

Candidate Information

**Project Manager / Deputy Director,
“Univ North” Development**

University College, Oxford

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BACKGROUND

Founded in 1249, University College ('Univ') is the oldest educational foundation in Oxford. It combines an ancient heritage with a thoroughly modern approach to fostering excellence in teaching and research. Its overriding emphasis is on academic endeavour at the highest standard; strictly merit-based recruitment of students; tutorial teaching of undergraduates; a closely integrated graduate community; and a strong commitment to research in the humanities and sciences.

The College's academic objectives are to:

- Provide an excellent education for high-ability undergraduates;
- Promote the research and scholarship of its Fellows and graduates;
- Develop its position as a college of preference for graduates by the provision of scholarships, accommodation and a stimulating intellectual community;
- Encourage undergraduate applications from a wide and diverse range of social and educational backgrounds through a strong programme of access initiatives;
- Establish and maintain links with all those interested in supporting its educational activities.

Every year about 110 undergraduates and 75 graduates are admitted to Univ. Around 600 junior members – 370 undergraduates and 230 graduates - are in residence at any one time. The Governing Body of the College comprises of 52 Fellows. In addition, there are approximately 120 non-academic staff working in various administrative and maintenance roles.

The College is an independent, self-governing institution. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for all aspects of the running of the College. It is chaired by The Master and underpinned by a structure of committees, including the Premises Committee concerned with Property and rents; The Development Committee concerned with Old Members, Fundraising and events; the Academic Committee, concerned with academic policy and administration; the General Purposes Committee, concerned with the domestic management of the College and the Finance Committee concerned with the financial resources of the College and its endowment.

The College has a very material endowment which routinely places the higher third of the 38 colleges and halls that comprise the collegiate University. The net assets of the College include long term fixed rate bonds of £50 million, which mature in 2065. Univ was the first Oxford College to issue such bonds.

The College puts these funds to use by seeking to grow its endowment through a combination of well-judged investment management alongside its long-term fund-raising programmes. The investments are for the purpose of supporting a larger college than would be possible otherwise including resources for undergraduate bursaries, graduate scholarships, access initiatives, Fellowships and teaching support. Excess returns are used to enhance the academic and student facilities, including those proposed in the major development of the expansion of the College's estate in north Oxford (see below).

The investments of the College comprise direct property, property funds, financial securities and bonds. The aim is to provide at low volatility an average of 3.5% per annum real after costs and bond interest to fund the College's activities and, if possible, additional returns to fund capital expenditure. The College has been well-served by its Investment Committee, which was created July 2002 with compound, real return on the investments, after costs, in excess of this required rate.

The College has an exceptionally strong record of fund-raising, managed by an Alumni and Development Office, which in turn is supported by a Communications Office. For example, in the summer of 2016, it brought to a successful close a ten-year campaign to raise £55m for undergraduate bursaries, graduate scholarships, Fellowships and facilities. The College's annual appeal has been one of the most successful of the Oxford colleges. It is consistently supported by over a third of the College's alumni ('Old Members') and has raised well in excess of £1m annually in recent years.

The Univ North Development Project

The College has a stock of about 400 rooms of accommodation for its students. The College plans to add to this over the immediate term by realising the potential of a recently acquired site in north Oxford. The development secured planning consent in October 2020 and the anticipated build is very much the driver for this post.

The proposed development project - Univ North - represents the largest single expansion of the College's accommodation for over three centuries. The consented development comprises 7 new buildings and 2 material refurbishments to create 150 new bedspaces plus a range of ancillary facilities. The ancillary facilities will include a student café, common performance space, gym and a nursery. The site is some 6 acres bounded by Banbury and Woodstock Roads to the east and west, and Staverton and Rawlinson Roads to the north and south, respectively. The development is landscape-led and the crafted grounds will sit appropriately in the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

This substantial project is, therefore, of considerable importance to the College with the prospects of long-term legacy running through this century and beyond.

More information about the College is available on our website at www.univ.ox.ac.uk

THE ROLE

Department:	Estates Bursary, University College
Job Title:	Project Manager, Univ North Development
Accountable to:	Finance Bursar
Grade:	9.1

Overview of the Role

The College seeks a project manager who is able to operate with confidence and expertise in supporting the College in the Univ North Development residential construction project.

The project is currently at RIBA stage 4, with tender documentation being prepared for issue to the market for a principal construction contractor. The successful candidate will operate as the College's project representative, working closely with the Finance Bursar, who is directing the project; the Domestic Bursar, who is leading on landscaping and functional operation; Bidwells Project Manager; the College senior officers; the Trustees of the College; Niall McLaughlin architects; Price & Myers; Max Fordham and our other critical consultants, and the wider stakeholders including Univ North neighbours, and the City Council's planning team. As has been typical across the sector, the disruptions caused by COVID are being assessed continuously and incorporated into the judgements to progress the project.

The role would suit a residential property development project manager capable of providing leadership in complex situations. The successful candidate will have established demonstrable experience in the management of several successful property developments of similar scale. There is a substantial dimension to the role that includes communication and connection, which can only be meaningfully led by a College member. The successful candidate will need to display and develop extraordinary skills, strategically and tactically, to help bring all of the different stakeholders along in this high-profile project.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Manage the client's and different stakeholder's needs in the execution of the project, representing the College in all aspects.
- Maintain a 'licence to operate' on behalf of the College by using experience and expertise to anticipate likely points of challenge and controversy, and carefully working through its internal governance processes, up to and including the satisfaction of its Governing Body.
- Support the management of the tender, including evaluation and contract definition, to guide the College to the best outcome.
- Support the College leadership and its contractors in delivering the project to meet all Health, Safety, environmental, cost, quality and schedule expectations, with deviations from these to be signalled and discussed in advance with recommendations developed to address the imminent issues.

- Speak for the College in bringing points of contention to satisfactory resolution. Coordinate any internal client research.
- Stay informed and on top of market trends and future directions, including matters as diverse as inflationary and supply pressures in the construction sector and Health & Safety requirements.
- Analyse and communicate the effective optimisation of the project throughout from a cost and risk benefit perspective, supporting the Project Board and, as appropriate, the Oversight Committee, which operate on behalf of the Trustees of the College.
- Communicate effectively with colleagues and external stakeholders at every level to ensure that the project is characterised by one of high engagement.
- Prepare for occupation and support the first year of use by working closely with the Domestic Bursar, the College's grounds team, and the Building and Maintenance Manager, and the Works team to address all operational matters.
- Maintain continuous, full and accurate project records for the leadership to guide decision-making and to protect the College in the unlikely event of dispute.

THE PERSON

Applications for this appointment will be assessed against the following qualities, competences and experience:

Essential

- Evident material residential property construction project management success across a diversity of projects, including those of comparable scale.
- A leader able to operate confidently and competently across all aspects of tactical project management for residential construction project operations, contract negotiations and, *in extremis*, litigation.
- Evidence of strategic decision-making in the context of complex stakeholder needs in a challenging marketplace.
- Demonstration of professional personal organisation, with a natural enthusiasm and evidence of responsible self-starting.
- Able to show commitment and drive through to exceptional outcomes, despite challenging or changing circumstances.
- Clear understanding of construction contract agreements across the different forms, with assured handling of essential H&S law and environmental regulation.
- A demonstrable appreciation that short-term loss can be turned into long-term gain with an ability to engineer positive opportunities from difficult situations.
- A customer-orientated outlook.
- High level of verbal and written communication skills, and fluent in web communications.
- Recognised professional accreditation, with a clear willingness to maintain and develop relevant professional technical skills.

Desirable

- Familiarity with Oxford college processes and the needs of college student accommodation.
- Experience of calculated trade-offs for full life cycle (cradle-to-grave) project optimisation.
- Understanding of environmental and sustainability expectations.
- Experience of delivering projects in areas of public sensitivity areas (conservation areas, green belt, or similar) with high environmental and bio-diversity expectations in the stakeholder community.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contract Type: Fixed term (three years)

Date of Appointment: The appointment will be made with a target start date of 1 December 2021; a slightly earlier or later date may be negotiated. The appointment is subject to a satisfactory financial probity check, references and proof of right to work in the UK.

Salary: The salary on appointment will be in the region of £48k to £50k p.a., depending strictly on experience.

Pension: The post-holder will be enrolled into the USS pension scheme, which currently requires a contribution of 9.8% of salary while the College would contribute 21.4%.

Health Insurance: The College will pay all or part of the post-holder's membership fee of its medical insurance plan (currently BUPA) depending on their contractual hours. This is a taxable benefit that covers members of the post-holder's immediate family.

Hours of work: This is a full-time post based on 5 days per week (i.e., 36.5 hours working week). The ability and willingness to adopt a flexible approach to working hours and duties is required, and you may be expected to work additional hours occasionally to fulfil the needs of your role and of the College. It is expected that the successful candidate will be willing to access Oxford to deliver the tasks satisfactorily.

The College may be amenable to flexible working for the right candidate, depending upon circumstances. Please note, however, that the post-holder should declare any other employment or salaried office and the College is likely to decline consent to other work.

Expenses: The post-holder will be reimbursed for all expenses reasonably and properly incurred in the performance of their duties.

Probation: The appointment is subject to a probation period of 6 months during which the post-holder will be expected to master the full requirements of the role and achieve a satisfactory level of performance as assessed by the Finance Bursar.

Notice: 3 months' notice period is required on either side following a successful probation period.

Relocation: Re-location expenses are unlikely to be available given the fixed term nature of the post.

Lunch: Meals are provided when working in College and if the kitchens are open.

Retirement: College has adopted the principle of an Employer Justified Retirement Age.

The above list is not exhaustive. The College reserves the right to alter or amend any of the above terms and conditions prior to an offer of employment.

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply by email (preferred) to the HR Manager (hr.manager@univ.ox.ac.uk) or by post to the HR Manager, University College, High Street, Oxford, OX14BH.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further before deciding whether to apply, please call Andrew Grant on +44 (0)1865 2776610 or +44 (0) 7342 656595 (m).

Applications should include:

- A comprehensive curriculum vitae giving details of relevant achievements in recent posts as well as your education and professional qualifications.
- A covering letter (no more than two pages) that explains your interest in this post, providing evidence of your ability to match the criteria outlined in the Person Specification. It is important in the covering letter that you explain why you should be appointed as a strong candidate (rather than simply that you could do the job).
- Telephone contact numbers (preferably daytime and evening/mobile), which will be used with discretion.
- Details of your latest salary and notice period.
- Dates on which you will not be available for interview in the period indicated below.
- Names and contact details of 2 referees, together with a brief statement of the capacity in which they have known you and an indication of when in the process they can be contacted. At least one should be your line manager in your most recent job and another should have experience of your work through working closely with you for a considerable period.
- Please also complete the optional recruitment monitoring form (available for download separately). We collect confidential and anonymous equal opportunities data at recruitment in order to support the College in its monitoring duty.

Your referees will be asked to comment on your suitability for the post and to provide details of the dates of your employment. We will assume that we may approach them at any stage unless you tell us otherwise. If you wish us to ask for your permission before approaching a particular referee, or to contact them only under certain circumstances (for example, if you are called to interview), you must state this explicitly alongside the details of the relevant referee(s).

Closing date

The closing date for applications will be **midday Thursday, 14 October 2021**. Late applications may not be considered.

Selection Process

Applications will be acknowledged by HR upon receipt.

After the closing date, all candidates will be informed by email or phone of the outcome of their applications.

A short list of the best-qualified candidates will be invited to a panel interview on the 1st and 2nd November, 2021, which may be held online or in person, depending upon the circumstances.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The College is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applications from all candidates and encourage applications from women and minority groups who are currently under-represented in this part of the College. No applicant will be treated less favourably than another because of their sex, marital status, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, disability, age, pregnancy or maternity or sexual orientation.