UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

HUMANITIES DIVISION

TORCH
The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities

TORCH Director

The Role of Academic Leads within the Humanities Division

The Academic Lead roles within the Humanities Division play a vital and formative part in the design, development and implementation of divisional strategy, working closely with the Head of Division and Divisional Registrar. The two Associate Head roles (Associate Head Research and Innovation and Associate Head Education) help to direct the strategic vision and provide oversight of divisional activities including leadership and governance. The Academic Programme Directors (TORCH, DiSC, Ertegun Senior Scholar in Residence, Academic lead for Equality Diversity and Inclusion, and Researcher Advocate), also contribute to the strategic vision and to the delivery of its objectives through their programmes of activity. Collaboration is at the heart of successful delivery, both with fellow academic leads and also with professional services colleagues across the division.

The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH)

Launched in May 2013, TORCH stimulates, supports and promotes research activity of the very highest quality that transcends disciplinary and institutional boundaries and engages with wider and public audiences; it also serves as a vital hub for innovative and creative engagement with public audiences, in collaboration with a diverse range of partners within and beyond Oxford University.

Currently based in Radcliffe Humanities in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, and moving to the new Schwarzman Centre from 2025, TORCH is generously supported by the University's John Fell Fund, with additional support from Research England's Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), trusts and foundations, as well as private donors. TORCH has received major grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, including for the *Humanities and Science* series (2014-16) and *Humanities & Identities* (2017-24). Since 2013, TORCH has raised over £4 million in grants and philanthropy to support humanities multidisciplinary research and wider public engagement.

TORCH is a member of the Consortium of Humanities Centres and Institutes (http://chcinetwork.org/)

Further information about TORCH is available at: https://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/about/who-we-are

The Role of the Director of TORCH

This is an outstanding opportunity for a creative and dynamic senior academic to step up to lead TORCH as it begins on the next chapter of its development as an interdisciplinary research incubator and hub for Knowledge Exchange and Public Engagement with research.

The Director will ensure that TORCH remains closely attuned to the interdisciplinary interests of Oxford's humanities researchers at every career stage and enables collaborative activity at all levels. Alongside the cultivation of interdisciplinary and international research interests from across the Humanities, the Director will set out the forward strategy for the programme, in line with the vision for the Division, developing annual headline themes, as well as building productive collaborations with external partners. The Director will also be responsible for building opportunities to communicate the impact of innovative research in humanities both externally and across the collegiate University. Working closely with the Academic Champion: Networks and Partnerships, they will nurture a vibrant intellectual home for visiting academics

and researchers associated with the Centre – especially early career researchers; and, via the interdisciplinary research that TORCH fosters, encourage public engagement with research and knowledge exchange beyond academia. The role will work closely with the Director of the Humanities Cultural Programme to contribute creatively to the development of an exciting new programme of research-led cultural and public engagement activity as part of the Schwarzman gift.

The Director is a member of the TORCH Management Group, (chaired by Associate Head, Research and Innovation) and attends the Humanities Cultural Programme Steering Group. The Director is a member of the Humanities Division Research Committee, which has oversight of TORCH on behalf of the Divisional Board, and to which the Director reports on activities and strategy. The Director is supported by a dedicated and experienced professional staff, based in TORCH and the Humanities Divisional Office.

The TORCH Director will work with the Head of Division on identifying and supporting relevant fundraising priorities for TORCH.

Candidates must hold a doctoral degree, or equivalent, in the humanities.

Deadline for Expressions of Interest: **Friday 27 January 2023**

Candidate Profile

This is an outstanding opportunity for a senior academic to step up into a leadership position within the Humanities Division and make a significant contribution to the strategic direction of one of the foremost interdisciplinary research centres in the Humanities.

The successful candidate will be able to creatively develop forward-thinking programmes of activities which align with, and contribute to, the achievement of the strategic objectives of the Division. With strong diplomatic skills and good judgement, they will have the ability to manage multiple, complex stakeholder groups, to build productive, collaborative partnerships regionally, nationally and internationally.

The Director reports to the Associate Head, Research and Innovation and is accountable to the Humanities Divisional Board through regular reports to the Humanities Research Committee and to the Head of Division. This appointment is open only to internal applicants and offers a buyout equivalent to 100% of teaching stint. The post is available from Michaelmas Term 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter, for two years in the first instance, with an option to extend for a further year.

The main duties of the role:

1. To lead in developing TORCH's strategy, ensuring these are focussed, reflect the diversity and collegiality of research in Oxford, address the challenges of encouraging inter/multidisciplinary research in the Humanities and, where appropriate, seek to engage the wider community outside academia.

2. To work alongside the Associate Head of Research and Innovation and the Academic Champion: Networks and Partnerships to develop the Centre's programme of interdisciplinary academic and public engagement activities and to include appropriate measures to gauge effectiveness, in consultation with the Humanities Research Committee.

3. To identify and nurture potential partners, regionally, nationally and internationally, that via meaningful collaboration will allow the Centre to deliver its strategic aims. This will include national and international travel as appropriate.

4. To work with the Associate Head, Education, as appropriate, in where areas are identified where there is a need for growth in interdisciplinary curricula provision (for example in the medical or environmental humanities).

5. Ensure support for ECR communities, through TORCH's programme of activities, working alongside Associate Head, Research and Innovation, Researcher Advocate, and Academic Champion: Networks and Partnerships.

6. To creatively contribute to the development of the Humanities Cultural Programme, led by the Director of the Humanities Cultural Programme.

7. To promote Humanities research, and its impact, in Oxford nationally and internationally.

8. To develop and implement a strategy to secure TORCH's financial sustainability for the long-term.

9. To engage in fundraising, working with the Head of Division and the Development Office.

10. To secure research grants, working with the Associate Head of Research and Innovation, the Head of Humanities Research Support and the Humanities research support team.

11. To represent the Centre in the appropriate University, national and international fora.

12. To facilitate communication and collaboration in interdisciplinary research and its impact across Oxford, in particular with the colleges, research centres within the Humanities Division and their equivalents in other parts of the University, and the wider higher education community.

13. To provide academic leadership and, as appropriate, mentorship, and other advice for researchers associated with the Centre.

14. To ensure the Centre provides a vibrant and welcoming intellectual home for visiting academics associated with TORCH.

Selection criteria

Essential

1. A doctorate, or the equivalent research experience, in a humanities discipline.

2. Demonstrable ability to provide strategic leadership and vision for a prestigious interdisciplinary and multi-faceted research programme.

3. Evidence of the ability to promote and develop collaborative activity that crosses the collegiate University and beyond, including partners and communities outside the academy.

4. Proven ability to raise external funding, including securing funding from grant-awarding bodies, foundations and/or private philanthropic sources.

5. Demonstrable interest in, and ability to foster the development of early career researchers, including undertaking mentoring responsibilities.

6. The ability to communicate effectively and gain the confidence of a wide range of people, including academic staff, senior University officers, and all grades of professional and support staff.

7. Excellent oral and written skills, including making presentations in formal and informal contexts.

8. Excellent interpersonal skills with an in-depth understanding of complex academic environments.

9. An excellent research record in the Humanities, including research leadership experience beyond individual publications.

Terms and conditions

The position is open only to internal candidates. For joint postholders, the appointment would be subject to approval by the postholder's college.

The Director's underlying University contract of employment, and its associated terms and conditions, will remain in place during the appointment. The appointment will be for a period of two years (with an option to extend for a third year), which includes an initial probationary period of one year. Should the Director wish to terminate the appointment prior to the end of the two-year period, the length of notice required shall be at least one month during the probationary period and three months thereafter. The Head of the Humanities Division may request that the appointment be terminated, and the notice period will be at least one month during the probationary period and three months thereafter.

The following arrangements are offered:

- Teaching buy-out equivalent to 100% of teaching stint (or equivalent support for other academic activities)

- Deferral of sabbatical leave due during the period of office, if not to do so would involve loss of entitlement.

The specific package of support will be agreed between the Head of Division and the office holder.

How to apply

Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae and covering letter, stating how they meet the criteria for the post and how they would expect to meet the responsibilities of the role. Where applicable, candidates are asked to indicate that their college will support their release from teaching duties.

The curriculum vitae should include qualifications, an up-to-date select list of significant publications, current and planned research activity, and details of two referees (who will be contacted for shortlisted candidates). For applicants who are shortlisted, two letters of reference and one or more interviews will be required.

Applications should be submitted electronically to academic.appointments@humanities.ox.ac.uk by **12 noon on 27 January 2023.**

You are welcome to request a preliminary conversation with the Head of Division (Dan Grimley) daniel.grimley@music.ox.ac.uk, or the Humanities Division's Associate Head (Research and Innovation) Abigail Williams abigail.williams@ell.ox.ac.uk.

December 2022