The Wardenship

Merton College, Oxford, intends to elect a new Warden as Head of College following the election of the existing Warden, Professor Irene Tracey CBE, to the Vice Chancellorship of the University of Oxford. The Warden plays a central role in the intellectual and social life of the College, and the position entails a strong pastoral element. The College therefore seeks someone of high intellectual calibre who will share and promote its academic values, foster good relations between students, fellows, staff and alumni, contribute to its future strategic and financial planning, and represent its interests in the collegiate University and the wider academic community worldwide.

The College is a self-governing institution and ultimate authority for all decisions rests with the Governing Body which is comprised of the Warden and around sixty Fellows. The Warden and Fellows who are members of the Governing Body serve as trustees of the College. The Warden, acting as first among equals, chairs the Governing Body and many of its principal sub-committees, including the Warden and Tutors’ and Graduate Committees, which deal with all matters pertaining to undergraduate and graduate education. The tutorial system of small-group teaching, which is overseen by a full-time Senior Tutor, is central to Merton’s undergraduate educational mission and the Fellows look to the Warden to support its maintenance and effective operation. It is expected that the Warden will work with the Fellowship to continue to develop the long-term strategic vision of the College in a changing academic and economic climate.

The office of Warden is concerned with all matters of student welfare and discipline at both undergraduate and graduate level, and the College has an extensive network of people to support this work. The Warden also plays a crucial role in developing bonds with our community of alumni in Britain and throughout the world.

The Warden works in close association with the College’s three Bursars (Finance, Domestic and Estates), and with the Fellowship generally, to regulate the College finances, advance the upkeep and development of College facilities, and maintain and increase its endowment, especially through fundraising. The Warden chairs the Finance and Development Committees. The new Warden will work closely with the Development Director to build on recent successful endowment and building campaigns.

The Warden is Merton’s chief representative in Oxford’s collegiate University; a willingness to sit on University committees is therefore desirable. The Warden also speaks for the College at the Conference of
Colleges, the inter-collegiate body which enables the Colleges to voice their interests and to act collectively on issues that matter to them. Also useful would be previous administrative experience, some knowledge of finance and estate management, experience in the areas of fundraising and strategic development, and an enthusiasm for both the formal and informal aspects of collegiate life.

The College

Merton College, the first fully self-governing College in the University, was founded in 1264 by Walter de Merton, sometime Chancellor of England and later Bishop of Rochester. It boasts some of the oldest and most beautiful buildings in Oxford including Mob Quad, Fellows’ Quad, and the Chapel, which is now home to a highly successful choral foundation. The College Library houses an unbroken archive stretching back to the foundation and possesses rich holdings of early manuscripts and printed materials, together with a number of specialized collections such as those relating to Max Beerbohm and T. S. Eliot. Merton participates with several other colleges in a conservation centre to maintain these holdings and shares a professional archivist with Corpus Christi College. A virtual tour of the College is available on its website.

The College admits roughly equal numbers of undergraduate and graduate students (approximately 300 of each are in residence at any given time) and currently aims to provide accommodation for all of its undergraduate members, and for every first-year postgraduate student. Academic standards are high at Merton, and the College regularly comes top of the Norrington Table of undergraduate final examination results across Oxford colleges. The record in many types of extra-curricular activities is also strong. Every effort is made to widen academic access to the College through the appointment of a Schools’ Liaison and Access Officer and ongoing communication with an increasingly diverse range of schools. The College is committed to the pursuit of equality, as illustrated by the current annual series of Merton Equality Conversations.

Although graduate teaching is largely undertaken outside the College, Merton seeks to create a coherent graduate community by assigning all graduates an in-college adviser amongst the Fellowship and by promoting interaction between the undergraduate, graduate, and faculty members of the College.

At present the College has twenty-nine tutorial Fellows in a wide range of subjects in the medical and physical sciences, the social sciences, and the
humanities, and thirteen professorial Fellows. It has also established a variety of fixed-term Fellowships designed to promote the careers of young scholars, as well as Fellowships for advanced researchers of the highest academic calibre, and has set up several very active interdisciplinary research groups. All tutorial and professorial fellows are members of the College’s Governing Body, together with some research fellows and professional College Officers.

Merton also has a Visiting Research Fellowship programme designed to bring distinguished academics to Merton from all over the world. Up to six such Visiting Research Fellowships are awarded annually.

The College community also comprises a large domestic and administrative staff, a team of duty porters, and various ancillary staff. The College grounds are famous and are expertly maintained by a team of professional gardeners who have frequently won local and national prizes.

**Terms and Conditions**

The position is full time; it has a fixed term of 7 years, with the possibility of renewal for up to 5 years, and the Warden may not hold other paid or unpaid offices without the consent of the Governing Body. The Warden will receive a salary that will be agreed at a level commensurate with the post and that will be pensionable with USS. The College provides accommodation in which the Warden is expected to reside. Free meals are provided in accordance with the College’s Bylaws and the Warden’s partner is very welcome to dine in Hall. A personal assistant for college-related business and secretarial support are supplied by the College.

The College is an equal opportunities employer.

**Application Procedure**

The College welcomes both direct applications and nominations but reserves the right to approach potential candidates who have not applied. Applicants should send a covering letter explaining their interest in the post together with a full CV to merton@egonzehnder.com

Those wishing to nominate candidates should use the same address and should provide as much professional information as possible about their nominee.
Potential applicants may contact the Sub-Warden, Professor Alan D. Morrison, for an informal and confidential discussion of their suitability to the post (sub-warden@merton.ox.ac.uk).

The deadline for receipt of applications and nominations is Friday 9 December 2022.

The College does not expect to hold interviews for the Wardenship earlier than June 2023.