



Junior Research Fellowship in the Northern Ireland Peace Process (Quill Project)

Pembroke College proposes to appoint a Junior Research Fellow in the History of the Northern Ireland Peace Process. The post is funded by the generosity of the Carnegie Foundation of New York and is designed to support an academic in the early stages of their career while contributing to the development of the Quill Project's *Writing Peace* programme, with a particular emphasis on the creation of materials for use in secondary-level education.

Background

The University of Oxford is notable for a tradition of Irish studies. The Foster Chair of Irish History (the first endowed chair of Irish History in Britain) is currently held by Professor Ian McBride. Professor McBride has written extensively on various aspects of modern Irish history and will act as academic mentor to the post-holder, advising on all matters related to research and career development. Elsewhere in the University Irish specialists include Professor Marc Mulholland, Professor David Dwan and Professor Senia Paseta. The post-holder will also work closely with Dr Conor Kelly, Bingham Early Career Fellow in Constitutional Studies.

Quill is a digital humanities research project, based in Pembroke College. Its online platform is designed to model the negotiation of legal and constitutional texts. The work of the project includes the digitization and transcription of archival material, editing, analysing, and modelling the process of negotiation, and communicating the results of that research to a wide variety of audiences. Quill's *Writing Peace* initiative began in 2021 and has been widely recognized for its efforts to secure the documentary record of the Northern Ireland peace process and make it available for research. Over the past four years, we have worked closely with archivists, officials, policymakers, and journalists grappling with the aftermath of the Northern Ireland conflict and the challenges of British-Irish relations post-Brexit. In the next phase of our work, we will equip schoolteachers and their students with the materials and skills to explore the lessons of the peace process in the classroom. To achieve this goal, we are seeking to appoint an individual with expertise in the modern history and politics of Ireland and an interest in digital humanities and education to work with our team and extended network of collaborators to produce a suite of interactive educational resources.

The Role

Fifty per cent of the Northern Ireland Peace Process Research Fellow's time will be devoted to pursuing independent research on aspects of the Northern Ireland Peace Process, with a focus on the negotiation process. The remaining fifty per cent will support the work of *Writing Peace* more directly by co-ordinating focus groups and co-creating and testing educational materials with young people across Ireland and Britain. The aim is that by the end of the fellowship, the Fellow will have a record of publication and experience of research and impact activities that will enable them to advance to the next stage of an academic career, while Quill will have made its Irish collections accessible to a wider range of users.

Specific Responsibilities

The Research Fellow will report jointly to Professor Ian McBride and Dr Nicholas Cole. Their responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the following:

Research (50%)

- Propose, plan and manage a high quality and ambitious programme of original research on specified aspects of the Northern Ireland Peace Process within the current timeframe of the *Writing Peace* project, 1985 to 1998;
- Publicize the outcomes of that research at a national and international level through presentation of papers and the submission of at least one journal article;
- Participate in the well-established postgraduate Irish History seminar series convened by Professor Ian McBride;
- Liaise with research colleagues in and beyond Oxford with a view to future research collaboration on the Northern Ireland Peace Process, and;
- Engage in the life and activities of the College.

Quill (50%)

- Manage the operation of focus groups with teachers and archivists to consult on the production of *Writing Peace* educational materials;
- In collaboration with the focus groups and the rest of the *Writing Peace* team, produce an e-book on 'The Art of Compromise';
- Working closely with the *Writing Peace* technical team, advise on the creation of digital tools and interactive online activities;
- Visit secondary schools in both parts of Ireland and the UK and establish an online seminar series for secondary school students to obtain feedback upon and promote the new resources;
- Organize other academic and educational events relating to *Writing Peace* as appropriate; and
- Participate in academic and other events with a view to disseminating research and promoting the work of the Quill Project.

The Research Fellow shall be expected to have a plan for the Fellowship which will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Qualifications and Requirements

The successful candidate will meet the following essential criteria:

- Recent doctorate in a relevant discipline,
- Excellent academic track record,
- Outstanding written communication skills,
- Experience of archival research and working with archival material in a digital context,
- The personal motivation to pursue an independent research project, and
- The ability to work well as part of a multi-disciplinary, international team.

The following additional qualifications are desirable but not essential:

- Prior experience of working with the *Writing Peace* digital platform; and
- Detailed knowledge of the secondary education sector in Ireland and/or the UK.

The successful candidate will need to provide evidence of the right to work in the UK and to complete an enhanced DBS check for working with under-eighteens prior to taking up employment.

Benefits

This post is full-time and fixed term from early 2026 until 31 July 2027. The post-holder will be based at Pembroke College. The annual salary is £38,700. Other benefits include a research and welfare allowance of £1,750, membership of the Senior Common Room, dining rights in College (when the kitchen is open), and membership of the University pension scheme.

How to Apply

Applications should be submitted by email to ruth.murray@pmb.ox.ac.uk by **5pm (UK GMT) on Wednesday, 10 December 2025**, and should include:

- A letter of application explaining your suitability for the role,
- A curriculum vitae detailing your higher education, research, and any publications to date,
- A research proposal of approximately 1,500 words,
- The names, positions, and email addresses of two academic referees. Applicants should ask their referees to submit references **by email by the same deadline**; references will not be requested by the College.

Submitted materials will be assessed, and shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview the following week. Those shortlisted will also be asked to provide specimen chapters of written work. These should not be submitted at the application stage, but only upon confirmation of being shortlisted.

The successful candidate will be expected to take up the post in early 2026.

Right to Work in the UK

Appointment to this post is dependent on the candidate demonstrating that they have the right to work in the UK. At all times your employment is subject to the provision of original documentation to establish your right to work and remain in the UK, which the College requires in order to comply with its duties under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. It will remain your responsibility to ensure that you are able to produce such documentation as and when requested from you.

Candidates that require a visa to work in the United Kingdom are encouraged to check before applying to ensure that they are eligible for an appropriate visa using the information provided by the [University of Oxford Staff Immigration Team](#).