



UK Research
and Innovation

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

Executive Chair

Candidate Pack
March 2023



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About UKRI

The UKRI context

[UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\)](#) is the UK's largest public funder of research and innovation. We invest more than £8 billion annually to advance our understanding of society and the world around us and deliver benefits for society, the economy and the environment.

Our organisation comprises nine councils – the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK, the seven disciplinary Research Councils and Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England. As a UK-wide organisation we work across the four UK nations and with the devolved funding bodies and governments to understand and support different priorities that span research and innovation in different parts of the UK.



Through our Councils and the critical national capabilities provided by our centres, units and institutes, we deliver, support and champion the creativity and vibrancy of research and innovation in the UK, for the benefit of society.

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

Find out more in our new 5-year strategy, [Transforming Tomorrow Together](#)



About EPSRC

EPSRC invests in long-term, fundamental engineering and physical sciences research and training in the UK. It advances knowledge and technology development and supports innovation through the exploitation of research outcomes. In partnership with universities and others, EPSRC trains and develops scientists and engineers who go on to work in areas including the chemical, communications, construction, electrical, electronic, energy, engineering, information technology, pharmaceutical, process and other industries. EPSRC thereby contributes to the economic competitiveness and quality of life of the UK.

EPSRC works across the UKRI Councils, academia, industry and with Government to support inter- and cross-disciplinary work. It engages with a wide range of industries using a number of approaches, including research institutes (e.g., the Alan Turing Institute, the Henry Royce Institute and the Rosalind Franklin Institute) and research and technology hubs (including the eleven Future Manufacturing Research Hubs and two Vaccine Manufacturing Research Hubs).



Its total, leverage from its portfolio was £1.7 billion 2020/21 from more than 1400 companies.

In 2020/21 the EPSRC gross research expenditure was £1.24 billion. It employs around 230 domestic staff and in 2021 it supported 11,000 post-graduate students and 6670 researchers, collaborating with businesses, industry, government, charities and many others.

The EPSRC is an integral part of UKRI alongside the other six Research Councils, Research England and Innovate UK. This facilitates the closest possible collaboration across the whole breadth of UK's research and innovation activity, allowing completely new integrated ways of working to thrive. UKRI is led by Dame Ottoline Leyser as CEO and overseen by an influential independent Chair and Board. It is funded by UK taxpayers via the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. The successful applicant will be accountable to the Board and CEO, work directly with Ministers and will be selected by the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology.

[EPSRC Strategic Delivery Plan 2022 - 2025](#)



Environment & Offices

UKRI has many locations across the UK and the world. Our head office is based in Swindon with two other main administration offices in London and Bristol. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, these offices were closed leading to many colleagues to work from home. Listening to our employees UKRI has now adopted hybrid working. Hybrid working means most of us will work part of the time from UKRI locations and part of the time remotely, although the degree to which we can do this will vary depending on our different roles and activities.

A gradual approach

Since we are a hugely complex and multi-faceted organisation, there is not a single model of hybrid working that will work for everyone. We are therefore adopting a gradual phased approach, so that we can learn from our experience what works best for each role, activity and location. We are actively encouraging team leaders, in consultation with their Senior Leadership Teams, to experiment with and evolve hybrid ways of working that are appropriate for them.

As of June 2022, we have been using the learning to plan for longer term changes to our office space and other working environments at different locations; and to consider whether we need any additional locations.

The EPSRC team is primarily located in the Swindon and London area. Whilst an ability to lead and build relationships at a distance is beneficial, this is also a role where visibility is key, so travel to our offices and sites on a regular basis is expected.



We believe that the way we are structured and the flexibility of how to handle your work and that of your team makes us one of the more attractive employers for managing your work/life balance and caring responsibilities.



About the Role

We are seeking an inspirational individual with international standing and a proven track record to lead UKRI's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) as its Executive Chair and to contribute to the senior leadership of UKRI.

This is a unique opportunity to lead the UK's primary public funder of engineering and physical sciences research; champion, train and support the current and future UK science workforce; and help shape the UK's research and innovation system.



EPSRC funds research, infrastructure, training, and partnerships over a wide field covering chemistry, engineering, information and communication technologies, advanced materials, mathematical sciences and physics. EPSRC also plays a leading role in the delivery of the cross-UKRI technology programmes.

As the Executive Chair of EPSRC you will have responsibility for annual budgets of approximately £800m and lead a dedicated team of circa 230 staff based in Swindon and remotely, shaping strategy for UK engineering and physical sciences.

The Executive Chair, advised and challenged by EPSRC's Council, is responsible for setting and implementing the strategic vision for EPSRC. As a visible and credible leader of both EPSRC and the wider engineering and physical sciences research community, you will provide direction ensuring delivery of world-class research, innovation, skills development and infrastructure investment.

You will be a core member of the UKRI Executive Committee, providing leadership across UKRI to develop and deliver on its vision, mission and strategy.



Responsibilities

EPSRC is one of nine councils that make up UKRI. The Executive Chairs of the nine councils have two overarching responsibilities.

First, they have a responsibility to ensure the health and vibrancy of their domain. To achieve this, Executive Chairs have delegated responsibility for a budget awarded by the Secretary of State. The budget is set through recommendations to the Secretary of State from the UKRI Board, which is in turn advised by the UKRI Executive Committee. Executive Chairs have freedom to operate to deliver this budget through their council, including through collaborative programmes with other councils, with advice from their council's Council and aligned with the UKRI Strategy.

Second, as members of the UKRI Executive Committee, Executive Chairs have a responsibility for the health and vibrancy of the entire UK research and innovation system, recommending strategy to the UKRI Board. This includes making recommendations about and holding responsibility for the UKRI Strategy, for collective UKRI budgets, and for the leadership and delivery of collective UKRI programmes.

These two responsibilities overlap. Often, they will be fully aligned and synergistic, with collective working delivering clear domain-specific benefits. But occasionally, there will be trade-offs to be made. Executive Chairs must work to ensure domain-specific impacts are understood, while ensuring maximum benefit for the UK Research and Innovation system as a whole.

The following responsibilities are key to the role:

Leadership:

- Lead and manage the EPSRC and its staff in the successful delivery of its objectives, providing the inclusive leadership and vision to develop the quality, outputs and impacts of its research, skills and capital investment portfolio
- Lead and develop the capacity and capability of the EPSRC Executive team
- Work closely with the rest of the UKRI senior executive team and Board to provide overall leadership and direction to UKRI, modelling the culture and behaviours required to bring to life UKRI's values
- Act to ensure UK Research and Innovation provides a strong, unified voice for science, research and innovation in the UK and globally, both in facilitating the dialogue with government and partners on the world stage

Programme Delivery:

- Work with the Senior Independent Member (SIM) of EPSRC and other Council members to lead and develop EPSRC's strategic approach to supporting its area of expertise. This will include directed and responsive-mode programmes; the funding of postgraduate and skills training; investment in major longer term infrastructure projects; building collaborative arrangements with industry and others; and ensuring that the UK retains and develops its world-leading position in the engineering and physical sciences



- As a core member of the UKRI Executive Committee, working to deliver the best value from the overall research and innovation funding system and actively contribute to delivery of the mission of UKRI
- Chair the Programme Board of the National Quantum Technologies Programme
- Act as SRO of the Technology Missions Fund
- Chair the cross-UKRI AI programme
- Work collaboratively across UKRI to foster interdisciplinary work and build on collective capabilities, providing support and challenge when required

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Actively engage and consult with the academic community, charities, government and industry to develop and catalyse new ideas and communicate the strategic outputs. This will involve close engagement with stakeholders in the full range of industries interested in engineering and the physical sciences, including the chemical and pharmaceuticals industries, information technology, communication and electronics industries, construction and process industries, and others

Finance, Planning and Analysis:

- Maximise efficiency and ensure value for money from public investment
- Work closely with the UKRI CFO to ensure robust budget planning and financial control
- Work closely with the UKRI Executive Directors for Strategy to ensure robust analysis underpins decisions and evidences outcomes; and ensure synergy between EPSRC's objectives and overall UKRI strategy

Your skills and experience

The successful candidate will be able to command confidence and represent EPSRC and UKRI at the highest level, and be able to demonstrate the following criteria:

Essential:

- A highly respected engineer, mathematician, or physical scientist of international standing with a proven track record and with a firm grasp of developments across the spectrum of the engineering and physical sciences and their application
- Politically astute, excellent interpersonal skills, able to influence, build and maintain strong working relationships with a wide range of partners including industry; and be collaborative and consultative
- An ability to develop, lead and manage the delivery of a clear and strategic vision for engineering and physical sciences research through the development of high quality, value for money programmes and collaborations built on a detailed understanding of and engagement with the stakeholder landscape - both public and private sector
- Demonstrable inclusive leadership and management skills with experience of leading and managing a large and complex organisation to be high performing while tackling issues of



equality, diversity and inclusion; evidence of having successfully led cultural change and organisational development

- Commitment to the overarching goals of UKRI, and the health of a wider and more integrated R&D landscape

Benefits

Working for UKRI has numerous benefits, from being at the cutting edge of business developments and working with innovators globally, to a flexible environment and rewarding culture.

Additional to a competitive package of pay and a rewarding career you can enjoy:

- excellent pension
- 30 days of annual leave (excluding bank holidays)
- flexible working arrangements
- season ticket loans
- rent deposit loans
- Employee Assistance Programme providing confidential help and advice
- employee discounts and offers on hundreds of retail and leisure activities
- free eyesight tests and glasses, if related to the role
- tax-free childcare
- cycle-to-work scheme



Terms of Appointment

Appointment Term: An initial period of 4-6 years (To be discussed at interview)

Remuneration: £135,000 - £148,000pa + an opportunity for performance related pay

Time Commitment: Full Time. However, the role could be reduced to four days per week to allow for research activity to be maintained

Location: Swindon or London

Nature of Appointment: This is a Public Appointment by the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology. The post holder would be an officeholder and an employee of UKRI

Availability: Successful candidate/s will be encouraged to take up their appointment as soon as possible, following the successful completion of pre-appointment checks and security clearance



Timescales and Selection

The selection process will consist of an interview and presentation. Please note, candidates may also be required to complete a short, written piece as part of their application.

As these roles are subject to pre-appointment scrutiny, the successful candidate may be subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Science and Technology Select Committee.

Interviews will take place in London.

The timeline for this campaign is indicative and therefore subject to change.

Advert Closes	Monday 8 th May at 23:59
Panel Sift	TBC – Expected June 2023
Panel Interview	TBC – Expected July 2023
Candidates Notified of Outcomes	TBC – Expected August 2023
Pre-Appointment Hearing	TBC – Expected September 2023
Appointment Confirmed	TBC – Expected September/October 2023

The members of the Advisory Assessment Panel are:

- **Panel Chair and DSIT Representative:**
Alexandra Jones (Director, Science, Research and Innovation)
- **Representative of the Organisation:**
Dame Ottoline Leyser (CEO)
- **Representative of the Organisation:**
Professor Mark Smith (EPSRC Council – Senior Independent Member)
- **Independent Panel Member:**
Professor Iain Gray (Director of Aerospace & member of the University Executive – Cranfield University)

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

How to Apply

Your application should be submitted in two parts.

Both parts must be submitted by **23:59 Monday 8th May 2023** in order for your application to be considered complete. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

Part one: CV and Statement of Suitability



Please submit your application via the UKRI Careers Portal ([click here to be taken through](#)) by **23:59 Monday 8th May 2023**. You will need to supply:

- A curriculum vitae; and,
- A supporting statement

Your curriculum vitae and supporting statement must each be no longer than two A4 pages in length. Please ensure your documents are named as 'Surname, first initial – URN607 – EPSRC Executive Chair – CV/Statement of Suitability'.

Your Statement of Suitability should provide specific information about why you believe you would be suitable for appointment into the EPSRC Executive Chair role and a flavour of what you would want to do in this role, if successful. Think about your knowledge, skills, experience, personal attributes, and vision for the organisation, and take full advantage of the space available. Use practical examples where possible and ensure you refer to the essential criteria for this role. Please include a section that sets out what you believe the main challenges and opportunities to be for EPSRC and how you might address them. Again, please aim for no more than 2 A4 pages.

Please note, you will only be assessed on the content of your CV and supporting statement, and not the 'experience' section of the application.

Should you have any problem with submitting your application via the UKRI Careers Portal, please do send an email to publicappointments@ukri.org with 'URN607 – EPSRC Executive Chair' in the subject heading. A member of our team will then be in touch.

Please note, to apply via the UKRI Careers Portal you will receive a notification confirming your profile has successfully been created (if you have not previously set up an account) and a second notification confirming your application for this role has been submitted. If you do not receive the second notification confirming your application for this role has been submitted, please contact publicappointments@ukri.org, so we can ensure your application has been received.

Part two: Diversity Monitoring and Conflicts of Interest Form. Please click [here](#) to complete this form.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

UKRI believes that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed within an ethical and trusted working environment that enables them to do so, and that is attractive and accessible to everyone who is interested in developing their career with us.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our board and executive positions and bringing in talent, regardless of its origins. We encourage applications from all candidates regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or gender identity.



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We also value diversity of thought and experience and are committed to creating systems that value difference so that everyone can feel welcomed, included and nurtured throughout their time with us.

Arrangements for candidates with a disability: As a Disability Confident leader, we guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the essential criteria for the post. More details on the criteria can be found in this pack. If you wish to apply through the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to tick that option on the Diversity Monitoring form that you will submit alongside your application.

Adjustments: All candidates are entitled to request reasonable adjustments at any stage of the application process. If you would like to discuss reasonable adjustments prior to submitting your application, please contact UKRI Senior Appointments team at seniorrecruitment@ukri.org

We know actions speak louder than words. For further information, please visit the UKRI web page: ['How we support EDI in the workforce'](#)



Annex A: Conflicts of Interest

Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest that might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

It is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media. The Panel may explore issues with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Panel, and they may wish to explore issues with you, should you be invited to interview.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss further, please contact the UKRI Public Appointments team at publicappointments@ukri.org

Annex B: The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life

In 1995 the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles for public life. All candidates for are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service which are:

1. Selflessness
2. Integrity
3. Objectivity
4. Accountability
5. Openness
6. Honesty
7. Leadership

Further information on the principles of public life can be found [here](#).



Annex C: Complaints Procedure

If you feel you have reason to complain you should direct your concerns in the first instance to the DSIT Public Appointments team (publicappointments@beis.gov.uk) who will make every effort to deal with these and respond to you within 48 hours.

If your complaint is not dealt with satisfactorily, you can find information about the steps you can take under DSIT Complaints Procedure [here](#).

The Commissioner for Public Appointments is the independent regulator of public appointments.

The Commissioner's primary role is to provide independent assurance that public appointments are made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments. The Commissioner also investigates complaints and may conduct an inquiry into the policies and practices followed in relation to appointments processes which he regulates. The Commissioner will not investigate complaints relating to non-selection unless it appears that the appointments process has breached the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

You can contact the Commissioner by email at publicappointments@csc.gov.uk or by post, as follows:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

Room G/8, 1 Horse Guards Road

London, SW1A 2HQ

Further information on the role of the Commissioner or the appointments process is available at: publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk