Job Description

Job title	Operations Manager (Refugee-Led Research Hub)
Division	Social Sciences
Department	Oxford Department of International Development
Location	Queen Elizabeth House, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford, OX1 3TB
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £40,178 - £48,700 per annum, pro rata
Hours	Full time (37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed term until 30 September 2028 (with possibility of extension subject to further funding)
Reporting to	Director of Operations and Strategy, Refugee-Led Research Hub
Vacancy reference	188649
Additional information	Closing date: midday (UK time) on Thursday 26 November 2026 This role may not attract sufficient points to obtain a sponsored skilled worker visa, however applications are welcome from candidates who don't currently have the right to work in the UK, Should the successful candidate require a visa to obtain the right to work in the UK, we will discuss any suitable visa options with our Staff Immigration Team. Please note that we can only explore these options with the Staff Immigration Team after the successful candidate has been identified.

About Refugee-Led Research Hub (RLRH)

The Refugee-Led Research Hub (RLRH) supports individuals with lived experience of displacement to become leaders in fields related to human rights, forced migration, humanitarian response and development, politics, and law, among other areas. We do so by

delivering academic and professional development programming to a global cohort of students who have been affected by displacement—as refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, stateless, and beyond—supporting access to graduate degrees and advanced career opportunities. RLRH also creates opportunities for researchers with displacement backgrounds to lead primary and secondary research studies, from start to finish.

RLRH's team is composed of colleagues who are deeply committed to advancing refugee leadership, the majority of whom have lived experience of displacement. Our network of staff, researchers, students, and other affiliates is made up of 1,400+ individuals across 80+ countries. RLRH has five active offices: our first was established in Nairobi in 2020, we have had an office at the University of Oxford since 2021, and we have since developed physical hubs in Kakuma refugee camp (Kenya), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Kampala (Uganda), and in the Oxfordshire community (UK).

From October 2025 RLRH is funded to serve as a technical partner for the Mastercard Foundation's Scholars Program network, advancing an ambitious global agenda to support displacement-affected learners to access 1,000+ graduate-level scholarships at partner universities around the world. RLRH provides expert guidance and implements specialised programmes to help these learners enter university, thrive on course, and pursue meaningful and enduring careers on completion of their degrees. A complementary, refugee-led research agenda designed by RLRH colleagues produces insights to help Scholars Program partner universities and other stakeholders accelerate positive, long-lasting systems change.

About the Operations and Strategy Pillar

The Operations and Strategy Pillar provides the organisational infrastructure that enables RLRH to deliver high-quality programmes and advance its mission at scale. Working across finance, operations, people, organisational systems, planning, governance, and institutional partnerships, the Pillar ensures colleagues have the support and systems required to deliver meaningful work across multiple countries, institutional contexts, and funding streams.

As a globally distributed organisation operating across the University of Oxford, the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA), and a growing network of international offices, RLRH works within a complex operating environment that requires careful coordination, strong financial stewardship, and adaptable ways of working. The Operations and Strategy Pillar helps bring these different contexts together, building consistent organisational approaches while responding to local operational needs.

Beyond supporting day-to-day operations, the Pillar plays a central role in shaping how RLRH works and develops as an organisation. Through the continuous improvement of policies, systems, and ways of working that strengthen organisational effectiveness, improve organisational decision-making, support compliance, and enables the organisation to respond to new opportunities and challenges.

RLRH is entering a significant period of growth, with new regional hubs, expanding programmes, and a diversifying portfolio of funding and institutional partnerships. The Operations and Strategy Pillar helps turn this ambition into reality, building the foundations for sustainable growth while ensuring RLRH remains resilient, effective, and true to its mission.

Overview of the Role

As RLRH continues to expand globally, the Operations Manager will report to and work in close partnership with the Director of Operations and Strategy to provide operational leadership across the organisation's finance and operational support functions, ensuring systems, processes, and resources effectively enable the delivery of RLRH's programmes.

As an organisation hosted by the University of Oxford and operating through international host institutions, RLRH works within established finance and grants management structures rather than operating as an independent finance function. The Operations Manager will also work closely with the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID) finance team, Research Support, Post-Award, and other professional services across the University of Oxford, as well as colleagues within partner host institutions such as BIEA in Kenya and Ideas Academy in Malaysia. While these partnered teams provide institutional operations and financial administration oversight, this role is responsible for coordinating RLRH's internal financial planning, operations management, grant oversight, and organisational systems, ensuring financial and operational processes effectively support programme delivery, organisational priorities, sustainable growth, and compliance with institutional and donor requirements.

The role has responsibility for providing line management to the Finance Officer and Administrative Assistant based at the University of Oxford. The postholder will oversee finance, administration, procurement, travel, contracts, and operational support activities, ensuring these services operate efficiently, and maintain compliance.

Success in the role will depend not only on strong technical and operational expertise, but also on the ability to navigate complex institutional environments, build trusted relationships, and ensure colleagues have the systems, guidance and operational support they need to deliver RLRH's programmes and mission successfully.

Responsibilities

Financial Systems, Analysis, and Reporting (25%)

- Lead the preparation of regular financial reports and analyses to support organisational decision-making by providing RLRH senior leadership with clear oversight of financial performance, available resources, grant expenditure, financial risks, and opportunities.

- Coordinate the preparation, consolidation, and review of project budgets, financial forecasts, and expenditure reports across multiple funding streams.
- Maintain oversight over organisational financial commitments and advise on financial viability of new contracts and supplier agreements based on available and eligible grant balances.
- Manage cashflow forecasting and liquidity, ensuring RLRH can meet its ambitious global commitments and calling attention to fundraising risks.
- Lead the continuous development and improvement of financial systems, reporting tools, and workflows, ensuring information from host institutions and accounting systems is integrated effectively to support accurate financial management and reporting.

Financial Controls and Expenditure Tracking (20%)

- Provide oversight and quality assurance to the RLRH Finance Officer to ensure transaction-level tagging is accurate.
- Establish, implement, and monitor financial standards for how RLRH tracks expenses, ensuring alignment with Oxford, BIEA, and other emergent institutional compliance requirements.
- Coordinate and support internal and external audits, ensuring appropriate records, documentation, and controls are maintained.
- Build effective working relationships with host institutions to ensure compliance with responsibilities set out in collaboration agreements and financial reporting requirements.
- Work closely with the RLRH Finance Officer and Departmental Finance team to ensure month-end financial transactions, including journals and cost transfers, are completed accurately and in a timely manner, with expenditure correctly allocated to the appropriate funding streams, projects and cost centres.

Operational Policy, Governance, and Training (15%)

- Lead the development, implementation, and improvement of RLRH-specific financial and operational policies, SOPs, and guidance within the frameworks established by host institutions. Work with relevant institutional teams to ensure RLRH procedures complement and consistently apply wider organisational processes, while also meeting donor requirements and responding to RLRH's operational needs.
- Strengthen financial capability across RLRH by providing training and guidance on budgeting, monitoring, expenditure, and financial procedures.
- Identify and implement opportunities to improve operational processes, reduce administrative burden, and embed scalable ways of working across RLRH.

Donor Management and Compliance (15%)

- Lead the preparation of budgets and financial information for funding proposals, renewals, and organisational growth initiatives, working closely with senior leadership, programme teams, and host institutions.
- Maintain detailed knowledge of donor budgets and expenditure restrictions ensuring organisational spending remains compliant with approved budgets and funder requirements.
- Support the development of collaboration agreements and MOUs with host institutions and programme partners, ensuring appropriate financial and operational arrangements are in place for programme delivery.
- Act as the principal operations and finance liaison for funders working closely with the University Post-Award focal point to coordinate financial reporting, budget amendments, funder approvals, and other grant management requirements.
- Review donor financial reports prepared by the Finance Officer and lead re-budgeting exercises as per organisational priorities and donor requirements and deadlines (e.g. quarterly, bi-annually, annually).
- Provide strategic financial advice and guidance to programme teams on budgeting, expenditure, donor requirements and financial planning throughout the grant lifecycle.

Organisational Planning and Budgeting (15%)

- Lead the delivery of RLRH's annual budgeting and budget revisions, working closely with the Director of Operations and Strategy, senior leadership and the MEL team.
- Develop and maintain a multi-dimensional budgeting framework that supports organisational planning, resource allocation and budget management across departments, donors, programmes, and cost categories.
- Work closely with the Department Finance Manager to coordinate the quarterly forecasting process, reviewing financial performance against budget, and updating forecasts.
- Work closely with senior leadership and programme leads to ensure organisational planning is rooted in financial reality and that data collection informs future budget allocations.

People Management and Team Support (10%)

- Provide day-today leadership, coaching, workload planning, and quality assurance to the Finance Officer and Administrative Assistant, fostering their professional growth and technical proficiency.
- Maintain a dotted-line relationship with the East Africa Operations Coordinator, the SEA Programme Manager, and other future hubs to ensure regional financial workflows support global RLRH standards.

Additional duties:

As a new starter, you will be expected to complete required training for the department and, if applicable, your role, these include:

- Information security and Data Protection
- Implicit Bias
- Bullying and Harassment training
- Equality and Diversity briefing
- Harassment in Higher Education

This is to ensure the department remains committed to providing a positive, supportive and inclusive environment for all. Access to these training courses will be provided once in post.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Educated to a degree-level in finance, accounting, business, economics, or a related subject, or equivalent relevant professional experience.
- Significant professional experience in finance and/or operations within the charity sector, higher education, international development, research or another complex multi-stakeholder environment.
- Experience developing, improving or overseeing financial systems, processes and reporting tools, including working with multiple financial platforms and institutional stakeholders.
- Strong analytical skills and advanced proficiency in spreadsheets and financial data analysis, with the ability to interpret and communicate complex financial information effectively.
- Expertise in complex multi-dimensional budgeting (by donor/programme) and managing the financial complexities of large-scale grants (e.g., Mastercard Foundation).
- Proven ability to set standards, audit regional teams, and develop SOPs that balance rigor with the needs of international development contexts.
- Proven experience managing donor-funded grants and ensuring compliance with funder requirements.
- Experience leading, managing, and developing finance/administrative staff in a high-growth environment.
- Experience preparing and reviewing grant budgets, supporting funding proposals, and contributing to donor financial reporting processes.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to manage up to executive leadership and liaise effectively with University administrators.
- Experience using a range of digital systems to support finance and operations, including accounting software, budgeting and reporting tools, collaboration platforms (e.g. Slack), HR, or CRM systems.
- Experience working across teams, organisations, and institutional environments and managing competing requirements and priorities.
- Demonstrated commitment to working inclusively and effectively within diverse, multicultural, and international teams.
- A commitment to demonstrating respect, courtesy and consideration in interactions with members of the University community.

Desirable

- Familiarity with University of Oxford financial procedures and higher education administration.
- Experience working in financial operations in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMIC), East Africa, and/or with fiscal sponsors like the BIEA.
- Professional accounting qualification (e.g., ACCA, CIMA) or equivalent.
- Knowledge of international development, higher education, research, migration, refugee studies, or related sectors.
- Fluency in another language spoken by RLRH learners and affiliates, for example, Arabic, Farsi, French, or Swahili.

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.

Social Sciences Division

Oxford is a world-leading centre for research across the disciplines of the social sciences. Characterised by a wide range of methodologies, themes and fields of scholarship, multi-disciplinary research and innovative ideas thrive in an environment underpinned by excellence across the disciplines of the social sciences.

Our approach to supporting research across the Social Sciences Division has been highly successful in the last ten years, with the volume of research awards continuing to rise and the development of a large number of research centres and groupings. Researchers at Oxford receive significant support and guidance in the development of their research, including career development, research and impact funding, research project design and management, and research outputs from academic and administrative colleagues across the University, division and departments.

More information please visit: www.socsci.ox.ac.uk

Oxford Department of International Development

The Oxford Department of International Development (ODID) is the focus in the University for postgraduate teaching and advanced research on developing countries and emerging economies, and on their relationship with the rest of the world. ODID is located at Queen Elizabeth House in central Oxford and is thus often known as 'QEH'.

The Department is recognized as one of the leading international centres in its field. It was ranked as the top development studies department in the country in the UK government's national assessment of research excellence in both 2008 (Research Assessment Exercise) and 2014 (Research Excellence Framework), with most of its research rated as world-leading and

internationally excellent. ODID maintains a worldwide network of scholars and policy researchers in developing countries. The Department has particular strength in the study of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It has close relationships with cognate departments in Oxford, such as Politics and International Relations, Anthropology, Area Studies, Economics, and Law.

The Department comprises a core of ~35 academic staff engaged in teaching and research, together with ~60 research staff in research centres - the Refugee Studies Centre, Young Lives, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, the Technology and Industrialization for Development Centre, the Oxford SDG Impact Lab, and the International Growth Centre, which is led by ODID and the Department of Economics, with the LSE. These centres have support from key research partner institutions in developing countries, and engage in extensive policy advisory work for governments, international agencies and civil society organisations.

ODID teaches around 260 postgraduate students on doctoral and Masters' programmes. Students come with outstanding academic track records from all over the world. Degrees offered at ODID include the DPhil in International Development, a DPhil in Migration Studies (based at Anthropology), a two-year MPhil in Development Studies and four one-year MSc courses in Economics for Development, Refugee & Forced Migration Studies, Global Governance & Diplomacy, and Migration Studies. These programmes are research-led and combine rigorous research methods training with applied thesis work which prepares students for both academic and policy careers. The Department is also home to a considerable number of postdoctoral fellows and academic visitors from a wide range of developing countries.

Further information about the Department can be found at https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/ and on the courses at https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/content/study.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are central to Oxford's mission, shaping our research, teaching, and global engagement. At ODID, we celebrate diversity and strive to create an open and welcoming environment where every member of our community is valued and has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We recognise the impact of social inequalities on our lives and work, and we are committed to addressing these challenges within our community.

Our Athena Swan Bronze Award reflects the progress we have made in promoting gender equality and fostering a positive culture. We also endeavour to take steps to advance race equality, reduce bias and discrimination, and support neurodiversity and disability inclusion.

As a department, we seek to foster an inclusive learning and teaching environment for students from diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of needs. In our research, we strive to promote a culture of collegiality, mutual support and equitable partnership with our collaborators. Collaboration and inclusion strengthen our community, enrich teaching, and research, and extend our reach globally.

For further information about the department's commitment, please visit our EDI webpages.

About the Refugee Studies Centre

The Refugee Studies Centre was founded in 1982 as a programme led by Professor Barbara Harrell-Bond OBE. The RSC has since established itself as the world's largest centre for research and teaching on refugees and forced migration, and is now an integral part of ODID (the Oxford Department of International Development). The RSC's aim is to build knowledge and understanding of causes, effects and experiences of forced migration. Research at the RSC has shaped the academic field of Refugee Studies, questioned entrenched assumptions about forced migrants and associated institutional responses, and had a powerful impact on practice. Its staff includes four permanent Associate Professors / Professors, and at any time, several teams of postdoctoral scholars. The disciplines of these academics include politics and international relations, law, anthropology and sociology, with regional expertise spanning Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Australasia. The RSC runs a prestigious Master's degree in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies and a bi-annual Online School on Forced Migration for policymakers and practitioners that draws people from over 40 different countries. The RSC publishes the most widely read publication on forced migration in the world, Forced Migration Review, as well as the Journal of Refugee Studies. Further information about the Centre can be found at: www.rsc.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.

Please note that only the CV and supporting statement will be considered; any other documents uploaded will not be reviewed as part of the shortlisting process.

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.
- Before applying for this post, you are advised to read the Internal Mobility Principles. The principles promote good practice for moving into professional services roles, and are designed to provide clarity on expectations for managers and individuals.

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: recruitment@qeh.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

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.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech

Academic freedom and freedom of speech, as outlined in the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Statute XII, are protected by law and by the University's statutes and policies. This includes the ability within academic practice to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions. These rights must be exercised within the law and within reasonable restrictions set out in University policies and

codes of practice. 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, travel discounts, and a variety of professional development opportunities. Our range of other employee benefits and discounts also includes free entry to the Botanic Gardens and University colleges, and discounts at University museums. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

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. 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 website 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 dependents. See https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme

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 the Work+Family Space, 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. See https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/my-family-care

The University has excellent childcare services, including five University nurseries as well as University-supported places at many other private nurseries.

For full details, including how to apply and the costs, see https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/

Disabled staff

We are committed to supporting members of staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions. For further details, including information about how to make contact, in confidence, with the University's Staff Disability Advisor, see https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability-support

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 at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks

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. See www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk.