



**Institute for Science,
Innovation and Society**
University of Oxford



SCHOOL OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND MUSEUM ETHNOGRAPHY

Job title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow – How Institutions Think (HIT)
Division	Social Sciences
Department	School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, Institute for Science, Innovation and Society
Location	Banbury Road, Oxford
Grade and salary	Grade 7: £30,738-£37,768 per annum
Hours	Full time
Contract type	Fixed-term for 2 years
Reporting to	Professor Steve Rayner

The role

HIT is a pilot project to investigate distributed cognition in an institutional framework. The project brings together a collaborative group of researchers from anthropology, archaeology, cognitive science, philosophy of mind, science & technology studies (STS), and social psychology to empirically explore the phenomenon of distributed cognition under different institutional (social organizational) conditions defined by the density of social and material networks and the extent of social differentiation within such networks.

The project's focus on social and material networks emphasises the role of things as well as people in sociomaterial processes of cognition. From an anthropological perspective, the work brings together two strands of thought in the work of the late Dame Mary Douglas: her 1986 book "How Institutions Think" and her 1978 work "The World of Goods", which respectively highlighted the essentially social basis of cognition and the role of commodities and technologies as material signals, alongside verbal, visual and tactile signals, in constituting and enacting institutional arrangements

In the thirty years since the publication of "How Institutions Think", new ideas in cognitive sciences and the philosophy of mind provide reason for revisiting the question of whether and how institutions think. Specifically the 4E's of extended, enacted, embedded and embodied mind promise to shed new light on processes of social cognition, discussions of shared intentions and joint actions, the workings of social and cultural institutions of all sorts and sizes and the productive intermingling of social, material, and technical worlds.



Analysing these phenomena from a 4E perspective holds the potential to further develop our understanding of how institutions, their material forms and social practices may not merely shape cognition but actually be part of our cognitive and affective processes. A particular emphasis of the research will be on tracing the cognitive and affective flexibility of individuals as they move between different organizational and material contexts to monitor the extent to which they adjust their behaviour to conform to organizationally appropriate expectations and material conditions in order to understand how, and to what extent the articulation of concepts and values are stabilized in the hearts and heads of individuals or are emergent properties of situated social and material interactions.

In the first instance, the Post-Doctoral Research Fellow (PDRF) will work for 2 years full-time with Prof Steve Rayner and Dr Lambros Malafouris on an Oxford University-funded pilot project. The project will be guided by a wider interdisciplinary team consisting of colleagues in the US and Europe. The social scientist PDRF will collaborate with these colleagues to design and conduct ethnographic/interview-based studies in complex organizational settings, most likely beginning with complex clinical (hospital) settings (Rayner 1986), as well as discuss and develop findings throughout the project.

Responsibilities

The PDRF will be expected to prepare project outputs including academic papers in scholarly journals, and policy/briefing documents for colleagues and stakeholders in other disciplines and organisations. Duties will also include organization of workshops and the preparation of research funding applications for additional and follow-on work, which may present opportunities for further engagement with the project. The appointee will also participate in the Creativity Research Cluster at Keble College, Oxford. The PDRF will also be expected to present their work at international conferences, and at project meetings and relevant events in Europe and North America.

Required selection criteria

- PhD in anthropology, cognitive archaeology, human geography, STS, social psychology, sociology or similar discipline
- Experience carrying out social science research in institutional settings
- Demonstrated commitment to interdisciplinary and international collaboration
- Experience designing, carrying out and analysing ethnographic methods and interviews
- Record of communicating research in academic, interdisciplinary and non-academic settings, including e.g. public talks, briefing notes, policy papers, etc.
- Academic publication record commensurate with career stage
- Ability to work independently and in a team

Desirable selection criteria

- Familiarity with relevant literature in any of the following fields: neo-Durkheimian cultural theory, philosophy of mind, distributed cognition, material engagement theory
- Experience in preparation of research grant applications
- Experience using NVivo (or similar) for cataloguing and/or analysing research data

The University of Oxford

The University of Oxford aims 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. Income from external research contracts in 2014/15 exceeded £522.9m and we rank first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. 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

The Social Sciences Division is a world-leading centre of research and education in the social sciences. The social sciences at Oxford are distinctive for both their depth and breadth, with activity spanning fourteen departments and faculties and one cross-divisional unit. Interdisciplinary links within and beyond the university are strong, extending to the humanities, natural sciences, and medical sciences.

Academic and research staff and research students are engaged in world-leading research that challenges current ideas and theories and is tackling some of the major challenges facing humanity, such as sustainable resource management, migration, governance, poverty and development, and justice. REF 2014 confirmed Oxford as the UK powerhouse for research in the social sciences, where Oxford accounted for more world-leading (4*) research than any other institution, across the social sciences units of assessment to which it made submissions. The division also delivers an exceptional range of high quality educational programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research), all of which are underpinned by the innovative research being undertaken by our academics.

For more information please visit: <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/>

School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography

SAME is renowned for its contributions to anthropological theory, its commitment to long-term ethnographic fieldwork, and its association with the Pitt Rivers Museum and the anthropology of visual and material culture. Home to over sixty members of academic staff and researchers, over a hundred doctoral students, nine Master's programmes, and two undergraduate degrees, Oxford anthropology is one of the world's largest and most vibrant centres for teaching and

research in the discipline. In recent years it has also become known as a centre for medical anthropology, for migration studies, and for cognitive and evolutionary anthropology.

Academically and organizationally the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography comprises the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology (ISCA), the Centre on Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS), the Institute of Human Sciences (IHS), the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology (ICEA), the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society (InSIS) and also aspects of the academic side of the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM, which is governed through the University's Academic Services and University Collections Group). ICEA includes the Centre for Anthropology and Mind (CAM).

More information about the School can be found at www.anthro.ox.ac.uk.

Institute for Science, Innovation and Society

The Institute for Science, Innovation and Society (InSIS) researches and informs the key processes of social and technological innovation that are critical to society in the 21st century and beyond. In exploring “wicked” problems such as climate change and the future of cities, the Institute seeks to understand the social context of science and technology, and the interconnected nature of our present day challenges. InSIS is directed by Steve Rayner, who is also James Martin Professor of Science and Civilization, Co-Director of the Oxford Programme for the Future of Cities and the Oxford Geoengineering Programme. InSIS is based at the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography and is also part of the Oxford Martin School.

For more information, please visit www.insis.ox.ac.uk.

How to apply

Before submitting an application, you may find it helpful to read the ‘Tips on applying for a job at the University of Oxford’ document, at www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/supportandtechnical/.

If you would like to apply, click on the **Apply Now** button on the ‘Job Details’ page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously. Please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them now.

You will also 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).

Your application will be judged solely on the basis of 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** 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 departments.

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)

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk. Further help and support is available from www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/support/. To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk.

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic emails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all emails.

Important information for candidates

Pre-employment screening

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This will include right-to-work, proof of identity and references. We advise all applicants to read the candidate notes on the University's pre-employment screening procedures, found at:

www.ox.ac.uk/about/jobs/preemploymentscreening/.

The University's policy on retirement

The University operates an employer justified retirement age for all academic and academic-related posts (grade 6 and above), for which the retirement date is the 30 September immediately preceding the 68th birthday. The justification for this is explained at: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/revisedejra/revaim/.

For **existing** employees any employment beyond the retirement age is subject to approval through the procedures: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/retirement/revisedejra/revproc/

There is no normal or fixed age at which **support staff** in posts at **grades 1–5** have to retire. Support staff may retire once they reach the minimum pension age stipulated in the Rules of the pension scheme to which they belong.

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

Training and Development

A range of training and development opportunities are available at the University. Further details can be found at www.ox.ac.uk/staff/working_at_oxford/training_development/index.html.

For research staff only: Support for Research Staff

There is a particularly wide range of support for career development for research staff. Please visit: www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers to find out more.

Pensions

The University offers generous occupational pension schemes for eligible staff members. Further details can be found at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/epp/pensions/pensionspolicy/.

Information for international staff (or those relocating from another part of the UK)

A wealth of information is available on the University's International Staff website for staff who are relocating to Oxford from abroad, at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/international/.

The University of Oxford Newcomers' Club

The Newcomers' Club is aimed at helping partners of newly-arrived visiting scholars, graduate students and academic members of the University to settle in and to meet people in Oxford.

Transport schemes

The University offers a range of travel schemes and public transport travel discounts to staff. Full details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/ourservices/travel/.

University Club and University Sports Facilities

The University Club provides social, sporting and hospitality facilities. It incorporates a Club bar, a cafe and sporting facilities, including a gym. See www.club.ox.ac.uk for all further details.

University staff can use the University Sports Centre at discounted rates, and have the chance to join sports clubs. Please visit www.sport.ox.ac.uk/oxford-university-sports-facilities.

Childcare and Childcare Vouchers

The University offers quality childcare provision services at affordable prices to its employees. For full details about the services offered, please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/. **NB: Due to the high demand for the University's nursery places there is a long waiting list.**

The University also offers nursery fee payment schemes to eligible staff as an opportunity to save tax and national insurance on childcare costs. Please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare.

Disabled staff

The University is committed to supporting members of staff with a disability or long-term health condition and has a dedicated Staff Disability Advisor. Please visit www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/staff for further details.

BUPA - Eduhealth

Bupa Eduhealth Essentials private medical insurance offers special rates for University of Oxford staff and their families www.eduhealth.co.uk/mini-site/.

All other benefits

For other benefits, such as free entry to colleges, the Botanic Gardens and staff discounts offered by third party companies, please see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/benefits/.