



Innovate UK

Appointment of

Challenge Director – Faraday Battery Challenge

March 2025 Project Code: OAYIQ

Saxton Bampfylde

Introduction

We are seeking a strategic and visionary Challenge Director to lead a UK-wide industrial programme focused on research and innovation into battery technology and the wider innovation sector. The transition to an electrified future will require many types of batteries, with some yet to be imagined. Therefore, the next generation of battery technology must be developed, along with exploration and de-risking of new production processes that ensure long-term UK success in battery manufacturing and car-making. The Faraday Battery Challenge is a key initiative to deliver new research and innovation which will drive economic impact and maintain the UK's competitive edge in these industries.

The Challenge Director will work across Innovate UK and play a pivotal role in delivering the next phase of this challenge, ensuring real economic value and fostering stakeholder collaboration. They must be a champion for the area, capable of bringing stakeholders together to deliver impact for the UK economy. They will leverage their leadership expertise to foster collaboration and alignment among partners and key stakeholders, ensuring programme success and economic impact. By leading a high-performing team, the candidate will drive innovation and deliver strategic outcomes that directly contribute to the growth of the UK economy.

We are passionate about our commitment to making equality, diversity and inclusion a key part of everything we do, to ensure our organisation reflects our users and that in our workplace, everyone has a voice, and everyone can develop their potential.

Innovate UK recognises the importance of work-life balance, and we will be happy to discuss any requests for flexible working arrangements.

Watch our video “Why Join Innovate UK?” [here](#).

About Innovate UK

Innovate UK (IUK) is the UK's innovation agency, currently providing approximately £2 billion per annum of innovation support. IUK delivers products, services and funding to the UK's business community to support innovation and drive growth.

With a portfolio of investments up and down the country, IUK helps key sectors including manufacturing, biotech, agri-food and digital to seize the power of revolutionary research, and technologies to stimulate growth and new products.

IUK has an active network of 335,000 innovators and supported 19,500 businesses last year, of which 8,000 were supported for the first time. In addition, IUK partnered with over 20 Government departments/agencies, and operates a growing network of Catapult centres, across 50 locations up and down the UK, supporting over 5,000 SMEs. More information on IUK's portfolio of activity is available [here](#).

We live to drive economic growth by:

- Inspiring innovators with a shared vision of the future economy
- Involving diverse talents, companies, investors and local/national stakeholders in innovation through our programmes and campaigns
- Investing resources, including R&D grants, loans and advice on skills, fundraising and scaling-up

Innovate UK in UKRI

Innovate UK is an integral but distinct part of UKRI, the UK's national funding body for scientific and technological research and development. As well as being responsible for Innovate UK, you will have a critical role in leading commercialisation and business engagement across UKRI.

You will ensure that the UK's considerable strength in generating early-stage research and innovation is captured, commercialised and anchored as economic and societal value for British businesses, investors and citizens.

About the Faraday Battery Challenge

The Faraday Battery Challenge is a £610 million investment, delivering a mission-led, research and innovation programme that covers "Lab to Factory" development, cutting-edge research, and national scale-up infrastructure. The Faraday Battery Challenge supports the development of sustainable batteries that are cost-effective, high-performance, durable, safe and recyclable. It does this through addressing market failures in road transport decarbonisation and by attracting investors to the UK's battery industry. By leveraging scientific strength, with our delivery partners the Faraday Institution, UK Battery Industrialisation Centre and Innovate UK Business Connect; the challenge draws together these pillars to accelerate the delivery of a pipeline of activity.

About the role

The Challenge Director will lead and manage this strategically important and high-profile Challenge, working in close collaboration with senior teams across Innovate UK and closely with the Department for Business and Trade in delivering the next phase of the challenge, and key stakeholders in the ecosystem. The individual will be responsible for driving the success of the Faraday Battery Challenge as it enters a new phase by setting a clear vision, collaborating across the ecosystem, inspiring teams, and implementing innovative strategies. They will work across industry, research, UKRI, and government shaping future of the challenge. The Challenge Director will be a key interface with Government Departments, ensuring the delivery of activities within budget and aligned with the challenge's objectives.

Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities

We are seeking a dynamic and visionary executive leader with a strong focus on leadership, management, and delivery of strategic outcomes. The ideal candidate is highly skilled in strategic thinking and change management with an ability to foster a high-performance culture aligned with the organisation objectives and values.

You will be an industry leader within the context of the wider battery eco-system, directing the advancement of business-led innovation in this field and able to foster international collaboration. You will demonstrate emotional intelligence, resilience, and self-awareness.

The role holder will maintain a positive attitude in the face of challenges and make tough decisions when necessary, inspiring others to take ownership of tasks and maintain motivation towards shared goals.

The successful applicant will have an ability to adapt to fast-changing environments and lead organisations through complex transitions.

The role holder will have an exceptional ability to understand and interpret complex issues across multiple areas, generating creative solutions and translate them into practical, organisation-wide strategies.

The Challenge Director will lead their team in proactively develop a clear plan for delivery of the challenge objectives, monitoring progress, clearly communicating expectations, and driving high performance to achieve key objectives.

They will have a proven track record of leading teams and managing large-scale projects with measurable results.

The role holder will be responsible for managing 2 direct reports, with a total team size of 7 and form part of the Mobility Team within the Innovate UK Net Zero Domain.

The applicant will have strong skills in developing others, providing mentorship, and guiding teams through personal and professional growth.

This is not an exhaustive list and you might be encouraged to undertake any other duties across the wider directorate and organisation, commensurate with the Band and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the key experience and/or training.

Person Specification

Qualifications and experience:

Essential

- You will be recognised as an industry leader in battery technologies, coming from a manufacturing, engineering or transport related industry or other associated domains.
- With a keen interest in innovation, ideally you will have experience of leading innovation programmes as well as having a strong familiarity with the research environment of batteries for EVs.
- You will have extensive experience of working with industrial partners across a range of fields associated with this industry. This is likely to include batteries, scale-up manufacturing of cells, materials, electrodes, ULEV technology etc.
- You will have demonstrable experience in the management of multi-million-pound budgets and be able to implement cost-control and forecasting in a rigorously controlled environment.
- You will have experience of managing distributed relationships and collaborating across teams and organisations. With experience of working with a diverse range of government and industry stakeholders, you will be able to coordinate and deliver multi stakeholder programmes.
- You will be a competent, credible leader who is able to motivate high-performing teams, including direct and indirect reports, whilst developing talent, coaching and mentoring a diverse workforce as needed.
- You will have a strong track record of delivering against demanding KPIs and 'stretch' targets, with experience in the governance of "arm's length" organisations.
- You will have previously led the development and implementation of strategic plans and change initiatives and through this, can demonstrate substantial experience of managing diverse teams through periods of change with a positive impact.
- Educated to degree-level or post graduate level in a relevant scientific or technical subject, or equivalent experience.

Desirable

- Understanding of structure of government and key UK Research and Innovation partner organisations as well as its constituent agencies and brands, as well as the Devolved Administrations

Skills:

- Outstanding communication and engagement capability with authenticity to deliver effective communications
- Excellent verbal communication and stakeholder management skills, delivered consistently
- Self-awareness and excellent personal resilience as well as a high level of professionalism, discretion and tact
- A willingness to challenge preconceptions and offer well-reasoned and considered judgements to all levels of stakeholders
- Highly developed analytical and problem-solving skills, including the ability to quickly understand new and complex issues and to apply creative solutions
- Ability to think strategically and can translate into actionable plans
- Proven ability to work at Board and Executive-level
- Strong networking capability, able to demonstrate excellent commercial and political judgement
- Proven ability to lead a diverse group of stakeholders around a common challenge
- Recognisable gravitas and influencing skills, with credibility as a senior leader
- Sound financial acumen with the ability to provide efficiency and value for money
- Leading by example, promoting an ethos of high performance, instilling a clear sense of purpose, priority and direction in order to set the standards
- Excellent planning and delivery across concurrent projects

Competencies:

All team members demonstrate compatibility with and capability against our Core Competencies such as:

Thinking and Problem Solving – Stakeholder management – Communication skills – Influencing – Self-awareness/self-management – Strategic awareness – Working with others– Project management

Travel Requirements:

Field-based: The role is field based but will require regular interaction with team members and stakeholders. There will be a requirement to travel, mostly national, and there is some flexibility in this. Innovate UK staff make extensive use of telepresence tools for meetings to minimise unnecessary travel. In general, you will need to work in the Swindon office once a week and may have four to six nights away from home per month on average to attend conferences and events.

Employee Benefits:

We offer a benefits package crafted to provide an excellent work/life balance. This includes 30 days' annual leave, 10.5 public and privilege days, flexible working hours, an exceptional defined benefit pension scheme, and access to a variety of support networks and discount schemes.

[Benefits of working at UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\)](#)

Flexible Working:

We understand the importance of work-life balance and are happy to discuss the possibility of flexible working with applicants.

Pre-employment Screening:

To enable us to hire the very best people we will conduct a comprehensive pre-employment check on successful applicants as part of the recruitment process.

The role holder will be required to have the appropriate level of security screening/vetting required for the role. UKRI reserves the right to run or re-run security clearance as required during the course of employment.

UKRI supports research in areas that include animal health, agriculture and food security, and bioscience for health which includes research on animals, genetic modification and stem cell research. Whilst you may not have direct involvement in this type of research, you should consider how this aligns with your personal values or beliefs. To enable us to hire the very best people we will conduct a full and comprehensive pre-employment check as a crucial part of the recruitment process on all individuals that are offered a position with UKRI. This will include a security check and an extreme organisations affiliation check.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

Innovate UK is a diverse workforce of people. We believe that encouraging these differences and drawing the best from them will build a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met. Underpinning this is a belief that it is a fundamental right for everyone to be treated equally, with fairness, respect and dignity. We will act directly and use our influence to ensure that this right is promoted and upheld; we encourage applications from all those who meet the criteria set-out in our role profiles.

Equal Opportunities:

We are an equal opportunities employer, committed to employing any person who meets the criteria for our roles. When undertaking recruitment we may require applicants to undertake certain tests or assessments, some of which will be online and others may be in-person. If you have a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia then you may be entitled to support with undertaking this type of assessment exercise. Where you feel that reasonable adjustments are required to support you, we ask that you advise your recruitment point of contact in a timely fashion, providing further information. In confidence, Innovate UK will then review your application for adjustments and provide support as required.

UK Research and Innovation:

Innovate UK is a partner organisation within UK Research and Innovation. If successful in securing the position, your employer will be UK Research and Innovation. More information can be found online <http://www.ukri.org>

Title:	Challenge Director – Faraday Battery Challenge
Salary:	£110,000 - £130,000 gross per annum
Reports to:	Director of Mobility, Net Zero Domain
Location:	Field based
Contract:	Fixed Term (18 months)

How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Innovate UK on this appointment.

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

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 **Tuesday 1 April 2025**.

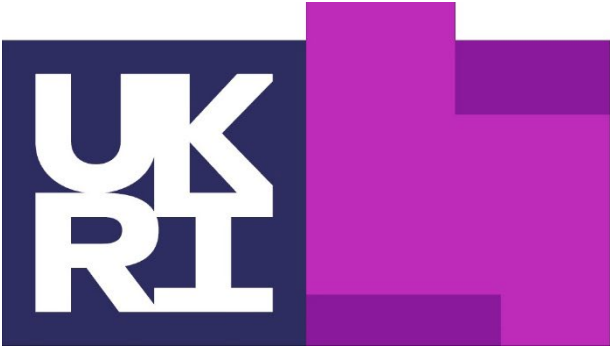
* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

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.

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.



Innovate UK