

Forging Ahead - Project Manager

Job Ref: REQ250480

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Forging Ahead is the first stage of a large multi-university project led by Loughborough University focussing on research commercialisation across the Midlands. A mature commercialisation ecosystem relies on access to knowledge, investment, and talent. The Midlands boasts a strong knowledge base. Work is ongoing to enhance the investment ecosystem. There is, however, significant opportunity to better connect talent, expertise and skills in the Midlands to improve commercialisation intensity for the region. The Forging Ahead/Forging Beyond project is a collaboration of 15 Universities, backed by Research England, to address this gap through the implementation of an holistic portfolio of interventions including: creation and management of a Talent Pool; scale up of our best-practice accelerators across the region; creation of inward investment champions and colocation/innovation export networks; plus tailored interventions in priority sectors: Health & Med Tech, Advanced Manufacturing, Net Zero, and Creative & Digital. The Project will grow entrepreneurial capacity across the universities creating a step change in spinout creation. It will boost innovation and investment in critical midlands sectors by creating pathways for Intellectual Property, reinforcing supply chains and networks and promoting broader skills transfer across businesses and universities.

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to manage and coordinate the Midlands-wide Forging Ahead Project, becoming instrumental in driving forward the future innovation landscape in the Midlands. Based at Loughborough University and working closely with colleagues from the Research Innovation Office, the post-holder will apply strong organisational and stakeholder management skills to implement the Project. They will work with the 15 Partner Universities, and oversee a dedicated team, to jointly realise the aims and ambitions of this important initiative.

The Project partners include: Aston University, Birmingham City University, University of Birmingham, Coventry University, Cranfield University, De Montfort University, Derby University, University of Keele, Lincoln University, University of Leicester, Loughborough University, Nottingham Trent University, University of Nottingham, University of Warwick, Wolverhampton University.

Job Description

Job Grade

Management and Specialist Grade 7

Job Purpose

To manage and coordinate all operational aspects of the Forging Ahead and Forging Beyond Project, reporting to the Director of the Research and Innovation Office, and working closely with the Principal Investigator.

Job Duties

1. Project Management and Governance

- To be a member of and develop a strong working relationship with the Project Management Board and a strong understanding of their ambitions for the Project. Providing support to the Board by, for example,

contributing to the Project's resource planning; preparing and analysing management information, producing reports, making recommendations where appropriate, and helping with other administration needs as requested to support delivery of the Project's strategy.

- Act as a key contact for the Research England and the Project Partners and engage with University colleagues regularly to ensure the Project keeps on track and aligned with objectives and aims.
- To support and contribute to the development of the Project's strategy and agreed key performance indicators.
- With support from colleagues, be responsible for overall coordination of Project activities and events. Coordinate and monitor individual activities against the Project's programme plan, tracking performance and expenditure in liaison with associated project partners, stakeholders and sponsors, as appropriate.
- To develop a knowledge of the Project and University guidelines on governance to ensure that performance reports and proposals for new activities can be channelled through appropriate committees for endorsement; liaising with RIO colleagues as required.
- To produce a range of project documentation in relation to budgets, governance, ethics and Health and Safety, to ensure that project obligations are met and recorded.
- Develop and embed transparent internal processes that will facilitate the achievement of the Project's objectives, within the University's policies.
- To work with RIO's Finance Business Partner and colleagues from the Research Finance Office to plan and execute effective financial procedures.
- Working with colleagues monitor and provide oversight of all financial transactions, ensuring accurate forecasting of expenditure and income against agreed KPI's; establishing and maintaining accurate financial records for reporting and audit purposes.
- Provide support for the Project Management Board by contributing to the Project's resource planning; prepare and analyse management information, produce reports, make recommendations where appropriate, and help with other administration needs as requested by the Project Management Board to support the delivery of the Project's strategy.
- Organise and support formal meetings; plan agenda, produce and coordinate papers and record formal minutes of discussions at the Project Management Board and Project Council meetings.
- To provide support on any other matters of management and governance including strategic alignment and risk management and mitigation strategies.

2. Project Coordination and Activities

- Responsible for leading operational activities across the Forging Ahead function. Manage external relationships across all project partners to ensure good working relationships and practices are maintained and Project Partners remain engaged with and bought into the aims of the Project. To include conducting regular in person engagement of Project Partners across the Midlands.
- To collaborate with other stakeholders in the Forging Ahead network in a timely and professional manner, gathering and curating key information relating to these contacts and bringing them in to contribute to the Project as appropriate.
- Manage the organising of Forging Ahead meetings, workshops and other engagement events across the portfolio of planned interventions.

3. Management Responsibilities

- To Manage a Project Team (Central Service Team) of five, including:
 - Project Administrator
 - Marketing and Communications Manager
 - Peer to Peer Learning Lead
 - Network Manager
 - Business Development Manager
- To coordinate HR processes within the Project's Central Service Team to include Recruitment & Selection, Sickness Absence and conduct Personal Development Reviews (PDR's).

- To oversee and direct the allocation and prioritisation of the work of the Project Team (Central Service Team) by setting objectives and supporting processes for the appraisal of progress and individual performance.

4. Related Activities

- To engage in training and continuing professional development.
- Identify, encourage, and promote good practice in the area of equity and diversity and in-line with University Policies
- Contribute to the development of EDI strategies and action plans and support their delivery
- To carry out these and any other duties commensurate with the grade and purpose of the post, in line with objectives agreed in the staff review process.

Points To Note

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

The post-holder is expected to be based primarily at Loughborough University's East Midlands Campus but with regular travel to Project Partner locations in the Midlands.

Special Conditions

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equity & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equity & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Belonging and Inclusion and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

Organisational Responsibility

Reports to Director of RIO. The Forging Ahead Project Manager will line manage the Central Service Team.

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

| Area | Criteria | Stage |
|----------------------|--|-------|
| Experience | Significant experience of leading a substantial multi-stakeholder project and working with individuals of varying seniority. | 1, 3 |
| | Experience of creating, implementing and managing effective processes and procedures to comply with regulatory requirements. | 1, 3 |
| | Sound experience of managing budgets, ideally involving the intricacies of research and/or innovation focussed funding from a variety of sources. | 1, 3 |
| | Experience of taking a strategic view in day-to-day decision-making and acting on own initiative. | 1, 3 |
| Skills and abilities | Highly organised with excellent planning and project management skills. | 1, 3 |
| | Confident ability to produce, manipulate and present management information. | 1, 3 |
| | Ability to assimilate and apply information in a multi-disciplinary environment. | 1, 3 |
| | Strong evidence of skills in persuasion and diplomacy. | 1, 3 |
| | Well-developed problem-solving skills, using initiative and judgement in more complex situations. | 1, 3 |
| | Excellent practical IT skills including Microsoft Office and Outlook diary management. | 1, 3 |
| Training | Evidence of continuous personal development; a willingness to undertake further training as appropriate, and to adopt new procedures as and when required. | 1, 3 |
| Qualifications | Undergraduate degree or equivalent qualification. Or substantial relevant experience gained in a similar HE setting. | 1, 3 |
| Other | Evidence of a good working knowledge of equal opportunities and understanding of diversity in the workplace. | 1, 3 |
| | A commitment to equity and diversity with the ability to role model, adhere to and advocate Equity and Diversity policies. | 1, 3 |

Desirable Criteria

| Area | Criteria | Stage |
|------------|--|-------|
| Experience | Experience of supporting new business or University spinout ventures. | 1, 3 |
| | Knowledge of the processes of commercialising intellectual property including pathways for finance and investment. | 1, 3 |
| | Understanding of how to develop entrepreneurial communities in particular the drivers and value for universities and the wider economy | 1, 3 |

Conditions of Service

The position is Full time and Fixed Term, ending on the 1st of May 2028. Salary will be on Management and Specialist Grade 7, £46,735 to £55,755 per annum, and a starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff grades 6 and above, details of which can be found [here](#).

The post-holder is expected to be based primarily at Loughborough University's East Midlands Campus but with regular travel to Project Partner locations in the Midlands.

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which can be found [here](#).

The University offers a wide range of employee benefits which can be found [here](#).

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equity and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>