



Reuben
College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Appointment of
President

March 2026

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Welcome

Reuben College, Oxford, invites applications for the position of President, to succeed Professor Lord Lionel Tarassenko, who will step down in September 2027 as the College's founding Head.

This appointment offers a unique opportunity to lead the University of Oxford's newest college through its next phase of development — from its dynamic “start-up” years to full independence, maturity, and enduring academic distinction. The President will

guide Reuben's evolution as a self-governing community and champion its mission to tackle twenty-first century global challenges through interdisciplinary research, inclusive collaboration, public engagement and innovation and entrepreneurship.

Reuben seeks a leader who combines intellectual distinction, inclusive leadership, and visionary energy — someone who will uphold the College's values while advancing its reputation across Oxford and beyond.

The College

Reuben College was established in May 2019 as the University of Oxford's 39th college, named in recognition of a landmark gift from the Reuben Foundation. Dedicated to graduate study and interdisciplinary research addressing twenty-first-century challenges, Reuben is the University's first new college in over three decades, founded to create a forward-looking scholarly community that reflects the evolving landscape of graduate education.

Reuben's academic life is structured around four intersecting research themes, which serve as touchstones for its scholarship and public engagement:

- Values & Society
- Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Cellular Life
- Environmental Change

Two strategic areas further enrich the social fabric and daily life of the college, also contributing to a dynamic programme of events that showcase the College's values in action.

These are:

- Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- Public Engagement with Research, Culture & Heritage

As a graduate college, Reuben offers a rich environment that nurtures intellectual independence, professional development and community. A strong entrepreneurial spirit runs through the College. Its diverse Fellowship brings a wealth of expertise to support students in advancing their research impact, engaging the public with their work, and developing initiatives that connect scholarship to society. As a young and rapidly developing college, Reuben offers its members a rare opportunity to shape the institution's ethos, culture, and activities for generations to come.





Partnership is at the heart of Reuben's identity — quite literally forming part of its foundations. The College shares parts of its stunning Grade-II-listed Jackson and Worthington buildings with GLAM (Oxford University's Gardens, Libraries and Museums) including the historic Radcliffe Science Library reading rooms, and the Collections, Teaching and Research Centre. The College has a number of Fellows from GLAM in the Governing Body, cementing the partnership.

Located in the University Science Area, adjacent to the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and a short walk from University Parks and the city centre, the College occupies architecturally significant buildings dating from 1860 to 1934. These heritage spaces have

undergone a major programme of refurbishment to create purpose-built, flexible, and accessible environments for graduate life, including a dining hall, library, Graduate Common Room, games room, multi-faith room, cafeteria, snug, lecture rooms, and, most recently, a student bar and music room.

The Reuben Foundation's generous founding endowment continues to underpin every aspect of College life, supporting scholarships that enable a diverse and international community to thrive. Through this partnership, and through the many collaborations that now define its work, Reuben brings together the University's rich tradition of academic endeavour with a commitment to addressing the challenges of tomorrow.



Governance and Structure

Reuben College is a graduate Society within the University of Oxford, currently in transition to full independence. Its Governing Body — chaired by the President and composed of its Official Fellows and Fellows by Special Election — is responsible for the strategic direction, finances, and administration of the College.

Reuben College has 500+ students, 50+ Governing Body Fellows, a similar number of other academic posts, and c.35 members of staff. The College's leadership team of President, Senior Tutor and Bursar, is supported by Fellows taking on important College Officership such as Vice Presidency, in rotation.

Reuben's governance reflects its founding values of transparency, democracy, and inclusivity. Fellows, staff, and students are encouraged to contribute to the life and leadership of the College. Committees are structured to ensure collaboration between academic and professional services, and to embody the College's participatory ethos.

More information about our governance and policies can be found here: <https://reuben.ox.ac.uk/governance-and-policies>.

The Role

The President is the head and chief ambassador for Reuben College, responsible for providing intellectual and strategic leadership, chairing the Governing Body, and representing the College across the University and beyond.

At this pivotal moment, the President will:

- Shape the next stage of the College's strategic vision, building on its strong legacy, ensuring its financial sustainability, academic distinction, and inclusive culture;
- Provide visible and proactive leadership in fundraising and external engagement, cultivating philanthropic support and partnerships to grow the College's endowment, expand its scholarships, and fund new facilities and initiatives;
- Be a regular, active presence within the College, engaging closely with Fellows, staff and students, and taking a hands-on approach to daily life and decision-making;
- Lead Reuben from its founding phase to full independence, including the securing of a Royal Charter;
- Act as an inspirational figurehead, sustaining and strengthening the community's ethos of openness, collegiality, and curiosity;

- Serve as the College's principal representative and advocate, building relationships across Oxford, the higher education sector, government, philanthropy, and industry;
- Champion Reuben's distinctive character as a young and evolving graduate college, recognising that this is not a traditional Head of House appointment but one that demands energy, adaptability and a readiness to be directly involved in shaping the College's future; and
- Inspire and connect a community whose interests span all academic divisions of the University – from the sciences and medicine to the social sciences, humanities, and creative disciplines – ensuring that the College's interdisciplinary mission is genuinely inclusive and representative of Oxford's full intellectual breadth.

Reuben's next President will inherit an institution with strong momentum and distinctive character — but also one still defining its traditions and structures. This is a rare opportunity for a leader who relishes innovation, creativity, and institution-building to shape the identity of a college for the twenty-first century.



Key Duties

Strategic Leadership

- Provide overall leadership of the College and advance its academic, cultural, and social aims.
- Work collaboratively with the Governing Body to develop and deliver a compelling long-term strategy, including independence milestones.
- Foster a culture of open dialogue, shared purpose, and collective decision-making.
- Ensure the College maintains a strong financial position and is well-governed, transparent, and sustainable.
- Champion Reuben's identity as an inclusive, forward-looking college engaged with global challenges.

Academic and Community Leadership

- Promote a culture of intellectual excellence, curiosity, and interdisciplinarity.
- Support the wellbeing, academic success, and personal development of students, staff and Fellows.
- Be visible and approachable — engaging regularly with students, staff, and Fellows in all aspects of College life.
- Celebrate and support the diversity of all academic disciplines.

- Encourage public engagement, enterprise and impact, as integral parts of the College's mission.

Fundraising and External Relations

- Act as the College's leading ambassador to alumni, donors, and external partners.
- Work closely with staff, students and Fellows to expand Reuben's network of supporters.
- Build on the generous support of the Reuben Foundation and other benefactors to grow the College's endowment and fund new scholarships, programmes, and facilities.
- Represent Reuben effectively across the University, the city of Oxford, and the wider higher education community, both nationally and internationally.

Operational Oversight

- Chair the Governing Body and major College committees.
- Line manage the College's senior leadership team.
- Support good governance, sound financial management, and efficient administration.
- Guide the College through its transition to financial and legal independence.





Person Specification

The successful candidate will combine intellectual credibility, strategic acumen, and inclusive leadership with the energy and imagination to shape a young and growing college.

Essential Qualities

- A distinguished record of achievement and leadership in academia, public service, industry, or another relevant field.
- Intellectual credibility and ability to engender trust and respect across the University of Oxford and beyond.
- Ability to be a compelling advocate for interdisciplinary collaboration, academic freedom, and the public value of research.
- Strategic vision, with the ability to set direction, unite others behind shared goals, and inspire confidence.
- Inclusive and empathetic leadership, grounded in listening, consultation, and mutual respect.
- Track record of fundraising, relationship-building, or development work with benefactors and partners.

- Genuine interest in the academic, professional, and personal development of Fellows, staff and graduate students, and, ideally, experience of engaging positively with student communities.
- Proven ability to lead organisations through growth and change.
- Financial literacy and an ability to oversee budgets and investments effectively.
- Excellent communication, diplomacy, and public representation skills.
- Commitment to fostering inclusive cultures and environments in which individuals from all backgrounds can thrive.
- International outlook and ability to engage across cultures.

Desirable Qualities

- Strong understanding of navigating complex organisations such as the Oxford collegiate system.
- Experience of working within a university environment.



Terms of Appointment

Applications are welcome from individuals of all backgrounds, including international candidates.

The President will be appointed for an initial term of five years, renewable for a further term of five years by mutual agreement.

It is expected that the new President will take up the post in September 2027.

The position will require a significant presence in Oxford particularly during University terms, with flexibility outside term time. The President will be expected to be available for regular weekend and evening commitments.

The remuneration package will be competitive.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Reuben College, Oxford on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **IPEAJ**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 30 March 2026**.

*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to visit the College during the week commencing 18 May 2026, with final interviews scheduled for 15 and 16 June 2026.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



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