



Building
Digital UK



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Building Digital UK Chair

Candidate Pack

Closing Date: Extended - 13 January 2025
at 11:55pm

If you have any questions, require further information, or would like this candidate pack in an alternative format, please contact the Public Appointments team at partnerships@dsit.gov.uk

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Department for
Science, Innovation,
& Technology

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Department for
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Ministerial foreword

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of Building Digital UK.

The BDUK Board has a vital role in advising and supporting the Chief Executive and the Executive Team to deliver the organisation's strategic priorities and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively for their delivery. The Board reviews the management and performance of BDUK and ensures high standards of corporate governance are maintained.

BDUK is helping to bring fast and reliable broadband and mobile coverage to hard-to-reach places across the UK, working closely with industry partners and local bodies to deliver its mission to ensure that homes and businesses across the UK can access fast and reliable digital connectivity.

The Chair will lead the Board in providing encouragement and constructive challenge as BDUK delivers its ambitious multi-billion pound portfolio - including Project Gigabit and the Shared Rural Network. The Chair will play a leading role in BDUK's engagement with its key stakeholders and set the Board's agenda to provide scrutiny of BDUK's programmes and operational delivery strategies.

It is a transformational time for BDUK as they lead up to their 2025 and 2030 key coverage milestones. This is a tremendous opportunity to be involved in leading an exceptionally talented and visionary organisation and your role will be key to ensuring the organisation exploits investment and delivery fully.

If you believe you have the experience and qualities we are seeking to help to lead and support this organisation, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Kyle MP

Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology



Building Digital UK

Building Digital UK (BDUK) is a government agency under the Department for Science, Innovation, and Technology (DSIT). Its mission is to improve the UK's digital connectivity by extending high-speed broadband and mobile coverage, particularly in rural and underserved areas. BDUK aims to bridge the digital divide and support economic growth by providing equitable access to reliable digital infrastructure.

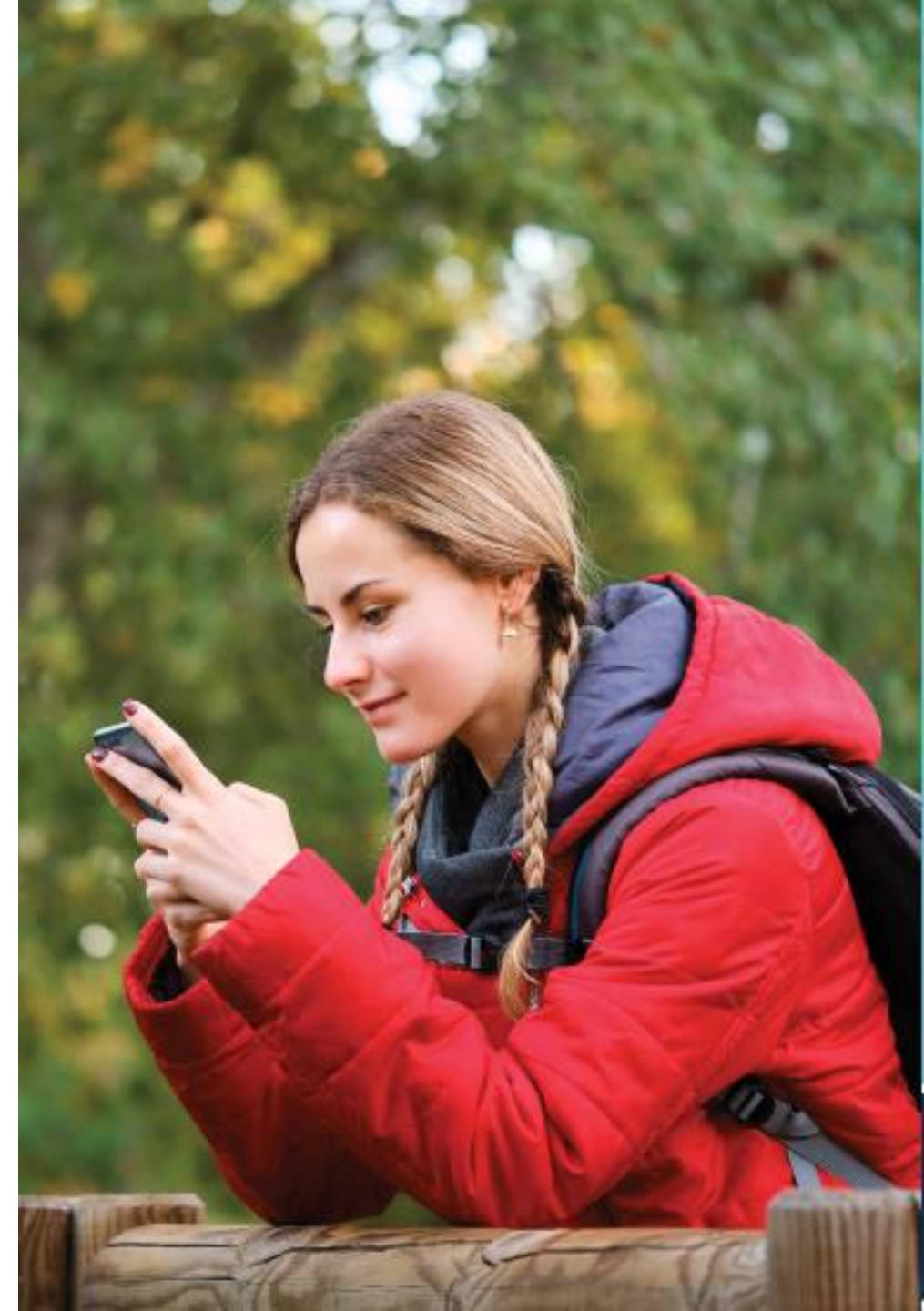
What BDUK Does:

1. **Project Gigabit:** Focused on delivering gigabit-capable broadband to areas that are commercially unviable, ensuring rural and hard-to-reach communities are not left behind.
2. **Shared Rural Network (SRN):** A partnership with mobile network operators to improve mobile coverage across rural areas, with the aim of achieving 95% geographic coverage by the end of the program.
3. **Voucher Schemes:** Offering funding support to help individuals, businesses, and communities connect to gigabit-capable broadband.
4. **Collaboration:** Works closely with local authorities, private-sector providers, and other stakeholders to maximize the impact of public investment in digital infrastructure.

Future Targets:

- **Gigabit Coverage:** Achieve at least 85% of UK premises with gigabit-capable broadband by 2025, with the ambition to reach as close to 100% as possible by 2030.
- **Rural Connectivity:** Extend gigabit broadband to 1 million hard-to-reach premises by the end of 2025 through Project Gigabit.
- **Mobile Coverage:** Through the SRN, ensure 95% of the UK's geographic area has high-quality 4G coverage by 2025, significantly improving connectivity in rural areas.
- **Digital Equality:** Close the digital divide by addressing gaps in infrastructure access to empower communities and businesses nationwide.

BDUK's work underpins the UK Government's broader ambition to be a global leader in digital connectivity, supporting innovation, economic development, and inclusion across the country.



The Role

The Chair of BDUK's Board plays a crucial leadership role in providing strategic direction and governance. Key responsibilities include:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Overseeing the agency's long-term objectives, ensuring alignment with national digital infrastructure goals.
- **Governance:** Ensuring robust financial and operational management, while maintaining transparency and accountability in decision-making.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Acting as a high-profile advocate for BDUK, engaging with government officials, externally with telecommunications network providers and suppliers, and community representatives to build partnerships and drive initiatives.
- **Board Leadership:** Establishing a close and effective working relationship with the CEO and ensuring that the Board is effective in holding the executive to account for programme delivery and providing direction. Effectively leading the Board, holding the executive team to account and drawing out the skills and experience of other Non-Executive Directors. Serving as mentor and sounding board to the CEO and leadership team.
- **Performance Oversight:** Promoting the highest standards of integrity, probity and corporate governance, ensuring that BDUK complies with all governance requirements. Ensuring the Board has a succession planning strategy, including providing advice to Ministers on other appointments to the board; maintaining a focus on promoting equality and diversity through Non-Executive and Executive appointments and throughout the organisation as a whole. Provide strategic leadership and oversight for the upcoming Arm's Length Body review, ensuring thorough evaluation and effective implementation of recommendations.

This role requires a blend of strategic vision, governance expertise, and strong communication skills to lead BDUK in its mission to connect communities and improve digital equity across the UK.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- Ability to be politically astute and manage the operating environment, to enable BDUK to maintain focus on delivery in line with Government objectives - especially driving economic growth and digital inclusion.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to challenge an organisation, its culture, and its frame of reference in a constructive, straightforward, and open manner.
- Strong strategic leadership track record on complex and multifaceted programmes, with the ability to foster credibility on account of both personality and experience.
- Experience in major infrastructure projects or commercial contract negotiations to drive value for the public purse.
- Strong enterprise level management skills to provide efficient execution of our two programmes. Prior non-executive experience and a clear understanding of governance.
- Ability to adapt to changing political and industry/market factors.

Desirable Criteria

- As a core member of the senior leadership team, drive forward the ongoing programme of transformational change to build BDUK and its capabilities as a steward of the research and innovation system, led by the BDUK CEO.

Terms of Appointments

Appointment Term: An initial period of 3 years.

Remuneration: £48,000 per annum

Time Commitment: 7 days per month

Location: 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 not be an employee of the Department or the public body.

Availability: Successful candidates will be encouraged to take up their appointment as soon as possible, following the successful completion of pre-appointment checks and security clearance at Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) level. Further details can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-kingdom-security-vetting-clearance-levels/national-security-vetting-clearance-levels>.

How to apply

Applications must be submitted by **23:55pm on 13/01/2025**. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

To apply, you will need to create an account or sign in via the **Public Appointments website**.

Once you are logged into your account, click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on-screen instructions. To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- A two-page curriculum vitae (CV)
- A two-page supporting statement
- Equality information
- Information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

A good application will set out specific information about how you meet the person specification for this appointment. Think about your knowledge, skills, experience and personal attributes, and take full advantage of the space available. Provide practical evidence that best demonstrates how you meet the essential and any desirable criteria.

We will ask you to check and confirm your personal details to ensure your application is accurate.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.



Assessment panel, process and timing

The members of the Advisory Assessment Panel are:

Panel Chair and DSIT Representative:

Sarah Connolly (DSIT Digital Infrastructure Director)

Second Panel Member:

Lindsey Fussell (Ofcom, Interim Group Director for Online Safety)

Independent Panel Member:

Professor Graeme Reid (Chair of Science and Research Policy at University College London)

The timelines for this campaign is indicative and subject to change. Please check the advert for any updates. Interview dates will be confirmed closer to the time.

Advert Closes	13 Jan 2025
Panel Sift	W/C 20 Jan 2025
Panel Interview	February 2025
Candidates notified of the outcome	March 2025
Appointment confirmed	March/April 2025



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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our boards 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. We particularly welcome applications from people with ethnicity, gender and disability characteristics currently underrepresented on our Boards.

We are committed to fostering regional diversity and encourage applications from talented individuals across the UK, ensuring representation from all corners of our vibrant and diverse regions.

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 the 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 adjustments prior to submitting your application, please contact partnerships@dsit.gov.uk.

Eligibility

In general, you should have the right to work in the UK to be eligible to apply for a public appointment. There are a small number of specialist roles that are not open to non-British citizens. Any nationality requirements will be specified in the vacancy details. The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards.

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- * you are disqualified from acting as a company director (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986);
- * have an unspent conviction on your criminal record;
- * your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors.

When you apply, you should declare if:

- * you are, or have been, bankrupt or you have made an arrangement with a creditor at any point, including the dates of this.
- * you are subject to a current police investigation.

You must inform the sponsor department if, during the application process, your circumstances change in respect of any of the above points.

When you apply you should also declare any relevant interests, highlighting any that you think may call into question your ability to properly discharge the responsibilities of the role you are applying for. You should also declare any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of the [1] Code of Conduct of Board Members (see Outside interests and reputational issues section below)

Visible links - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>.

Annex A

Conflicts of interest and due diligence

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 BEIS Appointments, Diversity and Talent Team at publicappointments@beis.gov.uk.

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 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 BEIS 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.