

Summary

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow in American Literature
Division	Humanities
Department	Faculty of English Language and Literature
Location	St Cross Building, Manor Road, Oxford OX1 3UL
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £36,024-£38,205
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term (24 months)
Reporting to	Professor Lloyd Pratt
Vacancy reference	170914
Additional information	

The role

The Postdoctoral Fellow in American Literature is a two-year position funded by the Drue Heinz Fund for American Literature at Oxford. The Fellow will pursue their own independent research on US literature and collaborate with the postholders in the area through participation in the American literature research seminars, colloquia, and conferences.

It is anticipated that the appointee will take up the post on 1 September 2024 or shortly thereafter.

Responsibilities

The Fellow will primarily use their time in Oxford to develop research for publication and participate in the research culture in the Faculty of English and at the Rothermere American Institute. The Fellow will also participate in the American literature research community, developing programming in collaboration with the postholders in this area. The postdoc will be expected to:

- Manage their own academic research and administrative activities;
- Adapt existing and develop new research methodologies;



- Prepare research publications, including book chapters, journal articles, and a monograph;
- Present papers at conferences or public meetings;
- Carry out collaborative projects with colleagues in partner institutions, and research groups at Oxford and in the broader academic community;
- In collaboration with the postholders in the area, shape and contribute to the content of the research environment in American literature, including the American Literature Research Seminar, the annual Harmsworth Lecture in American Arts and Letters, and other lectures, conferences, or colloquia in American literature;
- Develop programming in American literature with the postholders in the area, including a 'state-of-the field' event emerging from the research to be staged in the final term of the fellowship.

Selection criteria

- A PhD/DPhil in American literature, broadly conceived;
- Established or developing track record of outstanding research;
- Publication record that is appropriate to career stage;
- Ability to manage own academic research and related activities.

English Faculty

The Faculty of English Language and Literature is by far the largest English Department in the UK, and has a very distinguished research record (awarded the top grade in the last two research assessment exercises). We have been ranked top in the QS World Rankings in its subject for the last three years and our teaching has been graded 'Excellent' in every Quality Assurance review. The English Faculty's teaching and research covers literature in English from works in Old English of the 7th century to the current period of what has been called global English. The spread of historical expertise places the Faculty in a unique position to speak authoritatively about the long history of the literatures and languages of the British Isles, as well as the diaspora and interchange of literatures and languages that emerged from them. Students have opportunities to trace the development of literature from early manuscripts to current digital and hybrid forms; they benefit from a distinctive experience of close personal supervision with leading academics, in turn developing their own communities and identities as critics and researchers.

The Faculty currently has 80 permanent members of academic staff, including 9 statutory Professors. This is in addition to a further 100 or so members teaching in the colleges and temporary members of staff. A list of Faculty members and their research interests is available on the website. For more information, please visit: www.english.ox.ac.uk. There are currently approximately 900 undergraduate students (with roughly 260 admitted each year to the single honours school and a further 20 to joint honours school programmes). The Oxford English Faculty has the largest graduate school in the country, with approximately 90 Masters students, and a further 150 graduate research students.

American Literatures at Oxford

The English Faculty at Oxford considers American literature in its long historical and broad international contexts. Our work in American literature also receives significant support from the Rothermere American Institute (RAI) for the study of American literature, history, and politics. The RAI's Esmond Harmsworth Lecture in American Arts and Letters has been given by some of America's most eminent writers, including Hilton Als, Michael Chabon, Lydia Davis, Jennifer Egan, Richard Ford, Joy Harjo, Joyce Carol Oates, Claudia Rankine, Marilynne Robinson, C.K. Williams, and Tobias Wolff. The RAI and English Faculty also hosts research seminars, classes, and conferences in American literature and are home to a significant community of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The American Literature Research Seminar (ALRS), which meets every other week in term, brings scholars and critics from around the world to present ground-breaking work. Recent speakers at the ALRS and American literature events in Oxford include Branka Arsić, Nancy Bentley, Stephen Best, Timothy Bewes, Daphne Brooks, Thomas Constantinesco, Elizabeth Dillon, Jonathan Elmer, Jennifer Fleissner, Erica Fretwell, Malik Gaines, Paul Gilroy, Jacqueline Goldsby, Fiona Green, Jared Hickman, Hsuan Hsu, Kara Keeling, Lisa Lowe, Kate Marshall, Jarvis McInnis, Tavia Nyong'o, Kevin Quashie, Sarah Rivett, Shirley Samuels, Elisa Tamarkin, Kyla Wazana Tompkins, Bryan Wagner, Kenneth Warren, and Dagmawi Woubshet. Faculty postholders with teaching and research interests in American literature include Rebecca Beasley, Matthew Bevis, Elleke Boehmer, Nicholas Gaskill, Christine Gerrard, Patrick Hayes, Paulina Kewes, Nicole King, Erica McAlpine, Kate McLoughlin, Michèle Mendelssohn, Anghi Mukherjee, Seamus Perry, Lloyd Pratt, Kirsten E Shepherd-Barr, Tara Stubbs, and Hannah Sullivan.

Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the following faculties: Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Philosophy; Theology and Religion; the Ruskin School of Art. The Division has over 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 cutting-edge 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.

The Humanities Division has embarked on a major building project on the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, following the recent announcement of the £150 million gift to create the [Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities](#).

The Schwarzman Centre will serve as a dynamic hub dedicated to the Humanities. The building will bring together seven Humanities faculties, the Humanities Divisional Office, a new library and significant cultural and public engagement spaces in a space designed to encourage experiential learning and bold

experimentation through cross-disciplinary and collaborative study. The Faculty of English Language and Literature will move to the Schwarzman Centre upon the completion of the project.

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

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.

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 also be asked to upload:

- A two-page cover letter outlining your doctoral project and indicating how you meet the selection criteria for the post. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants);
- A CV;
- A two-page thesis or dissertation abstract;

- A two-page proposal outlining the publication(s) you intend to produce during the period of the Fellowship. (The outline is of indicative interest and will not be treated as binding in the event of selection.)

Your application will be judged solely based on how you demonstrate that you meet the selection criteria stated in the job description.

Please upload all documents as **PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **midday (BST)** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit a PDF copy of their thesis.

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

Please consult the FAQs for applicants, including technical troubleshooting advice, which 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@ell.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**, which with effect from 1 October 2023 will be 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.