Further Particulars for Reuben College Research Fellowships

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I - Reuben College

I.I - The vision

The founding of Oxford’s newest college, supported by a generous benefaction from the Reuben Foundation of £71 million, which includes £15 million for Reuben College scholarships, offers an exciting opportunity to bring together academic researchers focused on exploring some of the most important questions of the 21st century.

Reuben College will provide an environment that stimulates and facilitates interdisciplinary research, while emphasising the qualities of innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship. It will support a community of scholars who embrace opportunities to interact with researchers beyond the boundaries of their own disciplines and to engage with colleagues beyond the realm of academia. As a new college, we are building a community of people and practice that recognises the importance of equality and diversity in our community and in our intellectual endeavours. The goal is to create a working environment for the active promotion of entrepreneurial thinking, collaborative working and interdisciplinary exchange. Our community is enhanced and strengthened by the diversity of
our staff and students, and we are particularly eager to find ways to expand and extend such diversity.

**I.II - Academic and Strategic Themes**

One of the main goals of Reuben College is to facilitate interdisciplinary research and collaboration in order to tackle some of the most challenging questions of our time, such as, for example, how to mitigate climate change; or how to use artificial intelligence and machine learning to help improve healthcare.

To promote the ethos and practice of interdisciplinary interaction, there is an initial focus on four research clusters, whose academic themes have been chosen for their wide reach across the University, their strongly interdisciplinary nature, Oxford’s existing and potential strengths in these areas, and their innovation and entrepreneurship potential. The initial clusters focus on the topics of (a) **Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning**, (b) **Environmental Change**, (c) **Cellular life**, and (d) **Ethics & Values**. These clusters have natural synergies, enabling cross-cutting discussions and research collaborations to emerge. Each of the four areas will be interpreted as broadly as possible, as we are keen to attract researchers from all four of the University’s Academic Divisions.

The four themes are complemented by a number of strategic themes, notably in **Innovation and Entrepreneurship** and in **Public Engagement in Research**.

**II - Research Fellowships**

Research Fellowships form an important component of the vision for Reuben College, and are “early-career research” posts intended to offer college affiliation to postdoctoral researchers at the University who would value contributing to, and engaging in, life at Oxford’s newest college.

The Research Fellows will join Reuben College alongside other members who include:

- **Graduate students** - comprising, for example, Masters and DPhil students
- **Official Fellows** – the main grade of senior membership, typically comprising senior members of the University, who are members of the College’s Governing Body and who guide the daily running of the College
- **Senior Research Fellows** – affiliations for senior researchers at the University, at approximately the professorial stage
- **College Staff** – non-academic employees of the College
II.1 College Duties

As early-career researchers, Research Fellows at Reuben College will already have substantive research duties within their respective Division of the University. Duties within the College are expected to be “light touch”, while emphasising the need for Fellows to be engaged with the life of Reuben College on a regular basis.

Perhaps different to the standard model for equivalent posts elsewhere in the University (for example, “Junior Research Fellowships”), the emphasis for Reuben’s Research Fellows is very definitely on bringing an enthusiastic, sustained, and meaningful contribution to College life.

Additionally, Reuben College is dedicated to the support of its Research Fellows through structured mentoring. In this programme, which is unusual for Research Fellowships at the University, an Official Fellow (in a relevant academic discipline) will be assigned as a College Mentor, providing advice and support in career progression. This is intended to be complementary to any support provided in the Research Fellow’s academic Department.

It is expected that all Research Fellows of the College will:

- Regularly attend academic and social events organised at the College, primarily during the weeks of term. Such events will include a lively series of academic workshops, invited lectures, outreach events, workshops, reading groups, hackathons, etc.
- Organise, or co-organise with other College members, a small number of events each year, with full financial support from the College.
- Act as College Advisor to a small number of graduate students each year, meeting with each once per term (perhaps, for example, over lunch) to offer academic insight and pastoral guidance.
- Attend termly meetings with their College Mentor, who, as noted above, will be an Official Fellow in a relevant academic discipline.
- Contribute more widely to the social life of the College, by attending lunches or dinners (funded by the College, as described later).

II.11 - College Benefits, Terms and Conditions

Successful candidates will be elected to a Research Fellowship for up to three years, subject to a review at the end of the first year of satisfactory engagement with College life. The agreement will be coterminous with University employment, intending to provide College affiliation while the Research Fellow holds a postdoctoral appointment within the University.

Research Fellows are non-stipendiary and will receive the following benefits:

- A research allowance of £1,000 for the first year, rising to £2,500 per annum for the second and third years (subject to confirmation of budget in future years). This research allowance is
for supporting research costs, such as the purchase of books and equipment, conference fees, academic travel, etc., and would be claimed via presenting corresponding receipts or other proof-of-costs to College.

- Full dining rights, equivalent to that of Official Fellows, intended to allow the Research Fellow frequently to attend lunches and dinners in College.
- The right to bring guests to College meals, subject to capacity, and at their own costs.
- Membership of the Reuben Common Room, which is the single body representing the social and academic needs of all members of College.

Benefits will continue as normal during any period of family leave or sickness absence, but will be suspended for the period of any research leave, other paid leave (excepting the above), or unpaid leave of 12 months or more, taken by a Research Fellow, during which time they choose not to fulfil their college duties. All decisions in these regards will be taken by the President in consultation with the Senior Tutor, with a view to promoting fairness and consistency of treatment amongst the Fellows.

### III - Applications

#### III.1 - Eligibility

This is not an employment position, and to be eligible applicants must be currently employed by the University in a grade 7 or 8 postdoctoral research post.

Applicants will be asked to demonstrate how they can contribute to one or more of the four academic themes within the College, or to one of the two strategic themes (as outlined in section 1), but they do not have to be necessarily employed within a post that corresponds directly to a theme. For example, it is quite possible to demonstrate how one could substantively contribute to the “AI and machine learning” theme within Reuben College without being employed at a grade 7 or 8 post in a Department that undertakes machine learning. Themes at Reuben College, as described in section 1, are intended to be “broadly interpreted”.

As noted above, Research Fellowships are coterminous with employment at grade 7 or 8 within the University, and so the Research Fellowship would end if University employment ceased.

Please note that there is no restriction on the elapsed time since the applicant’s doctoral viva, and Research Fellows at Reuben College are intended to encourage applicants from a wide range of candidates, across all four Divisions of the University.

Tier 2 postholders are welcome to apply - this is not an employment position and should not necessitate a new visa application. (This also means that the College would not be able to act as sponsor for any visa renewal.)
Those who already have a Fellowship (e.g., a Junior Research Fellowship) with another college or society will not be eligible. Please note that teaching positions in the form of “Lecturerships” (e.g., Stipendiary or Non-stipendiary College Lecturerships) are not counted as Fellowships, and so those who are Lecturers in other colleges would be eligible.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, please contact the College’s Fellow for Early Career Researchers, Professor David Clifton (david.clifton@reuben.ox.ac.uk).

**III.II - Person Specification and Selection Criteria**

To summarise, the following are the requirements of a Research Fellowship:

- Currently employed as a grade 7 or 8 postdoctoral researcher within the University, holding a doctoral degree, with a University contract with an end date of October 2023. (or with a minimum of one year, and a very high likelihood of renewal if the end date is before October 2023).
- Commitment to the vision and approach of Reuben College
- Commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion
- Enthusiasm for working with colleagues in the setting up and delivery of interdisciplinary activities within the college (for example, seminar series, workshops, and reading groups)
- Willingness and capacity to act as the college adviser for a small number of Reuben College graduate students
- Strong communication skills, both written and oral
- Ability to build relationships at all levels, to network effectively, and to inspire confidence in students and colleagues
- As appropriate, a commitment to outreach, knowledge exchange, public engagement, or promoting innovation.

In selecting the Research Fellows, the Selection Committees will have regard for promoting a diversity of perspectives and approaches, and candidates will thus be assessed in relation both to the stated person specification, and the College’s need for intellectual diversity across the College’s four academic and two strategic themes. The priority will be on appointing those candidates who can make an enthusiastic, sustained contribution to College life (balanced appropriately with the demands of their substantive research duties in their Department), rather than balancing individuals across College themes.
**III.III - Equality, Diversity & Inclusiveness**

As a new college, we are building a community of people and practice that has diversity at the heart, for students and staff. We will be embedding and advancing equal rights as we tackle the big challenges in our academic research and as we build our College community. This gives our students both the opportunity and the shared responsibility to shape the culture and ethos of College life.

We are keenly aware that work on the protection and advancement of equality of opportunity is never truly complete. We have appointed a College champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and as appropriate will similarly appoint to posts to support specific protected characteristics, to guide and support all members of our College community where issues arise. We are proactive in our approach, embedding best practice from across the University, including adopting the University’s common framework for supporting disabled students, from ensuring accessible facilities to support at strategic and day-to-day levels.

Through every one of its committees, events, procedures and practices, the growing community of Reuben College are creating an environment in which everyone can take advantage of the unique opportunities that living, working and studying in Oxford bring, whatever their background. We hope that, as our community grows, all members continue to work towards ensuring equity of opportunity for each individual, without exception.

**III.IV - How to apply**

To apply, please send the following two items as pdf (with fonts no smaller than 11 point) to the President’s Executive Assistant (president-pa@reuben.ox.ac.uk) **by noon of 16 September 2021:**

1. A (maximum) 2-page covering letter, explaining how you meet the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience, and how you would contribute to the College in one or more of the themes described in section 1. It may be helpful for you to describe the first few events (such as interdisciplinary seminars) that you would intend to run, in collaboration with other College members, should you be appointed to this post.

2. A (maximum) 4-page CV, including your education & employment history, your list of publications, etc. Please include contact details for two referees, one of whom should be your line manager in your Department or equivalent.

Applicants are also asked to complete an [equality form](mailto: equality_form) for monitoring purposes only; these forms will not be viewed by members of the Selection Committees.