

Job Description and Selection Criteria

Post	Koch Senior Fellowship in History
Department/Faculty	Faculty of History
Division	Humanities
College	Wadham College
Location	Parks Rd, Oxford OX1 3PN
Grade and salary	Grade 10 Point 9: Salary £80,913 per annum (inclusive of Oxford University Weighting of £1,500).
Hours	Full-time (1 FTE, 37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	Fixed Term, 12 months
Start Date	01/10/2025
Vacancy reference	178259
Method of application	Electronic (see 'How to Apply' below)
Application deadline	12 noon (UK time) on 21/03/2025
Fellowship Theme for 2025-26	The theme chosen by the Koch History Centre for 2025-26 is the historical relationship between Religion and the State
Principal Investigator / supervisor	Professor Rob Iliffe

The role

The Faculty of History and Wadham College are seeking to appoint a recognised international expert in History broadly defined, with particular expertise in multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches to the study of history. The successful candidate will provide intellectual leadership in this specialist area, develop and grow the research themes of the Koch History Centre, and help to establish the strategic direction of a major research programme. The post will be held within the Centre.



The Koch History Centre

The recently inaugurated Koch History Centre provides a new institutional home in Oxford for the pursuit of world-class historical research. Funded initially for 5 years, the Centre will receive its first intake of fellows in October 2025.

The Centre aims to promote curiosity-driven humanities research with a strong emphasis on multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches to the study of history. It will offer scholars the time and facilities to undertake fundamental historical study, and its focus will be on supporting the production of innovative historical research while adhering to the best traditions of scholarship.

The Centre will be housed in Wadham College and the Faculty of History which is part of the Humanities Division of the University. It will host scholars with varying levels of experience who work on a wide variety of regions and periods. It will form a community of scholars who will interact fruitfully not only with other fellows but also with colleagues across the College and the University. Fellows will be selected solely on the basis of academic excellence.

Koch Fellowships

The Centre will appoint 3 senior and 9 junior fellows each year. The emphasis on attracting early-career scholars flows from the desire to attract and nurture outstanding researchers, who will shape the field for the next generation.

A different theme will be chosen as the focus for each year, and fellows will work on a project that is related to the subject area selected for that particular year. The themes chosen will be sufficiently broad to encourage applications from scholars who specialise on subjects in all regions and periods, and who bring with them a variety of historical methodologies and fields of expertise.

The Centre is particularly concerned to foster multidisciplinary discussion about different historiographical approaches and methods. It will appoint scholars who can articulate clearly what their interpretive methods are, and whose work engages with the chosen theme in a way that allows them to compare and contrast their own method with other approaches to it. There will be no presumption that any one historical approach is better than any other, and it is expected that a focus on approaches and methods will facilitate fruitful conversation between Centre fellows with disparate historical interests and concerns.

Junior fellowships will be for one year (i.e. 12 months), and will be open to any postdoctoral, early career (tenure track) or tenured academic within 10 years of being awarded their PhD at the time of application (with additional allowance for periods of maternity leave, illness, or other special circumstances). Senior fellowships will also be of one year's duration and will be open to individuals whose PhD was granted more than 10 years before their application.

All fellows will be based at Wadham College, and will benefit from its lively interdisciplinary research culture. The Governing Body of Wadham has 68 members, and apart from the History fellows (see further details below) there are fellows in cognate disciplines, including Medieval and Modern Languages, Philosophy, Anthropology, Economics, Politics, and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, as well as a substantial body of undergraduate and graduate students reading for degrees in History, and the joint schools with History. Wadham fellows in other disciplines, such as Environmental Science, engage in conversations and collaboration with colleagues in the humanities and social sciences. The Centre will host six seminars per eight-week term, which will be held at Wadham College and the

Schwarzman Centre for Humanities. The Schwarzman Centre, which is based in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, will be inaugurated in September 2025 as the new interdisciplinary building for Humanities scholarship in Oxford.

All fellows will give one seminar talk during their stay. The weekly seminars will be at the heart of intellectual life at the Centre, and making contributions to the collective discussions of these meetings will form a central element of the fellowship. They will be open to undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate audiences from across the University and will be made accessible to wider audiences as podcasts.

These seminars will be complemented by lectures and seminars given by other speakers, drawn from within, and outside, the university, whose research intersects with the annual theme.

The fellows will also form part of the History Faculty, and will be encouraged to participate in its considerable range of research seminars and lecture series (see further details below). The fellowships are research posts, and they carry no teaching obligation. However, fellows will be strongly encouraged to participate in the academic life of the Faculty and the Schwarzman Centre, both as participants in Faculty seminars and through their interactions with the graduate students and postdoctoral research scholars in the Faculty and elsewhere in the Humanities Division.

Fellows will have full access to the College and University libraries, and to the digital resources available through the Bodleian Library.

Fellowship Theme for 2025-26

The theme chosen for 2025-26 is the historical relationship between Religion and the State. Given the Centre's commitment to attracting historians with expertise in a broad range of periods and cultures, these terms should be understood as widely as possible. For example, 'the State' might refer to a range of different polities and state structures, including societies which did not have a hierarchical form of governance. In a similar way, 'Religion', for example, should be understood to include cases where institutions and practices of belief are formally separated from the aegis of political governance or where religious personnel exercised authority over social, judicial and economic life, or conversely, where temporal authorities exercise control over some or all areas of religious life (including banning any religious activity).

The Centre particularly welcomes applications from scholars whose work contributes to broader discussion of the interaction of religious belief with historical writing. Traditions of historical writing have long been intertwined with religious cultures and with different forms of clerical structure. We intend therefore that the study of these themes will encompass reflection on the ways that historical writing has often been influenced positively and negatively by these religious cultures in many eras.

Terms and Conditions

The senior fellowship will include certain lunching and dining rights at Wadham College which will be confirmed, as well as membership of the Common Room.

Duties of the post

The main duties of the post are as follows:

1. Maintain and enhance an internationally-recognised research profile, with a strong and sustained record of relevant academic publications in the field;
2. Engage in curiosity-driven humanities research with a strong emphasis on multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches to the study of history in a wide variety of regions and periods.
3. Initiate and implement long-term, often interdisciplinary research programmes
4. Develop and submit grant proposals to support your own research portfolio and that of the Koch History Centre, playing a key role in establishing overall research strategy. Contribute to the collective research culture of the History Faculty;
5. Develop new avenues of research, concepts and ideas to extend intellectual understanding
6. Regularly write research articles for prestigious international journals, book chapters, and reviews. Present papers at international conferences, and lead seminars to disseminate research findings
7. Contribute to the policy making of external agencies
8. Promote the Centre locally and nationally, disseminate research outcomes to advance knowledge in the specialist area; represent the Centre at external meetings/seminars and liaise with sponsors, stakeholders, national agencies, and professional bodies
9. Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups. Encourage research achievement among colleagues, manage and collaborate with research teams, and enhance the status and quality of the work produced by such teams;
10. Strengthen the Faculty's impact and public engagement profile in curiosity-driven humanities research, demonstrating the public value of multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches to research into history and maximising its practical applications beyond academia.
11. Provide international-level academic research leadership to the study of History as part of this new research centre;
12. to maintain a successful publication record (appropriate to the stage of career and accounting for career breaks) and contribute to the Faculty's REF ([Research Excellence Framework](#)) submission.
13. To contribute to a community of scholars who will interact fruitfully not only with other fellows but also with colleagues across the College and the University.
14. To foster multidisciplinary discussion about different historiographical approaches and methods
15. to give one seminar talk during the Fellowship and contribute to the collective discussions of these meetings as a central element of the fellowship.

16. Participate in the academic life of the Faculty and the Schwarzman Centre, both in the range of research seminars and lecture series and through interactions with the graduate students and postdoctoral research scholars in the Faculty and elsewhere in the Humanities Division

Selection criteria

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out below. You should make sure that your application shows very clearly how closely your skills and experience meet these criteria. We are committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Chairs of selection committees will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity and fair selection and there will be both female and male members of the selection committee. Selection committees will explicitly take into account any career breaks or other factors, such as part-time working or disability, which may have had an impact on the quantity of candidates' publications.

Selection criteria

Qualifications and experience	
Essential	A doctorate granted more than 10 years prior to the submission of this application.
Essential	An established (inter)national reputation with a track record of internationally outstanding research
Essential	An established (inter)national publication record
Research and public engagement	
Essential	Ability to contribute high-quality publications to the University's future REF submissions (REF: the UK-based Research Excellence Framework)
Essential	Evidence of active contributions to academic communities at academic national and/or international conferences
Essential	Proven expertise in multi- and inter-disciplinary approaches to the study of history
Desirable	Evidence of effective public engagement with research and impact
Desirable	Experience of leading research programmes, including setting the strategic direction
Desirable	Experience of providing specialist advice to external industry, university, or research councils
Personal effectiveness	
Essential	Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills, professionalism as a colleague, and a proven track record of good collegial working relationships
Essential	Ability to operate with credibility across a number of academic disciplines
Desirable	Experience of promoting equality and diversity within an academic environment
Technical skills	
Essential	ICT competence, including the ability to engage with bespoke software (training will be provided), and a willingness to use technological innovations to improve research

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>

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.

Wadham College

Wadham is one of the larger colleges of the University of Oxford, with approximately 450 undergraduates, 250 graduates, and over 70 Fellows. Founded in 1610 by Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham, Wadham College has a strong commitment to academic values, within a liberal and progressive atmosphere. The College is academically strong, and regularly features in the top ten in the annual ranking of Oxford colleges for academic performance in final examinations.

A particular focus of Wadham College rests on fostering multi- and inter-disciplinary dialogue between scholars whose research interests may cut across formal departmental boundaries. Cooperation and conversation with the fellows of the Centre within this wider academic community is precisely what association with the College is designed to facilitate. Wadham's historical research is characterized by a commitment to interdisciplinary approaches, linking history with literature, philosophy, theology and the social sciences. Wadham has a long and distinguished tradition of historical research and teaching, nurtured by numerous influential scholars throughout its

history. Past fellows include Lawrence Stone, whose pioneering work in social history redefined the study of the early modern family and society, and C. S. L. Davies, an expert on late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century politics. Its current fellows are Norman Aselmeyer, a social and urban historian of East Africa, Matthew Kempshall, a historian of medieval political thought and the classical tradition, Tehila Sasson, an historian of economic life in the British empire and the international order, George Southcombe, a historian of early modern religion, literature, and culture, and Robert Yee, an economic and political historian of modern Europe.

Wadham has long been at the forefront of advancing equality of opportunity, and celebrates vigorous debate, independent thought, and academic excellence. The College seeks to create a welcoming, accessible, and secure environment in which to work, study, live, and visit. The collegiate community embraces people of all ages, backgrounds, races/ethnicities, nationalities, beliefs (including religious beliefs), genders, sexualities, dis/abilities, and appearances.

Further information about the College can be obtained from <http://www.wadham.ox.ac.uk>

The Faculty of History

The Faculty of History in Oxford is the largest in the United Kingdom and one of the largest in the world. It has a very strong international reputation for its scholarship and its teaching of undergraduate and graduate students, with particular strengths in the history of the British Isles, continental Europe, imperial and global history, the United States, economic and social history, intellectual history and the history of science, medicine and technology. Within the Faculty there is also a department for the History of Art and a number of dedicated research centres.

The Faculty of History provides a robust and supportive framework for research, including:

- Financial support for research travel, research assistance, and editorial help
- Mentoring, including discussion of research plans and progress
- Internal and interdisciplinary collaborations, through research centres
- Assistance in the formulation of research plans and funding bids

The Faculty enables all its postholders, including departmental lecturers, to request up to £800 per year for research expenses, and makes additional funds available for organising conferences in Oxford. In addition, to assist newly-appointed postholders in the development and publication of their research, Faculty funds are available for early career and established colleagues to hold a workshop at which colleagues can discuss drafts of their next monograph.

In the summer of 2025 the Faculty will relocate from its current home in the Old Boys' High School on George Street to the new Schwarzman Centre.

More information about the Faculty can be found at: www.history.ox.ac.uk.

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

The Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the faculties of Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Philosophy; and Theology and Religion, as well as the Ruskin School of Art. The Division has more than 500 members of academic staff, approximately 4,100 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), 1,000 postgraduate research students and 720 students on postgraduate taught courses.

The Division offers world-class teaching and research, backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums, including the famous Bodleian Libraries, with their 11 million volumes and priceless early book and manuscript collections, and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology. Such historic resources are linked to innovative agendas in research and teaching, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study. Our faculties are among the largest in the world, enabling Oxford to offer an education in Arts and Humanities unparalleled in its range of subjects, from music and fine art to ancient and modern languages.

For more information please visit: www.humanities.ox.ac.uk.

International Staff and Housing

One of Oxford's great strengths is its truly international body of research and teaching staff from over 140 countries, and we welcome applications from academics across the world. We can help international staff and partners/families make the transition to Oxford. Information about relocation, living and working in the UK and Oxford is available at welcome.ox.ac.uk.

General information about home rental and purchase is available at <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/housing>.

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-faqs>

Non-technical questions about this job should be addressed to the recruiting department directly recruitment.support@admin.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, 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 dependants. 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 dependants 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.

Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS)

A society run by and for Oxford University research staff. It offers researchers a range of social and professional networking opportunities. Membership is free, and all researchers employed by Oxford University are welcome to join. Subscribe at researchstaff-subscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk to join the mailing list to find out about upcoming events and other information for researchers, or contact the committee on committee@oxrss.ox.ac.uk. For more information, see www.ox.ac.uk/oxrss, Twitter @ResStaffOxford, and Facebook www.facebook.com/oxrss.