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Job Description

Post title: **Network Manager of the Novel and Underutilised Crop Network (NUCNet)**

Date last updated/evaluated: September 2025

Author: MARK CHAPMAN

Standard Occupation Code:

School / Department: Biological Sciences

Faculty / Directorate: FELS

Job Family: Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA)

Grade: Level 5

ERE Pathway (if applicable): Not applicable

Post reporting to: Mark Chapman

Post line report(s): NA

Post base location: Hybrid: Campus / Home **:** Building 85

Job purpose: The Network Manager will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the recently funded network, NUCNet, developing, shaping and delivering the strategy, identifying and managing relationships with stakeholders and members, organising meetings and funding, and maintaining a website, member list, and report writing. Their work will help towards manage high-profile projects that will ensure national and international impact. This role will ensure the provision of comprehensive, effective and efficient administrative support to this network.

## Key accountabilities and indicative time allocation:

1. **30%**

Proactively lead on the management of administrative activities of NUCNet and provide high-level strategic support to the network Director, leadership team, and strategic advisory board including managing the team and facilitating interactions. Update, evaluate and monitor Network membership, identifying underrepresented groups, strategic stakeholders and knowledge gaps across the Network.

1. **20%**

Develop the strategy for, as well as planning and organising, Network activities (networking, training, engagement, knowledge translation) in the medium-term, with an appreciation for longer-term monitoring and iteration. Determine priorities, allocate resources and manage a budget to meet planned objectives and requirements.

1. **10%**

Critically analyse, evaluate and interpret information, data or concepts to determine the performance of the Network. Apply professional and/or specialist knowledge, experience and judgement in the absence of complete information, or where precedents may not exist. Propose, test and implement creative and innovative solutions as appropriate.

1. **5%**

Develop the framework for, and monitor the provision and progress of, short network-led research projects, pump-primed projects and training. Monitor and report on compliance with relevant organisational policies, procedures, and statutory requirements. Make appropriate interventions to meet objectives, requirements and quality standards.

1. **5%**

Provide professional and/or specialist advice, guidance and recommendations on complex issues, including the resolution of deep-rooted or unforeseen problems, and the application of new procedures, regulations or legislation.

1. **5%**

Apply in-depth practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a broad range of fields to manage and deliver effective and efficient services, projects and/or operational outcomes that meet stakeholder requirements and are aligned with relevant strategies within the School and wider University.

1. **5%**

Take a leading role in policy and service development. Translate agreed policies into operational plans and procedures. Develop new and improved procedures as required for current and future service delivery.

1. **5%**

Report to and advise the project team and other members of the Network leadership team in the partner institutions (NIAB, University of Reading, James Hutton Institute). Build working relationships with key stakeholders within and beyond the Network, including through relevant professional networks. Aid in reporting back to the funders (BBSRC and UKRI). Use persuasion and influence to foster and maintain relationships. Share, promote and help embed best practice and innovation, within and beyond the University.

1. **5%**

Contribute to the wider work of the Directorate or University through effective participation and collaboration in working groups and committees (e.g., project boards, self-assessment teams, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committees, etc.).

1. **10%**

Any other duties as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder.

Internal and external relationships:

Departmental management and University senior management

Members of the Network leadership team (Southampton, NIAB, University of Reading, James Hutton Institute) and the External Advisory Board.

External stakeholders (external funding bodies [UKRI, BBSRC], network members [academics, industry partners, policy makers, farmers and charities])

Special requirements:

# Person Specification – Skills and Competencies

All essential and desirable criteria outlined in this Person Specification will be assessed through a combination of recruitment application and CV, and where applicable numerical or written assessment.

**Knowledge, Experience and Qualifications**

Essential

* Well-rounded theoretical knowledge and understanding of biology and ideally agriculture or plant science, accompanied by practical and/or managerial experience.
* The required level of knowledge and understanding will normally have been gained through some or all of the following:
  + Considerable work experience in project management roles
  + Vocational training
  + Formal qualification(s) equivalent to Level 7 of the [Regulated Qualifications Framework](https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) e.g. master’s degree, postgraduate certificate, diploma or Level 7 award, certificate, diploma.

Desirable

* PRINCE2 or similar project management qualification.

**Teamwork and Communication**

Essential

* Effectively manages team dynamics, creating an environment that engages and motivates project teams.
* Provides expert advice, guidance and recommendations (both written and spoken) on complex issues.
* Fosters and maintains working relationships within the department and wider University.
* Uses persuasiveness and positively influences others to achieve outcomes.

Desirable

* Experience using social media to communicate with a national and international audience.
* Experience operating, updating and maintaining a website.
* Experience engaging a lay audience in scientific content in-person and/or in writing.

**Planning, Organisation and Resource Management**

Essential

* Plans and manages significant new projects or work activities, ensuring plans complement wider strategic plans.
* Understands and keeps records of the finances of the project.
* Appreciates University priorities and applies these in managing work.

Desirable

* Experience organising national networking and/or training activities.
* Experience organising in-person activities across the UK.

**Problem Solving and Initiative**

Essential

* Formulates development plans to meet current and future skill requirements.
* Applies knowledge, experience and understanding of a professional, specialist or technical field to inform work plans, based on a detailed understanding of the theory and/or principles underpinning the field of work.
* Uses initiative, professional and/or specialist judgement and originality to resolve problems and develop revised policies and procedures, where required.

# Job Hazard Assessment

A full health clearance is required for this role where any hazards marked “**^**”, using the agreed Occupational Health referral template [available from here](https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/HealthWellbeing/SitePages/Occupational-Health.aspx). Where a full health clearance is required, this will apply to all role holders, including existing members of staff.

## Physical Environment

Working outside **^** Not applicable

Exposure to noise levels >80dbA **^** Not applicable

Working with dust or fumes **^** Not applicable

Working with skin irritants **^** Not applicable

Working with chemicals (industrial or cleaning) **^** Not applicable

Working in a confined space **^** Not applicable

Working at height **^** Not applicable

Working with sewage **^** Not applicable

Contact with cytotoxins **^** Not applicable

Exposure Prone Procedure (EPP) work **^** Not applicable

Contact with clinical specimens or pathology work **^**  Not applicable

Direct patient care or patient contact Not applicable

Exposure to temperature extremes Not applicable

Frequent hand washing Not applicable

Ionising radiation Not applicable

## Psychological and Social Environment

Working shifts **^** Not applicable

Working nights **^** Not applicable

Lone working Not applicable

Working with children Not applicable

Exposure to persons with challenging behaviourNot applicable

Working with larger groups Occasionally <30% Time

## Equipment, Tools and Machines

Working with vibrating machinery or tools **^** Not applicable

Driving duties e.g. LGV, PCVs, forklift trucks **^** Not applicable

Food handling Not applicable

Contact with latexNot applicable

## Physical Abilities

Prolonged physical movements or actions e.g. walking **^** Not applicable

Prolonged Standing or Sitting **^** Not applicable

Moving or handling heavy loads **^** Not applicable

Repetitive pulling or pushing **^** Not applicable

Repetitive climbing (steps, stools, ladders, stairs) **^** Not applicable

Repetitive crouching, kneeling or stooping Not applicable

Repetitive lifting Not applicable

Fine motor grips (e.g. pipetting) Not applicable

Repetitive reaching below shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching at shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching above shoulder height Not applicable

# Behaviours

Our [Inclusion and Respectful Behaviour Policy](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/policies/inclusion-respectful-behaviour) describes the expectations of everyone who is a part of our community.

Our **Southampton Behaviours** (below) outline the responsibilities we each have in working collaboratively to achieve our University strategy.

**Personal Leadership**

- I take personal responsibility for my own actions and an active approach towards my development.

- I reflect on my own behaviour, actively seek feedback and adapt my behaviour accordingly.

- I demonstrate pride, passion and enthusiasm for our University community.

- I demonstrate respect and build trust with an open and honest approach.

**Working Together**

- I work collaboratively and build productive relationships across our University and beyond.

- I actively listen to others and communicate clearly and appropriately with everyone.

- I take an inclusive approach, value the differences that people bring and encourage others to contribute and flourish.

- I proactively work through challenge and conflict, considering others’ views to achieve positive and productive outcomes.

**Developing Others**

- I help to create an environment that engages and motivates others.

- I take time to support and enable people to be the best they can be.

- I recognise and value others’ achievements, give praise and celebrate their success.

- I deliver balanced feedback to enable others to improve their contribution.

**Delivering Quality**

- I identify opportunities and take action to make improvements.

- I plan and prioritise efficiently and effectively, taking account of people, processes and resources.

- I am accountable for tackling issues, making difficult decisions and seeing them through to their conclusion.

- I encourage creativity and innovation in others, to deliver workable solutions.

**Driving Sustainability**

- I consider the impact on people before taking decisions or actions that may affect them.

- I embrace, enable and embed change effectively.

- I regularly take account of external and internal factors, assessing the need for change, and gaining support to move forward.

- I take time to understand our University strategy and communicate this to others.