



APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

APPOINTMENT BRIEF June 2019





AN INTRODUCTION

UKRI is an independent, non-departmental public body, that brings together the functions of the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK, and Research England. The new body seeks to maximise value from government's investment in research and innovation of over £6bn per annum by 2020. It leads the overall strategic direction of research and innovation funding in the UK, pushing the frontiers of human knowledge through research, and delivering benefits for UK society and the economy through world-class research and business-led innovation. The Research Councils, Innovate UK, and Research England continue to provide strategic leadership to their disciplines and thematic areas and continue to control their own delegated budgets and manage institutes and facilities.

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the UK's leading public funder of environmental science. We work with our research centres, higher education institutions, government, civil society and business to shape the direction of environmental research and innovation, fund cutting edge discovery science and strategic research, and provide the training, skills and infrastructure the UK needs to remain at the forefront of environmental science.



THE ROLE

PURPOSE OF POST

We are advertising this role at a time of unprecedented change. People are impacting the planet and driving environmental change on a scale that is unique in Earth's history. As population and prosperity rise, the way we live and do business leads to overconsumption of the planet's resources, with impacts on air, soils and biodiversity, and increasing challenges around extreme weather and a changing climate. The issues are complex, with the environment and the economy coupled in potentially unsustainable ways, yet we have the capability to adapt and innovate and move to a new, more sustainable state.

This role will lead NERC's strategic partnerships directorate, and, working collaboratively across NERC and our partners, will, with the funding and collaborative opportunities that UKRI provide, foster existing partnerships including with our Research Centres and create new partnerships with institutions that have a track record of bringing research and innovation breadth and depth together with business acumen and local communities. A key part of this role will be to ensure that NERC brings its considerable role as a convener to bear to identify and foster the best interdisciplinary talent and create leaders with the foresight to tackle interdisciplinary challenges, whilst demonstrating the key role of environmental science in delivering against key priorities such as clean growth. This role is central to delivering the new NERC's strategy, which sets out our ambition to continue to understand and uncover the extent of environmental challenges to create the global environmental solutions that we need. This includes limiting climate warming, creating a circular economy, having clean air and water, and biodiverse ecosystems for a productive, healthy and resilient planet.

This role will demonstrate NERC leadership and drive by developing, implementing and championing the partnerships to deliver environmental solutions within NERC's Strategic Delivery Plan. To lead good practice, sharing learning from inside and outside NERC, including with key partners such as HEIs, Research Centres and other stakeholders. To ensure NERC's national capability commissioning and capital programmes are high quality and ensure NERC effectively supports leading edge science and innovation in a way that maintains the confidence of NERC, and the wider community, in assessing and deciding science investments. To ensure effective policy, planning and delivery of NERC's capital investments. To ensure effective data and digital programmes that enhance future advancement of NERC science. To strengthen the programme management of cross-Council and strategic funds such as the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund through a sophisticated and benefit-driven approach to commissioning and post-award management.

To fulfil this role requires close collaborative working with other Directors and the NERC Executive Chair and membership of NERC Management Board (NMB), attendance at NERC Council and the NERC Directors' Update (NDU) and National Capability Partners Forum (NCPF).



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The post-holder reports to the NERC Executive Chair and will take corporate responsibility for:

- institutional relationships and funding (HEIs and Research Centres);
- delivery of high-profile strategic funds with significant programme and project management requirements;
- policy, planning and delivery of NERC's capital investments;
- digital environment (data and digital innovation);
- and for ensuring their effective delivery within NERC governance arrangements and business operations.

The appointed candidate will contribute to the corporate management of NERC as a member of an active and collegiate senior leadership team, and will be expected to represent and speak on behalf of NERC and UKRI more broadly to a wide range of communities and stakeholders at senior and working levels. The post-holder will have delegated responsibility for the delivery of £110M of UKRI's budget and will be directly responsible for a staff of c75 scientific administrators and £135M of NERC's directly allocated budget.

As Director, Strategic Partnerships, the post-holder will be responsible for the development of an increasingly sophisticated level of programme management and governance and a framework to fund large-scale interdisciplinary research programmes. In short, the post-holder will be responsible for managing a fundamental organisational change programme leading to new ways of working.



KEY SKILLS

STANDING

- From the outset demonstrate significant credibility with members of a wide, interdisciplinary research community and NERC partners and stakeholders, including leading HEIs and Research Institutes and other NERC strategic partners;
- Ability to ensure high-quality, robust research and innovation informs NERC commissioning, and partnerships;
- Prepared to represent and act on behalf of all disciplines and areas of science in NERC and advocate for how interdisciplinary action can bring about environmental solutions;
- Able to rapidly establish credibility internally within NERC (e.g. with Centre Directors) and across UKRI;
- Able to be a convincing representative of the Executive Chair at senior level meetings.

STRATEGY

- Demonstrable ability in translating organisational strategy into clear and deliverable programmes;
- Track record in developing and delivering key interdisciplinary programmes that work in partnership to deliver strategic aims;
- Demonstrable experience in the direction and management of a complex organisation;
- Understanding of scientific and programmatic complexities and demonstrable ability to resolve them;
- Experienced in spotting potential future need for capital funds in emerging projects;
- Able to ensure that innovation is embedded throughout all of NERC's portfolios of work;
- Sensitivity to scientific practices and culture;
- Has an understanding of the issues involved in the public funding of science;
- Able to assimilate information, to analyse it and to envisage the potential result and impact.

MANAGEMENT

- Significant experience of working effectively within a collaborative and collegiate senior team that collectively takes responsibility for corporate matters;
- Previous experience of successfully managing senior staff;
- Has an understanding of the need for sound budgetary management and sufficient financial acumen to set business goals and priorities and to manage prudently.



LEADERSHIP

- Proven ability to provide strong leadership to 75 staff;
- Able to work effectively as a member of a senior team;
- Able to set a clear direction for own staff and for staff in Head Office more widely;
- Clear and convincing advocate for NERC and UKRI;
- Able to stand in for the Executive Chair as required.

INTERPERSONAL & NETWORKING SKILLS

- Can draw upon and build existing strong personal networks throughout NERC's existing and potential academic communities and partner organisations;
- Excellent communications skills. A natural collaborator with the proven ability to develop rapport and credibility and promote ideas persuasively;
- A proven relationship builder who can provide authoritative leadership while fostering partnership and collaboration between and across;
- Will willingly work with colleagues across UKRI; will not have a silo mentality;
- Proactive not reactive;
- Excellent communications skills. A natural collaborator with the proven ability to develop rapport and credibility;
- Can maintain strong relationships with UKRI senior management and key stakeholders.

EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Experience of working in a senior-level business development and/or partnership role.
- Significant and demonstrable understand and experience of working with HEIs and research organisations at a strategic level.



HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Natural Environment Research Council on this appointment.

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

Click on the '**apply**' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Wednesday 3 July 2019**.

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.

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.