

Job Description and Person Specification

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| Last updated: | July 2023 |

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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| Post title: | **Head of Strategic Research Initiatives** |
| School/Department: | Research & Innovation Services  |
| Faculty: | Professional Services |
| Career Pathway: | Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA) | Level: | 6 |
| Posts responsible to: | Director of Research Strategy and Funding |
| Posts responsible for: | Institutes Collaboration/Coordination/Project Managers (MSA5) 4.8 FTEResearch Culture Manager x 1 (MSA5)Project Officer (Funding Development) x1 (MSA4) |
| UKVI SOC | 1139 Functional Managers and Directors N.E.C. |
| Post base: | Office-based  |

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| Job purpose |
| The Head of Strategic Research Initiatives is a leadership role responsible for providing specialist expertise in understanding the research environment, culture and funding landscape in order to:* Support the delivery of the University research strategy, leading University wide or cross-Faculty strategic projects and initiatives that will drive significant research performance improvement
* Raise the profile and grow the University’s capacity for interdisciplinary research
* Build collaborative research communities both within and outside the University, identifying opportunities for research, knowledge exchange and securing funding
* Enhance the University’s inclusive research culture and increase the diversity of our research community
* Lead a team of highly skilled professionals to deliver support to the University Strategic Research Institutes and Faculties.

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| Key accountabilities/primary responsibilities | % Time |
| 1. | **Strategic Initiatives and Projects:** Using specialist knowledge, identify opportunities for research growth and develop strategic research initiatives that support the achievement of University strategy, ensuring effective implementation of strategies and initiatives. Lead University wide and cross-Faculty strategic research initiatives and projects to increase research performance, effectively bringing together collaborators and stakeholders from Faculties, Institutes and Professional Services to achieve project goals (for example: leadership of the University Anniversary Fellowships Scheme, research infrastructure plan etc).  | 20 |
| 2. | **Interdisciplinary Research:** Working with the Associate Vice-Presidents Interdisciplinary Research and Institute Directors, apply extensive expertise and knowledge of research environment and funding landscape to support the development and delivery of interdisciplinary research especially through University Research Institutes and major new Research initiatives; Identify and lead initiatives that will build capacity and capability for interdisciplinary research across the University. Including conceiving, developing and guiding delivery of challenge led sandpits and workshops that aim to enhance cross-disciplinary research capacity and capability, stimulate new ideas and foster new collaborations, ultimately leading to significant externally funded programmes of research.  | 20 |
| 3. | **Research Culture Enhancement**: Working with the Associate Vice-Presidents Interdisciplinary Research and colleagues across the University, identify opportunities to enhance an inclusive research culture across the University. Develop and implement initiatives to enhance the research culture and drive culture change at the University and that promote a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages inclusive collaboration, research excellence, and knowledge exchange. Working with the Head of Research Information and System, lead on research culture reporting within Research Excellence Framework (REF) for the University.  | 20 |
| 4. | **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including faculty, researchers, industry partners, and funding bodies, to gather. Collaborate with stakeholders to identify research opportunities, secure funding, and facilitate knowledge exchange activities. Build collaborative research communities both within and outside the University. | 15 |
| 5 | **Staff Management**: Lead and manage a diverse team of highly skilled professional staff. Provide leadership, guidance, and support to the team, fostering a collaborative and productive work environment and a culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement. Ensure that effective recruitment, induction, appraisal, development and training are in place to enable staff to fulfil their potential and meet best practice in their professional area and to understand their contribution to the Directorate, Institutes and to the University Strategic Plan, so that they are able to develop their skills and improve their performance.  | 10 |
| 6 | **Resource Allocation**: Manage the provision of specialist research support services to the Strategic Institutes. As part of business planning, collaborate with Institute Directors and AVP IR to ensure effective allocation of resources for professional staff and projects (including budgets and infrastructure) supporting research strategic initiatives. Manage institutional awards made to the University by UKRI and other funders (£1.5m annually) for interdisciplinary research and research culture ensuring alignment to the research strategy and maximising their impact and value. | 5 |
|  7 | **Performance Evaluation:** Develop and implement performance evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness and impact of strategic projects and of the interdisciplinary institutes' activities. Monitor key performance indicators and provide regular reports to senior management. Stay abreast of relevant policies, regulations, and best practices in research management and ensure compliance within area of responsibility. | 5 |
| 8. | Any other duties as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder. | 5 |
| Internal and external relationships |
| * Vice President Research & Enterprise, Associate VPs Interdisciplinary Research, Institute Directors, Associate Deans Research, academic and research staff
* Senior staff at UKRI, large charities, learned societies and international funders
* Staff in other Professional Services and Faculty Operations Services
* Partners in research collaborative projects (universities, industry, third sector)
* Professional advisers in specialist areas
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| Special Requirements |
| * Travel to attend meetings (primarily UK, some overseas)
* Willingness to work non-standard hours as reasonably required to fulfil role (e.g. out of hours meetings offsite)
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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| Criteria | Essential | Desirable | How to be assessed |
| **Qualifications, knowledge and experience** | Skill level equivalent to achievement of a professional qualification or postgraduate degree or related qualification, or equivalent experience at a senior level in a discipline relevant to the roleProven leadership and management experience in a complex organisation within a knowledge-intensive environment Expert knowledge of UK research environment and funding landscape with a successful record of leading and winning major funding bidsProven experience of managing significant change | Senior management and leadership experience in higher education.  | Application form andInterview |
| **Expected Behaviours** | Able to apply and actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion principles to the responsibilities of the role. As a Line Manager role model the Southampton Behaviours and work with the management team to embed them as a way of working within the Directorate |  | Application form andInterview |
| **Planning and organizing**  | Able to plan, lead and manage major new strategic projects or significant new activities, with little or no precedent and formulate strategic plans that reflect and support the priority needs of the university Able to plan and shape the direction of specialist professional area. Experience of strategic and financial planning and the preparation of business plans  |  | Application form andInterview |
| **Problem solving and initiative** | Able to make judgements on significant new problems where precedent may not applyAble to develop significant new concepts and original ideas within one’s field in response to intractable issues of importance to the University Able to think strategically and grasp complex issuesAble to rapidly analyse and manage issues on a critical pathAble to contribute to the resolution of complex issues whilst ensuring deadlines are met |  | Application form andInterview |
| **Management and teamwork**  | Able to proactively develop team dynamics and performance, ensuring quality standards are consistently achieved. Able to foster positive relationships both within and outside of own department. Able to proactively work with senior managers across the University to achieve key deliverables.Able to champion and oversee the team’s contribution to the University’s strategy Able to provide expert guidance and advice to colleagues to inform strategic planning or to resolve complex problems.. |  | Application form and interview |
| **Communicating and influencing** | Able to persuade and influence in order to develop strategies and foster and maintain relationships.Able to effectively influence in order to lead and achieve results across a distributed organisation without direct management control of all dependencies, integrating resources from across the University to deliver outcomesAble to negotiate effectively on behalf of the department or University on key issues.Excellent written, presentation and verbal skills, with ability to communicate at a variety of levels including the most senior leaders in Universities and funders.Excellent inter-personal skills with a wide range of people of different backgrounds, from within and outside the university |  | Interview |
| **Special requirements** | Flexibility to work unusual hours.Willingness to travel on business (mostly UK). |  |  |

**JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS**

**Is this an office-based post?**

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| ☒ Yes | If this post is an office-based job with routine office hazards (eg: use of VDU), no further information needs to be supplied. Do not complete the section below. |
| * No
 | If this post is not office-based or has some hazards other than routine office (eg: more than use of VDU) please complete the analysis below.Hiring managers are asked to complete this section as accurately as possible to ensure the safety of the post-holder. |

## - HR will send a full PEHQ to all applicants for this position. Please note, if full health clearance is required for a role, this will apply to all individuals, including existing members of staff.

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| **ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES** | **Occasionally**(<30% of time) | **Frequently**(30-60% of time) | **Constantly**(> 60% of time) |
| Outside work |  |  |  |
| Extremes of temperature (eg: fridge/ furnace) |  |  |  |
| ## Potential for exposure to body fluids |  |  |  |
| ## Noise (greater than 80 dba - 8 hrs twa) |  |  |  |
| ## Exposure to hazardous substances (eg: solvents, liquids, dust, fumes, biohazards). Specify below: |  |  |  |
| Frequent hand washing |  |  |  |
| Ionising radiation |  |  |  |
| **EQUIPMENT/TOOLS/MACHINES USED** |
| ## Food handling |  |  |  |
| ## Driving university vehicles(eg: car/van/LGV/PCV) |  |  |  |
| ## Use of latex gloves (prohibited unless specific clinical necessity) |  |  |  |
| ## Vibrating tools (eg: strimmers, hammer drill, lawnmowers) |  |  |  |
| **PHYSICAL ABILITIES** |
| Load manual handling |  |  |  |
| Repetitive crouching/kneeling/stooping |  |  |  |
| Repetitive pulling/pushing |  |  |  |
| Repetitive lifting |  |  |  |
| Standing for prolonged periods |  |  |  |
| Repetitive climbing (ie: steps, stools, ladders, stairs) |  |  |  |
| Fine motor grips (eg: pipetting) |  |  |  |
| Gross motor grips |  |  |  |
| Repetitive reaching below shoulder height |  |  |  |
| Repetitive reaching at shoulder height |  |  |  |
| Repetitive reaching above shoulder height |  |  |  |
| **PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUES** |
| Face to face contact with public |  |  |  |
| Lone working |  |  |  |
| ## Shift work/night work/on call duties |  |  |  |