

Job Description

Project Director

Salary:	Grade 9
Contract:	Part time 0.8FTE, fixed term until 31 December 2028
Location:	Canterbury Campus
Responsible to:	Professor Mark Smales
Job family:	Administrative, professional and managerial

Job purpose

The Project Director will work closely with the Academic Directors at Kent, and those at the partner institutions of The University of Manchester and University College London (UCL), alongside those employed on the Centre for Advanced Diagnostics Development and Application (CADDa) grant including the Project Managers at Kent and Manchester, and the Project Coordinator at Kent, to help ensure timely delivery of CADDa activities and outputs as outlined in the grant proposal.

The role holder will play a key role in coordination of the project and activities, and working with project managers to mitigate and prevent identified and arising risks. A key role will be to develop a CADDa sustainability plan, aid in the spin out of companies and linking of SMEs to academic expertise at the partner institutions, consolidate technologies and IP, train and mentor people, identify opportunities in the market place/clinic and ensure the long-term success of the Centre through the life cycle of the project. They will ensure delivery from start to finish, taking responsibility, with the Project Managers and Project Coordinator, that milestones and deliverables are met with phasing of the project such that activities and resource are aligned with the KPIs and intended outcomes. The post will therefore be responsible for developing and ensuring long term sustainability of the Centre across the delivery partners, for growing the Centre and liaising with all key stakeholders; coordinating translational and legacy activity.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main duties for the job. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job, may also be assigned from time to time.

- Bring in-depth experience and expertise of supporting business spin out and development from outside academia to commercial realisation to the CADDa project, working with academic and private stakeholders to transition ideas and concepts into new business opportunities in the field of human and animal diagnostics.
- Lead in the development and delivery of a long-term sustainability plan for CADDa beyond the initial Research England funded project.
- Apply specialist knowledge and experience of company/SME development and product launch to others and pathways by which to go from product inception to commercial reality.
- Develop knowledge of CADDa staff working within the area to help them better meet current and future needs of the team, keeping a strategic overview of projects and work packages.
- Keep up to date with developments in human and animal diagnostics, identify trends and opportunities and use this knowledge to help shape direction of CADDa.
- Effectively manage aspects across partner institutions, with the Project Managers, developing integrated project plans ensuring a consistent approach in line with University procedures and guidelines and monitoring each stage against the project plan to ensure delivery against agreed outcomes within time, cost and quality constraints.

- Identify, monitor and proactively manage project risks and issues with Project Managers through a defined risk management process to ensure strategic and operational risks and issues are identified, prioritised, assessed and appropriate mitigating actions are developed, implemented and monitored throughout the project life-cycle.
- Act as an advocate for project(s), providing knowledgeable advice and guidance ensuring project activity is promoted and understood, and successfully embedding the project into business as usual activity to ensure buy in from stakeholders. May be required to act as the principle point of contact for external stakeholders/partners.
- Lead on co-ordination of fundraising campaigns and initiatives.
- Lead on curating interactions with existing and new business partners across England and the UK to facilitate interactions and deliverables of the project and to develop new funding opportunities.
- Identify and make recommendations for improvements to contribute to the continuous improvement of projects and processes.
- Leading regular horizon scanning for future strategic opportunities, to leverage grant or other funding for CADDa and into the post-project phase.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- The role holder has a high level of autonomy and responsibility. They will work on large and complex projects with multiple stakeholders and actions for delivery. The projects may also carry a higher degree of reputational risk.
- The role holder will be required to build consensus across diverse range of stakeholders, successfully managing engagement and communications to ensure buy-in, bringing in senior level support (Project Sponsor) when required.
- Due to the number and/or nature of the projects the role holder will manage, they will need to have exceptional organisational skills, the ability to be agile, highly resilient and comfortable working in a fast paced, changing and at times challenging environment, problem solving and finding solutions as required.
- The role holder will need to manage a range of conflicting priorities and demands on time and resources, deciding how best to plan and manage own workload and those of others to ensure the best possible outcomes and to ensure an efficient, effective and robust service is provided in support of school/directorate objectives. They will also need an appreciation of both short and long term issues facing the School/Directorate
- Able to manage a budget(s) or resource to ensure maximum value is delivered. Have a good knowledge of both internal and external requirements pertaining to financial information and be able to advise and interpret complex data sets and information.
- Be able to travel to partner institutions and industrial collaborators/members of CADDa.
- Whilst the role holder may not directly line manage CADDa staff who will be delivering different elements, the ability to influence, and manage across and up is critical to its success.

Facts & figures

The Project Director will help run a project with an overall cost of >£8M with direct funding from Research England just under £4M. Along with the academic project Director (Smales) they will monitor the budget and be involved in decisions around non-allocated spend. They will oversee a Team of 4 other professional staff along with the academic director. They will have a strategic objective mission to ensure long term sustainability of CADDa and ensure inward investment to achieve this. They will work directly with business partners to develop collaborations and investment and be expected to work with 10's to 100's of customers, businesses and stakeholders to ensure

sustainability, translated CADDa research into commercial reality with the University commercialisation team and work with academics to deliver on CADDa objectives.

Internal & external relationships

Internal: Academics, professional services staff and students within Schools; staff at all levels within Central Professional Services departments.

External: Partners at University of Manchester and University College London (UCL). Relevant external bodies – public, private and third sector organisations; specialist consultants; other HEIs.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

This job involves undertaking duties which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:

- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Conflict resolution
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends
- Ability to travel in a timely and efficient manner to meetings and industrial partners

Person specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below.

Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

Essential Criteria:

- Educated to degree level or higher, or equivalent commercial experience (A,I)
- Experience of working in a non-academic environment either to develop and launch their own products or help others to, preferably in the diagnostics sector (A,I)
- Project management qualification or substantial experience of key project delivery activities such as risk management, stakeholder management, planning, change management (A,I)
- Evidence of supporting development to obtain funding/investment and of longer-term project financial sustainability (A,I)
- Experience of working with or for SMEs in their strategic development (A/I)
- Ability to work with and in teams to maximise how these together deliver agreed objectives and milestones across disciplines and institutions (I)
- Good broad knowledge and experience of successfully applying programme and project management tools and methodologies (A,I)
- Excellent and effective negotiation, influencing and communication skills, particularly the ability to persuade and inspire colleagues and external stakeholders to work collaboratively to ensure strategic priorities are met (I)
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to manage a variety of tasks simultaneously, and to organise and prioritise own work and that of others in order to meet project milestones (I)
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to facilitate critical decision making and manage senior level relationships effectively, build consensus and drive effective decision making in formal and informal settings (I)
- Excellent facilitation skills, able to lead workshops involving all forms of stakeholders to achieve agreed outcomes. (I)

- Proven ability to work independently without close supervision, and of working effectively as part of a wider, multi-disciplinary team (I)
- Commitment to deliver equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role (I)

Desirable Criteria:

- MBA or equivalent qualification or experience (A)
- Entrepreneur experience (I)
- Previous experience of working with academics to undertake collaborative research and develop ideas and products towards commercialisation (A,I)
- Knowledge of the human and/or animal diagnostics sector (I)
- Knowledge and understanding of the challenges and strategic issues facing Higher Education (I)

Assessment stage: A - Application; I - Interview; T - Test/presentation at interview stage