opinion, and we have the following research objectives:

- Firstly, we want to examine the detailed structure of public attitudes and opinion, including willingness to make trade-offs, the degree to which there is regional variation, and understanding the policy areas in which people will accept supranational governance.
- Secondly, we are seeking to understand the dynamics of change in attitudes and expectations. To what extent are individual opinions on Brexit-related matters 'set in stone'? We are interested in patterns of change, whether we find convergence over time or divergence and polarization between different segments of the population. We may find a crystallization of attitudes and identities over time, or a blurring of identity boundaries as the complexities of the negotiations become apparent.
- Thirdly, we aim to understand the drivers of changing attitudes, and the role played by individual factors (e.g. social class), social identities (e.g. Brexiteer), and contextual factors (e.g. macro-economic changes).

We plan to collect primary data using an internet panel, a method which is relatively new but gaining ground in the social sciences. Internet panels have the major advantage of being quick in terms of the data collection process, and we aim to do six rounds of data collection over the 18-month project period. An additional objective of this project will be to move forward the methodological understanding of the strengths and limitations of internet panels for researching opinion and opinion change.

Any requests for further information about this post or any queries should be addressed to the College Registrar at Nuffield, pprf@nuffield.ox.ac.uk. Further information about CSI can be found on the Centre's website <http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/> or by contacting Lindsay.richards@nuffield.ox.ac.uk

Main Responsibilities/Duties

The duties of the successful candidate will be:

- To participate in the planning and implementation of the internet panel study, taking ownership of the daily communication with our data collection partner;
- To take on a benchmarking exercise using representative surveys and to develop appropriate procedures for 'calibrating' the internet panel results.
- To undertake initial analysis for wide dissemination including 1) a series of short reports aimed at policy makers and 2) a longer, more detailed, policy report towards the end of the project
- To contribute to the dissemination of the results through participation in relevant research conferences, policy workshops and by liaising with project stakeholders and the project media specialist
- To carry out a detailed literature review;

- To undertake more detailed academic analysis of the panel data;
- To co-author an academic article on the reliability of internet panel data for attitudinal research;
- We also expect the successful candidate to represent the Centre and its work and to contribute to the administrative and technical functions of the Centre, for example by preparing the quarterly newsletter

The person appointed will be based at the Centre for Social Investigation at Nuffield College and will work in collaboration with Dr Lindsay Richards and under the supervision of Professor Anthony Heath; she/he would have the opportunity to co-author journal articles arising from the research.

Selection criteria

Candidates will be judged on the basis of the following criteria and should ensure that their covering letter shows in their own words how they meet the criteria.

Essential criteria

- To hold a doctorate, or be close to finishing a doctorate, in a relevant social science discipline (such as economics, political science, sociology and social psychology);
- To have a good record of scholarly writing and publication (appropriate to the candidate's stage of the academic career);
- To hold a good record of writing for a policy audience, i.e. to be able to translate and distil complex results for non-academic readers;
- To have a high standard of statistical skills including good knowledge of Stata, SPSS or R, and the ability to contribute to the design and conduct of the data collection;
- To have a high standard of writing skills, and communication skills;
- To have a good knowledge of the literature relevant to the study of attitude formation and change;
- To have the ability to work constructively as part of a small research team

Desirable

- To have experience of internet panel methodology (including survey experiments) and/ or awareness of the methodological issues and debate around internet panel methods;
- Good knowledge of a relevant aspect of Brexit-related attitudes, such as attitudes to immigration, attitudes towards the economy, or issues of sovereignty;

Terms and Conditions of Employment

The Postdoctoral Research Officer's salary will be within the College's Research Officer scale and is currently set at £30,478. Any cost-of-living awards will be effective from 1 August each year.

The post is a full-time appointment for a fixed term of eighteen months starting on 1 July 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter. There will be an initial probationary period of six months. The post will be based in the College's Centre for Social Investigation (CSI) directed by Professor Anthony Heath.

The Postdoctoral Research Officer will be entitled to College office space, free lunch and dinner (when the kitchen is open), and two academic High Table guests per term at the expense of the College. In addition, access to travel and other internal research funds is available, as appropriate.

Telephone, fax, photocopying and postage expenditure incurred by the Postdoctoral Research Officer for academic purposes will be met by the College.

Academic and research staff with children may apply for childcare places at one of the three nurseries run by the University and the four nurseries run by Oxford colleges. Demand for available places is high and places are not guaranteed. The University's Childcare Services can give advice on other childcare providers in Oxford (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/>).

The College functions as an academic community throughout the whole year, so that research and teaching activities are not confined to the University's three terms. No office or appointment may be accepted, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of Governing Body. The Postdoctoral Research Officer is required to reside within 25 miles of Oxford and is also required to obtain permission of the College if she or he wishes to take leave of absence.

Candidates will not be subject to any test of a religious, political or racial character.

Successful applicants who do not currently have the right to work in the UK will be required to apply for permission to do so under the UK points-based immigration system.

How to apply

Interested candidates should send an application package via e-mail as .pdf attachments, to pprf@nuffield.ox.ac.uk. The application package should consist of:

- i) a covering letter;
- ii) a curriculum vitae;
- iii) two samples of their written work (together with a one-page abstract for each sample).
Published work will be treated in the same manner as unpublished work; and
- iv) a Recruitment Monitoring form

The deadline for receipt of application packages is **Monday 12 June 2017**.

Applicants should also ask at least two referees to send references directly to the College Registrar (pprf@nuffield.ox.ac.uk), also to arrive by Monday 12 June 2017.

Enquiries: e-mail pprf@nuffield.ox.ac.uk; tel. +44 1865 278 516; or fax +44 1865 278 621

Interviews are likely to be held in the week beginning 19 June 2017. Applications will be reviewed as they are received and candidates may be invited for interview in advance of the closing date.

Nuffield College exists to promote excellence in education and research, and is an equal opportunities employer committed to equality and valuing diversity. Applications are particularly welcome from women, from disabled people and from black or ethnic minority candidates, who are currently under-represented in posts in the College.

Further Information

NUFFIELD COLLEGE

Nuffield College is a graduate college within the University of Oxford which was founded in 1937 and specialises in the Social Sciences, particularly Economics, Politics, and Sociology. It aims to be one of the world's outstanding social science institutions, providing a stimulating research-orientated environment for postgraduate students, research fellows, and senior academics and promoting, according to its Charter, 'the study by co-operation between academic and non-academic persons of social (including economic and political) problems'. About 30 students are admitted each year to undertake both taught masters courses and doctoral research for many of whom the College provides financial support in the form of studentships. In total there are about 100 students enrolled at any one time, many of whom either live in College or have offices in College. Postdoctoral Fellows are an important part of the College. In 2016-17 there are 60 Research Fellows in the College of whom 3 are based in the Centre for Social Investigation, 23 are Prize Postdoctoral Research Fellows funded by the College; and the remainder hold posts in the Departments of Economics, Politics and International Relations, Sociology, and Social Policy and Intervention.

The College has in addition 37 permanent academic Fellows (of whom 8 are College-funded Official Fellows), 26 non-academic Visiting Fellows drawn from the world of business, industry, politics and administration; and a number of Research Officers working on research projects run by the College's Fellows. The College enjoys strong links with the University's social science departments and works closely with the Social Sciences Division.

Nuffield College has been – and continues to be – the source of some of the major research developments in social science. These include the British Election Studies and the major programme of research on Social Mobility in Britain. It was the birthplace of the 'Oxford School' of Industrial Relations; it pioneered the development of cost benefit analysis for developing countries; and it has made a major contribution to the methodology of econometrics.

Research Facilities

The size and specialised nature of the College enable its members to work closely with one another in a stimulating and research-orientated environment. A 'critical mass' of students and Fellows working in the social sciences is helpful both in terms of facilities and of intellectual activity, such as the active seminar and conference programme.

The College Library is one of the finest in the social sciences and functions as a research library, reflecting the academic interests of the Fellows. The Library is open shelf and accessible 24 hours a day. Fellows also have access to all the facilities of the Bodleian Library, including full-text access to nearly all journals in the social sciences.

Research Centres in Nuffield College

The College currently hosts several research centres, focusing on different aspects of and approaches to the study of social sciences:

The **Centre for Experimental Social Sciences (CESS)** was established to promote and facilitate experimental research by social scientists in Oxford. The CESS offers an on-site laboratory with 25 computer stations, and maintains a large subject pool. The facilities are designed to support a wide

range of experiments. The CESS also maintains an online panel of UK residents, and provides supports for fielding online survey experiments. The CESS has a regular seminar series that highlights the work of renowned scholars employing experimental methods. Periodic workshops held by the CESS provide training for researchers in experimental research design, experimental data analysis, and programming languages (including ztree and Qualtrics). More information on CESS is available at <http://cess-web.nuff.ox.ac.uk>.

The **Centre for Social Investigation (CSI)**, where the Postdoctoral Research Officer will be based, is an interdisciplinary research programme; in keeping with the College's Charter which emphasizes 'the study by co-operation between academic and non-academic persons of social (including economic and political) problems', the Centre aims to address contemporary social issues of public interest and to engage with policy-makers and the public more generally, carrying out authoritative, non-partisan research on central social issues which draws upon expertise in economics, politics and sociology and related disciplines such as social policy. The Centre seeks to establish itself as an independent and rigorous source of information and analysis of contemporary social issues, communicated in an accessible way to nontechnical audiences, in addition to publishing technical work for academic audiences. Professor Anthony Heath serves as Director for the CSI, assisted by post-doctoral researchers.

CSI was launched at the British Academy in March 2015, the launch event focussing on social progress in Britain since the 1942 Beveridge Report which had identified the 'five giants of Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness on the road to reconstruction'. A series of briefing notes measuring social progress in Britain have been published on the CSI website, and the Centre is now in the final stages of completing a book for OUP on Social Progress in Britain.

In addition to the work on social progress the centre has completed a collaborative project with the Department for Communities and Local Government: 'Integration gaps and their socio-economic consequences'. Following-up this project, members of the centre gave evidence to the Casey Review and to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on social integration. A second major project was for the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission on changing inequalities: 'The childhood origins of social mobility: socio-economic inequalities and changing opportunities'. The report examined the antecedents of social mobility and asked whether inequalities are widening over time. The report was published in June 2016 and attracted widespread media coverage including an item by Mark Easton on the BBC TV news as well as articles on the BBC website and in the major broadsheets. A third completed project was a collaboration with the Trussell Trust and West Cheshire Foodbank on the characteristics of people accessing emergency food provision, and their reasons for referral to foodbanks.

A major on-going project (in partnership with teams from Essex University, the University of Utrecht, the University of Oslo, WZB Berlin and Carlos III University Madrid) is a two-year cross-national project employing field experiments to test for discrimination based on ethnic background and religion.

In addition to preparing briefing notes for policy-makers, members of the Centre are active in writing academic papers for refereed journals. Articles have been published in major journals such as the American Journal of Sociology, Social Forces, the Annual Review of Sociology, Child Development, Social Indicators Research, and Social Science and Medicine.

Further information about the Centre's activity can be found at <http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/> Further information about Nuffield College and its activities can be found on the College's website: www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk

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.

The University's 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 Social Sciences Division

Social Sciences is one of four academic Divisions in the University, each with considerable devolved budgetary and financial authority; and responsibility for providing a broad strategic focus across its constituent disciplines. Thirteen departments, one faculty, and three cross-divisional research units come under the aegis of the division which spans the full range of social science disciplines with links into the humanities and physical sciences (including Law, Management, Economics, Politics and International Relations, Sociology, Social Policy, Area Studies, Development Studies, Education, Anthropology, Archaeology, Geography, Public Policy). There are over 700 academic staff, 2,700 graduate students (postgraduate taught and postgraduate research), and 1900 undergraduates working and studying in the division.

The division is established as a world-leading centre for research in the social sciences and regularly sits at the highest levels of international league tables of one form or another. It is the largest grouping of social science disciplines in the UK and it is also home to several of Oxford's most widely recognised teaching programmes, such as PPE, the BCL, the MPhils in International Relations, in Economics, and in Development Studies, and the nationally regarded PGCE. We believe that excellence in teaching and research is synergistic and remain committed to sustaining and developing the high quality of our activities in both these areas. Our departments are committed to research which develops a greater understanding of all aspects of society, from the impact of political, legal and economic systems on social and economic welfare to human rights and security. That research is disseminated through innovative graduate programmes and enhances undergraduate courses. For more information please visit: <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk>.

Nothing in these particulars constitutes a contract.