

Appointment of Chief Scientist

November 2025
Ref: ABICC

Contents

- 1 Welcome from the Director
- 2 About HDR UK
- 3 Chief Scientist
- 4 Role profile
- 5 Who we're looking for
- 6 Terms of Appointment
- 7 How to Apply

Welcome from the Director

Welcome to Health Data Research UK (HDR UK). I am delighted you are considering the role of Chief Scientist at HDR UK for your next professional move.

HDR UK is the national institute for health data science and works to [accelerate trustworthy data use to enable discoveries that improve people's lives.](#)

Our vision is for large-scale data to benefit every interaction with patients, every clinical trial and every biomedical discovery, and to transform public health.

We work in partnership with the NHS, industry, charities and universities to realise the potential of the UK's wealth of health data in life-changing research. Patients and the public are actively involved in shaping HDR UK's work and ensuring it delivers public benefit.

The Institute played a major role in the COVID-19 pandemic, working with the NHS and collaborators internationally to link and coordinate the use of large-scale data. With access to this data, scientists and doctors could understand more about this new disease, identify which drugs were effective and provide evidence to allow the NHS and policymakers to respond to the challenge quickly.

HDR UK has also pioneered UK health data science that has laid the foundation for the recently announced Health Data Research Service. HDR UK is committed to building on these successes through a collaborative approach to harness high-quality patient data and powerful AI-driven technology to transform the UK's data infrastructure and deliver cutting-edge research, unlocking the power of large-scale data to improve health and care.

HDR UK is a virtual institute, with staff and partners in all four nations of the UK and a small office in central London. Our funding, which is secured for the next four years, comes from UK Research and Innovation, the Department of Health and Social Care (England) and the devolved administrations, and leading medical research charities.

We employ talented individuals who bring their own unique skills and experience to support our vision and benefit the whole team. Our values of transparency, optimism, respect, courage and humility guide how we work together within HDR UK, with our partners and other stakeholders.

Healthcare is on the cusp of a digital revolution and at HDR UK, you can be at the heart of it.



Professor Andrew Morris, Director, HDR UK

About HDR UK

Who we are and what we do

Health Data Research UK is the UK's national institute for health data; we are the only body that brings together England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland behind a single mission: to unlock the power of health data for better care, better research and better outcomes. We work across the full spectrum of the health and research ecosystem, from the NHS, universities and research institutes to charities, industry partners, and the fast-moving world of digital, wearable and mobile technologies.

We are a young, agile organisation with a strong sense of purpose. Our ambition is deliberately bold: to ensure that the UK's extraordinary data assets and scientific talent translate into real-world improvements for patients and populations, and to position the UK as a global leader in health data science.

Although HDR UK does not hold health data itself, we are building the national infrastructure that makes responsible, high-quality research possible. This includes:

- **Uniting health data** by connecting datasets across the UK and making them safely discoverable and accessible through the UK Health Data Alliance and Innovation Gateway – always in ways that earn and maintain public trust.
- **Improving health data** through national tools, methods, hubs, and expertise that raise the quality, usability and reliability of data for researchers and innovators.
- **Enabling world-class research and innovation** that delivers large-scale impact, tests novel approaches to data use, and brings together a community of leading national experts in health data science.

Our funders

HDR UK is backed by a coalition of major national funders who have committed investment over the next five years. Their support enables the research, skills development and infrastructure that underpin our One Institute approach, helping us deliver impact at scale across the UK. Alongside this core investment, we also secure thematic funding to drive specific programmes of work with national and international significance.





The role of Chief Scientist

At HDR UK, we attract exceptional people who bring distinctive expertise, creativity and drive to our mission, and who thrive in a culture that values curiosity, collaboration and real-world impact.

The Chief Scientist is one of our most influential leadership roles: a senior scientific figurehead with a high profile in the UK and internationally. We are seeking an outstanding individual with the vision, strategic clarity and intellectual authority to help steer a world-leading institute at the forefront of health and biomedical data science. This is a role for someone who can see the full sweep of the field, its scientific frontiers, its translational opportunities, and its profound potential to improve modern health systems.

The Chief Scientist will oversee HDR UK's scientific and research programmes, shaping an environment that builds capability across the UK and nurtures a vibrant, connected and innovative ecosystem. With responsibility for our UK Regions and Driver Programme investments, the role provides strategic leadership to senior researchers nationwide, ensuring coherence, ambition and momentum

across a distributed community of world-class expertise.

A central part of the remit is to foster an outward-looking, partnership-driven institute. The Chief Scientist will champion collaborations across the UK and internationally, operating at the interface of machine learning, tissue biology and multi-dimensional patient data. The goal is to create a powerful suite of capabilities that accelerates discovery, enables transformative research and maximises the societal impact of health data science.

This is a role for an exceptional connector; someone who can inspire and influence across disciplines, cultures and sectors. The successful candidate will be comfortable straddling computer science, statistics, biomedicine, clinical research, public health and the social sciences, and will bring deep understanding of fields spanning bioinformatics, clinical health informatics, real-world evidence and AI-driven health innovation. They will be a trusted partner to senior leaders across academia, the NHS, government, charities and industry, bringing authenticity, credibility and clarity of purpose to every conversation.

Role profile

Scientific Leadership

- Develop and deliver the Institute's vision with the Director and Senior Leadership Team, providing scientific and strategic leadership to shape and implement a world-leading organisation.
- Provide vision, leadership, motivation and direction for our portfolio of research programmes to maximise high-quality scientific delivery outcomes and outputs, and ensure tight integration with the Institute's product and services portfolio.
- Act as a thought leader, championing HDR UK's mission, research and projects in appropriate technology and health data science related fora and conferences.
- Assemble teams of clinical researchers, software engineers, data scientists, biologists, computational scientists, and big-picture thinkers to power advances in technology, computation and health data and who are dedicated to demonstrating the impact of their combined expertise.
- Be a visible national leader and demonstrate the ability to shape and influence the research and industrial science community, lead UK health and biomedical science research and align policies.
- Promote the Institute's key role in UK and international health data research to the general public, including as a media spokesperson, to inspire effective engagement and support for the use of health data and research.
- Lead an ongoing programme to develop and enhance the Institute's strategic and scientific role in the UK and internationally. Accrue significant programmatic investment into the Institute.

- Embrace and lead a culture of team science across the Institute – inspiring and bringing together experts across a wide-range of quantitative, engineering, biomedical and clinical research domains with diverse perspectives and sectoral backgrounds.
- Participate fully in strategic and scientific reviews of the Institute and the implementation of outcomes and ensure the effective resourcing of the research programmes within delegated authority.

Organisational Leadership

- This is a senior appointment, to be a member of HDR UK's Senior Leadership Team, reporting into the Director Andrew Morris.
- Accountable to the Director for the delivery of work areas, including budget and team management, which includes oversight of the ~300 researchers across the UK.
- Drive collaborative activities and develop strategic partnerships, including powering industry partnerships, to deliver the Institute's mission and facilitate the rapid application of the Institute's data science methodological research and expertise across diverse areas of biomedical, clinical and social and population research.
- Support and deputise for the Director on all scientific matters of the Institute and in the delivery of the Institute's scientific vision, priorities, and strategy.
- Act as a senior scientific leader and representative in all internal and external senior fora. Support proactive engagement with our Funders.

Our values:
Transparency
Optimism
Respect
Courage
Humility



Who we're looking for

An exceptional leader with outstanding communication and collaboration skills evidenced by:

Experience and Knowledge

- Proven international leadership with vision, influence, and delivery of high-quality research in health data science
- Experience developing and advancing emerging research disciplines
- Extensive partnership-building experience across health, social care, policy, government, industry, and third sector organisations
- Successful management of complex, multi-budget programmes, including significant funding acquisition (£10–100 million)
- Deep knowledge of health and research data environments, including data security, governance, and UK regulatory frameworks
- Experience in knowledge transfer, research translation, and public communication of science, including engagement with patients, public, and media
- Proven experience engaging with UK government and policy bodies

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent professional leadership abilities, including staff development and building interdisciplinary capacity at all levels
- Ability to deliver strategic plans and leverage existing data infrastructure and technology assets
- Able to inspire and influence across disciplines, sectors and geographies, without relying on personal authority alone
- Comfortable operating in high-profile, highly visible roles while maintaining humility and approachability
- Skilled in implementing and operating institutional governance and administrative frameworks
- Skilled in leading collaborative, distributed enterprises and building effective stakeholder relationships



Terms of appointment

Working at Health Data Research UK

HDR UK offers an attractive package and working environment. Since the pandemic we offer flexibility on working location and the primary base could be anywhere in the UK, but the successful applicant must be willing and able to travel to London and elsewhere (mainly in the UK) in connection with the requirements of the role.

Dimensions

This role can be carried out on a fulltime or part-time basis (0.6–0.8 FTE), or as a secondment opportunity. However, the Institute is keen to attract a diverse pool of applicants, including those from industry, and is flexible to discussing the most appropriate terms and conditions.

Safeguarding

HDR UK is committed to robust safeguarding policies, we expect everyone who works with us to share our commitment to safeguarding.

“Our mission is to accelerate trustworthy use of health data to enable discoveries that improve people’s lives.”



Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

HDR UK is an equal opportunities employer, and as such aims to treat all employees, consultants and applicants fairly. It is our policy to provide employment equality to all irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religion or belief
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants and employees who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be unfairly discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.



How to apply

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

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

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 12 January 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.

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.

