JOHN P. CLAY CAREER DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP IN SANSKRIT
FURTHER PARTICULARS

Location	The Queen's College and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Oxford
Grade and salary	£43,690 per annum, plus discretionary Queen's weighting of £3,335 per annum
Hours	Full time (37.5 hours/week)
Contract type	**Fixed-term for 3 years (renewable for a further 2 years)**
Reporting to	The Governing Body of The Queen's College

Introduction

Thanks to the generous support of the Clay Foundation, the College proposes to elect a fixed-term Career Development Fellow in Sanskrit for three years with effect from 1st September 2027. The post will be renewable for a further fixed-term of two years subject to receipt of donor funding. The post will be held at the Centre for Manuscripts and Text Cultures (CMTC) within The Queen's College, and the successful candidate will become an active member of the CMTC and will also be elected to Associate Membership of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

The Fellowship is open to candidates who hold a doctorate in Sanskrit, or a closely related field, or are close to completing such a doctorate. The successful candidate will have a broad expertise in Sanskrit. The Fellowship is intended for early-career researchers with less than two years' full-time postdoctoral research experience by the start date; further information about eligibility is below.

The role

The successful postholder will deepen the interdisciplinary research commitment to Sanskrit manuscript and text cultures at the CMTC. They will sit on the management committee of the Centre and actively develop research on South Asian manuscript and text cultures for the journal *Manuscript and Text Cultures* (*MTC*) and the *Manuscript and Text Cultures Monograph Series* (*MTMS*), published by Liverpool University Press.

In addition to conducting original research in Sanskrit manuscript and text cultures, the candidate will develop active research links between the CMTC and South Asian research institutes. The postholder will also have the opportunity to lecture on South Asian manuscript and text cultures at the CMTC's partner institutions in China—specifically the Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures at Nanjing University, and the Research and Conservation Center for Unearthed Texts at Tsinghua University, Beijing—while actively fostering research collaborations in these environments.

To enhance their career trajectory, the postholder will conduct an average of six weighted hours of formal teaching per week during term time for the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES), ensuring they gain essential university teaching experience.

Administratively, the postholder will diversify and provide vital continuity for the Management Committee of the CMTC through their specialised expertise in Sanskrit. By proactively recruiting Sanskrit scholars to contribute to *MTC* and *MTMS*, the postholder will significantly broaden the Centre's South Asian scope. They will also play a full role in the organisation of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the College, including admissions and, from their second year in post, pastoral support for students.

Responsibilities

The Fellow will be required:

- to pursue a programme of advanced research in Sanskrit;
- to play a full part in deepening the interdisciplinary research commitment to Sanskrit manuscript cultures at the CMTC;
- to teach six weighted* hours per week for the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and to be responsible for report-writing at the end of each term, detailing their students' academic progress;
- to play a full part in the College's undergraduate admissions process;
- after the first year in post, to act in a pastoral role as Personal Tutor to some of the undergraduates reading for Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and as College Adviser to some graduates in the College reading for postgraduate degrees in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and related fields;
- to contribute to College Open Days and outreach activities;
- to report annually on progress; and
- to undertake such other duties as the Governing Body may direct.

The successful candidate will be able to contribute to teaching the following:

- Elementary Sanskrit
- Introduction to the study of India
- Core Sanskrit text options (in Kāvya and/or Śāstra)

An ability to teach the following is also desirable:

- Any core or optional text papers such as Vedic Sanskrit, Epic Sanskrit, Epigraphic Sanskrit, Philosophical texts.

Applicants should also list in their covering letter what further Oxford undergraduate papers or courses they would be able to contribute teaching for.

Details of the Oxford courses in Sanskrit may be found at https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/sanskrit-0.

*Weighted hours are calculated from contact hours according to the number of pupils in tutorials and classes, as the sum of one hour for a single pupil and one-quarter of an hour for each additional pupil up to a maximum of five (i.e., according to the formula $1 + 0.25(n-1)$, where n is the number of pupils in the tutorial or class up to a maximum of five). If a group size of three is taken as the average, then on average three weighted hours equates to two contact hours.

Selection criteria

The successful candidate will meet the following criteria. They will:

- Hold, or be close to the completion of, a PhD/DPhil in Sanskrit (or a closely related a field such as South Asian languages, literatures, or manuscript/text cultures related to Sanskrit);
- Have strong record of and/or evidence of strong potential for research in Sanskrit, appropriate to the candidate's career stage, and a with a clear plan of research to be conducted during the five years of the Career Development Fellowship;
- Have record of, or evidence of the potential for, successful teaching in Sanskrit, including the ability to deliver high-quality formal teaching to undergraduate and/or postgraduate students;
- Have excellent administrative and organizational skills, with the capacity to contribute effectively to the management committee of the CMTC and the editorial workflows of its publications;
- Have the ability to communicate well about the subject;
- Have the ability and willingness to take part in pastoral and administrative activities, including the undergraduate admissions process.

Applications are particularly invited from candidates with:

- A research interest in localised epigraphic traditions;
- A commitment to interdisciplinary research and a readiness to engage in cross-linguistic conversations on global manuscript cultures; and
- An enthusiasm for international collaboration, including a willingness to build links with South Asian research institutes and to lecture at partner institutions in Nanjing and Beijing.

Eligibility: The Fellowship is intended to support those at an early stage of their academic careers. Candidates must have had their doctorate conferred (i.e. degree in hand) or have received official confirmation of successful completion of the doctorate no later than 1st June 2027, and must not have accumulated, by 1st September 2027, more than two years' full-time postgraduate research experience from the date of their doctoral award; however, these two years need not be continuous.

If, for any reason, you have taken a career break or have had an atypical career and wish to disclose this in your application, the selection committee will take this into account, recognising that the quantity of your research may be reduced as a result.

Salary: the annual salary for this post is £43,690 plus a discretionary pensionable £3,335 per annum Queen's Weighting payment which will be paid in monthly instalments. The Career Development Fellow will be automatically enrolled in the USS pension scheme unless they opt out.

Research Allowance: a personal research allowance of £4,165 per annum is provided by the College for research activities such as conference attendance, research assistance, and the purchase of books and IT equipment.

Place of Work: The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies will provide shared office space.

Entitlements: The Fellow is entitled to sabbatical leave earned at the rate of one term for every two terms taught after the first two years in post. The person appointed will be a member of the Senior Common Room at The Queen's College, and entitled to free meals. They will hold Associate Membership of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Sanskrit at Oxford

Sanskrit has a long and illustrious history at Oxford, boasting the oldest surviving professorship in Sanskrit in the UK, the Boden Chair of Sanskrit established in 1831. Today, Sanskrit retains a central place in the University's academic provision related to South Asia, at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Within the Faculty of AMES, it is offered as a dedicated BA in Sanskrit, and as a primary option within the joint honours programmes of Classics & AMES and Religion & AMES. At the postgraduate level, Sanskrit is a

foundational component of the MPhil in Classical Indian Religion and the soon to be established MPhil in Classical Indian Studies. Furthermore, it serves as a critical linguistic pillar for students in the MPhil in Buddhist Studies, as well as students on other graduate courses both within and outside AMES, including for example the MPhil in Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics.

The Queen's College

The Queen's College, founded in 1341, is one of the oldest Colleges in the University of Oxford and represents most aspects of the University community and its scientific and scholarly work. There are approximately 45 Fellows, about 160 graduate students and about 330 undergraduates.

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is represented at the College by Prof Dirk Meyer (Professor of Chinese Philosophy and Fellow in Chinese), Dr Jennifer Guest (Associate Professor of Japanese (classical literature) and Fellow in Japanese), Prof Richard Parkinson (Professor of Egyptology and Professorial Fellow), Dr Frances Reynolds (Associate Professor of Assyriology and Senior Research Fellow), and several Junior Research Fellows. The College usually admits approximately four students each year to study Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and its joint schools.

The College has one of the finest college libraries in Oxford, with around 50,000 volumes in the current lending collection—used extensively by students—and around 100,000 volumes in the antiquarian collection. The library's recent expansion provides new reading rooms, enhanced accommodation for its special collections, and more space for students and the working collection. The College organises a symposium that meets twice a term for graduate students and faculty to showcase their research and discuss their interests.

More information about the College can be found at www.queens.ox.ac.uk.

The Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures

The Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures promotes the study of pre-modern manuscript and epigraphic traditions in a broad comparative perspective, relying on the strong multi-disciplinary community in Oxford while openly engaging with scholars in other institutions worldwide.

The activities of the Centre are at once specialised and interdisciplinary, united by the common goal of enabling long-term research on how knowledge and meaning are shaped and sustained by material conditions, past and present. As a platform for international researchers to engage in close dialogue across their areas of expertise and inform each other about approaches and theories developed in their various subject areas, our goal is to generate discussions that cross subject boundaries and contribute to the theoretical understanding of material text cultures and their impact on knowledge production in global literate societies. With its multidisciplinary approach, crossing traditional academic divisions, CMTC seeks to cast light on the deep structures of human behaviours in material knowledge production, past and present.

The Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures was established as a research concentration at The Queen's College, Oxford in 2018. CMTC began in 2012 as an initiative of a group of Fellows at Queen's, led by Dirk Meyer, with common interests in manuscript and text cultures in literate societies. Since then it has drawn in academics and postdoctoral researchers from other colleges and universities. It provides the nucleus of a research cluster with a focus on knowledge production and text circulation. The Centre publishes a peer-reviewed, open access journal, *Manuscript and Text Cultures*, twice per year.

Manuscript and Text Cultures are represented in the College by a number of Official Fellows as well as a Classics Lecturer and the College Librarian all of whom also serve as Board Members of CMTC. Information about the research interests is available on the College web site: www.queens.ox.ac.uk/whos-here.

For more information, please visit: www.cmtc.queens.ox.ac.uk

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) is one of the world's leading centres for research and teaching on the languages, history and cultures of Asia and the Middle East and our courses present both the major traditions of the regions studied and, in most cases, their modern developments. We are a multidisciplinary Faculty with members working in linguistics, philology, literature, architecture, history, religious studies, art history and the social sciences.

The Faculty has some 220 undergraduate students and around 250 graduate students at Master's and doctoral level. It has over 100 teaching and research staff across an extremely wide range of subjects (see https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/).

Its research has been consistently ranked exceptionally highly in external assessment and is distinctive for the emphasis placed on engagement with the subject through materials expressed in the original languages of the areas studied and for its intellectual rigour.

At the undergraduate level, students can study for degrees in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Chinese, Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Japanese, Jewish Studies, and Hebrew. At graduate level, there are one- and two-year Masters degrees in a wide range of subjects including Classical Indian Religion, Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, and Buddhist Studies. Languages taught as part of our degrees include Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, and Tibetan, and we expect from next year to add Classical Tamil.

Library and other resources

The Nizami Ganjavi Library, situated on the ground floor of the Faculty's main building, has an excellent working collection of books, reference works and periodicals on all subjects taught and researched in the Faculty, from which staff members may freely borrow. The Bodleian Library, the University's main research library, is a legal deposit library.

The Ashmolean Museum (adjacent to the Faculty building and the Bodleian Art, Architecture and Ancient World Library) is essential for several sectors of the Faculty. Its collections are a focus for teaching and research, in keeping with the Faculty's emphasis on material and aesthetic culture. Collaboration between staff in the Faculty and Ashmolean is close, including joint appointments, while other curatorial staff are Faculty members and contribute to teaching, graduate supervision and research. The Ashmolean's holdings in coins, textiles and paintings, ceramics and other items of material culture are extensive and can be accessed for teaching and research.

The Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together nine faculties and the Ruskin School of Art. 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.

We offer:

- world-class teaching and research, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study
- superb libraries and museums, including
- the Bodleian Library with 11 million volumes and priceless early book and manuscript collections
- the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology

For more information, please visit: About | Humanities Division

The University of Oxford

Oxford's departments and colleges 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.

Oxford's self-governing community of international scholars includes Professors, Associate Professors, other college tutors, senior and junior research fellows, and over 2,500 other University research staff. Research at Oxford combines disciplinary depth with an increasing focus on inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary activities addressing a rich and diverse range of issues.

Oxford's strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, and in providing all staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that supports everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is a great strength, and vital for innovation and creativity, Oxford aspires to build a truly inclusive community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While Oxford has long traditions of scholarship, it is also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities. It consistently has the highest external research income of any university in the UK (the most recent figures are available at www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/finance-and-funding), and is ranked first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 spin-off companies created to date. Oxford is also recognised as a leading supporter of social enterprise.

Oxford admits undergraduate students with the intellectual potential to benefit fully from the small group learning to which Oxford is deeply committed. Meeting in small groups with their tutor, undergraduates are exposed to rigorous scholarly challenge and learn to develop their critical thinking, their ability to articulate their views with clarity, and their personal and intellectual confidence. They receive a high level of personal attention from leading academics.

Oxford has a strong postgraduate student body which now numbers over 10,000. Postgraduates are attracted to Oxford by the international standing of the faculty, by the rigorous intellectual training on offer, by the excellent research and laboratory facilities available, and by the resources of the museums and libraries, including one of the world's greatest libraries, the Bodleian.

For more information, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

How to apply

Applicants are invited to apply online via www.queens.ox.ac.uk/vacancies. The form will ask you to upload the following documents:

- Their CV
- A covering letter, which should speak specifically to the candidate's ability to fulfil the requisite teaching obligation
- A supporting statement of around 1,500 words of the planned post-doctoral research
- Two confidential letters of recommendation

We recommend your referees have Chrome or Safari set as their default browser when submitting letters of recommendation.

Both confidential letters of recommendation should be requested through Interfolio. Further guidance on how this can be managed can be found at this link. If your referee is unable to provide a reference letter via Interfolio, please email academic.recruitment@queens.ox.ac.uk for alternative instructions.

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

All applications must be received no later than **11:59pm (EST) Monday 8th February 2027.**

Informal enquiries about eligibility, specific details of application materials, or other aspects of the post not covered in the present document may be made to the Prof Dirk Meyer (dirk.meyer@queens.ox.ac.uk). All other queries, including queries about the application process, should be sent to academic.recruitment@queens.ox.ac.uk. Due to the high number of applications, we are unfortunately not able to offer advice about the presentation of an application, the suitability of a research project, or feedback on applications that are not shortlisted.

Applications will be considered by a selection committee containing representatives from The Queen's College and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. The College is committed to fairness, consistency, and transparency in selection decisions. Members of the selection committees will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection, and the risks of bias.

Interviews

Interviews are expected to be held in-person on Tuesday 16th March 2027.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit a sample of their research (maximum 8,000 words) prior to the interview. As part of the interview, candidates will be asked to give a teaching presentation as well as a presentation detailing their current and future research plans and their vision for advancing the Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures. Further details will be provided for shortlisted candidates.

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/.

If the successful candidate requires a visa, the College will cover the visa application fee, but not the immigration NHS surcharge. This is subject to the eligibility criteria being met for the required visa route Candidates are asked to note that the visa application process will require the submission of the doctoral thesis no later than three months prior to the start date of this post and to the provision of either a copy of the doctoral award certificate, or an academic reference confirming that the doctorate has been awarded, or an academic reference confirming the submission of the thesis, if not yet completed. The College also offers an interest-free visa loan scheme (in parallel to the University's scheme) to assist successful candidates with meeting the costs of the NHS surcharge and visa fees for themselves and their dependents.

Diversity and Equal Opportunity at Queen's

The Queen's College embraces diversity and equal opportunity. Applications are particularly welcome from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in

Oxford. The more inclusive we are, the better our work will be. For more information, visit www.queens.ox.ac.uk/equality-information

The College invites all applicants to familiarise themselves with its equal opportunities policy, available on its Equality Information page: www.queens.ox.ac.uk/equality-information

The College also shares the university's commitment 'to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.' The university's full policy is available at: www.edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/equality-policy

We are committed to the principles of equal opportunities and respect for individuals in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills. We value and celebrate diversity and feel that is critical to achieving our strategic aims and long-term success. We work to recruit employees and admit students from a wide range of backgrounds and promote an inclusive culture in which:

- everyone feels that they are valued and can work to achieve their potential;
- opportunities are open to everyone, and decisions are based on merit and are free from bias; and
- all of our current and prospective students, staff, and visitors are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, and do not face discrimination.

All College meetings include consideration of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 as they pertain to the meeting's actions and decisions. In formal and informal settings alike, the College endeavours to make decisions that afford equal opportunities to, and foster good relationships between, different groups of people. This commitment, supported by data and routinely monitored, extends to all aspects of our activities: in our outreach activities, in admissions, and in financial support, for undergraduates and postgraduates alike; in the procedures related to hiring and retaining academic and non-academic staff members of the highest calibre; in student support; and in all aspects of fostering an inclusive community in which everyone feels respected, valued, and heard.