



Innovate UK

Chief Operating Officer

Candidate Prospectus

May 2023

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Welcome message from Indro Mukerjee, Chief Executive Officer, Innovate UK

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this exciting and challenging role.

Innovate UK is a dynamic and innovative organisation at the forefront of driving business-led growth through innovation.

This is a pivotal moment for Innovate UK. We are looking for an experienced leader to join our Senior Leadership Team and play a key role in enabling UK business innovation to thrive.

As our Chief Operating Officer, you will have the opportunity to lead a talented team of professionals and contribute to the development of an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and easy to navigate.

Your expertise in delivering high volume transactions in complex stakeholder and governance environments, coupled with your passion for process and service improvement, will make a significant difference to our organisation.

As our Chief Operating Officer, you will work collaboratively with people across the UK Research and Innovation network to ensure the successful delivery of our mission. You will provide strategic direction and leadership, and be a key driver of change, enabling us to achieve our goals and Innovate UK's work and impact to new heights.

Our success as an organisation is dependent on our ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce, and we are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered. We welcome candidates from all backgrounds and are committed to providing equal opportunities for all.

Thank you again for your interest. We look forward to meeting you to discuss how you can make a meaningful contribution to Innovate UK's work to support and grow the UK innovation economy.

Indro Mukerjee

Chief Executive Officer, Innovate UK



About Innovate UK

About Innovate UK

Business innovation is the commercially successful application of ideas. It leads to new or improved products, processes, services, and business models based on new ideas and technologies.

The UK is a great place to innovate and do business. It is home to world-leading scientists and to world-class businesses in sectors including aerospace, automotive, health, infrastructure and construction, manufacturing, agriculture and food, design and creative industries, high value services, and in the enabling and emerging technologies.

The UK Government's vision

The Government's vision is for the UK to be a global hub for innovation by 2035.

As Innovate UK, we are working with UK business to create the environment in which this goal becomes a reality.

Our Mission

We help businesses to grow through the development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services, supported by an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and easy to navigate.

Our approach is built on five strategic themes – future economy; growth at scale; global opportunities; innovation ecosystem; and government levers – and a set of strong foundations that underpin all our activities.

To deliver this we:

Inspire: make the opportunities visible and compelling

Involve: bring relevant organisations and people together

Invest: convene resources needed, including our own

Find out more in our 'Innovate UK Plan for Action' [here](#)

Innovate UK is part of [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI) the UK's largest public funder of research and innovation. On joining Innovate UK you will be employed by UKRI, a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

About the role

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is responsible for leading the Innovate UK operational teams and transformation of the service delivery in support of the [Plan for Action](#) and [Strategic Delivery Plan](#). The role ensures that the skills, expertise, procedures, and processes for effective and efficient operational delivery are in place to deliver customer-focused innovation funding and support services.

The COO has oversight and leadership of the business systems technology programmes for Innovate UK and for our partnership arrangements. It provides 1st line assurance to the CEO and the Innovate UK Council for Subsidy Control/State-Aid Compliance, Managing Public Money and appropriate diligence for grant funding decisions and delivery.



This is a significant leadership role, as a member of the Innovate UK Senior Leadership team and contributing to the overall organisational direction and leadership.

The COO connects across UKRI central functions and programmes on behalf of Innovate UK and as relevant to the operational function and technology development.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership

- As a member of the Innovate UK Senior Leadership Team (SLT) this role will be expected to model the behaviours and values aligned to the [Civil Service Code](#).
- As the senior operational leader, ensure the smooth running of Innovate UK operations.
- Maintain and develop talent across operations to support our people, and ensure organisational resilience and effectiveness

Operations

- Ensure that the Business Operations team delivers the quality and timely service that Innovate UK requires – including but not limited to competitions, awards, and monitoring.
- Lead on the review, streamlining and development of processes to increase efficiency and embed a culture of continuous improvement

Transformation

- Develop the strategy and streamlined delivery of 'Innovate UK as a service' to internal and external stakeholders

- Act as Innovate UK change agent in support of our organisational development programme (Innovating Innovate UK)
- Ensure and maintain an effective organisation design and delivery capability for Innovate UK operations
- Work collaboratively within Innovate UK and across UKRI to identify and deliver simplification and harmonisation

Planning

- Act as the fulcrum for Innovate UK input to UKRI operational delivery plans, ensuring that Council requirements are appropriately reflected, and that Innovate UK can deliver agreed outcomes

Finance and Commercial

- Work closely with the Innovate UK Governance, Risk and Assurance team and Director of Finance, to ensure Innovate UK has all necessary financial controls and reporting in place, reflecting the principles of Managing Public Money
- Oversee significant procurements in conjunction with the Corporate Services Procurement Business Partner
- Ensure delivery of Innovate UK's operations to time, quality, and budget

Information Technology, Facilities, Administration

- Manage the provision of business IT to Innovate UK, working with internal and external suppliers
- Ensure that the Innovation Funding Service (IFS) is fully optimised, and that the development of any new systems meets the requirements of the organisation
- Ensure that that office facilities are appropriate and used flexibly and effectively
- Ensure that employees have the tools to carry out their jobs effectively, including future requirements through the enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems

Projects, Ad-hoc activities

- Undertake project leadership and/or support other bespoke ad-hoc activities as directed by the CEO

This is not an exhaustive list, and you may be encouraged to undertake other duties across the wider directorate, commensurate with the Band and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the key experience and/or training.



Your Skills and Experience

Candidates will be required to demonstrate the following criteria throughout the recruitment process.

Shortlisting Criteria Essential:

- Senior leadership experience in a fast-paced environment
- Demonstrable experience of operational planning and analysis
- Demonstrable experience of delivering significant projects / major change at pace
- Change management skills
- Strong written communication skills
- Budgetary experience with multi-million programmes/operations
- Sound appreciation of governance and risk management principles
- Experience of developing high performing teams to deliver high-quality and resilient business-as-usual operations

Desirable:

- Experience of delivering Subsidy Control/State Aid compliant funding programmes
- Experience in or an understanding of the research and innovation sector
- Knowledge or experience of working within the public sector
- Prince2 or similar project management qualification
- Lean/6-Sigma qualification or similar

Interview Criteria Essential:

- Proven leadership skills with an ability to inspire, motivate and develop capability within a team and across the wider organisation
- Ability to translate organisational vision and strategy into operational requirements
- Strong oral communication skills
- Experience of working at a senior level with diverse internal and external stakeholders
- Experience of building effective cross functional working relationships
- Strong numeracy and analytical skills, a track record of evidence-based decisions
- Excellent interpersonal skills, able to influence, build and maintain strong working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders; collaborative and consultative
- Enthusiastic, motivated, adaptable, and proactive with the ability to work flexibly in a changing environment



Competencies:

Applicants will need to demonstrate compatibility with and capability against our Innovate UK Core Competencies:

Thinking and Problem Solving – Stakeholder management – Communication skills – Influencing – Self-awareness/self-management – Strategic awareness – Working with others– Project management

Terms of Appointment

Contract Type: Permanent, flexible working supported

Salary: £95,000 per annum, this role qualifies to participate in the UKRI Senior Performance Related Pay Scheme

Hours: Full time - we support flexible working, and we would encourage applicants to have a conversation with us to discuss flexible hours

Location: Swindon, Wiltshire (Office based) with hybrid working

Reporting to: Innovate UK CEO

Travel Requirements: We anticipate that by applying for this position, applicants are willing to travel occasionally in the UK.

Innovate UK is part of UK Research and Innovation. If successful in securing the position, your employer will be UK Research and Innovation. More information can be found online <http://www.ukri.org/>

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

Benefits

We offer a benefits package crafted to provide an excellent work/life balance. This includes 30 days' annual leave, 10.5 public and privilege days, flexible working hours, an exceptional defined benefit pension scheme, and access to a variety of support networks and discount schemes.

We understand the importance of work-life balance and are happy to discuss the possibility of flexible working with applicants.

Timescales and Selection

The selection process will consist of a panel interview, plus 2nd stage interview as required, including a presentation. Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a psychometric leadership assessment prior to interview. Interviews are scheduled to be held in person at Caxton House, London. *Please note, the dates and details are subject to change.*

Process	Date
Closing date	26 May 2023 (23:59)
Shortlisting	5 June 2023
Panel interviews	21 & 22 June 2023

This competitive process is being conducted in line with the Civil Service Recruitment Principles (<https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/recruitment-principles/>) and is being regulated by the Civil Service Commission.

How to Apply

Please submit your application via the **Careers Portal** ([click here](#)) by 23:59 26 May 2023.

You will need to supply:

- A CV
- A supporting statement

Your CV and supporting statement must each be no longer than two pages in length.

Your supporting statement should:

- Cover how you meet the essential criteria listed under the person specification
- Be tailored to the role, describe what you would bring, describe your vision for the role, highlight any previous career achievements etc.
- State where you saw the role being advertised

Please note that if you do not provide a cover letter or supporting statement, or address the above points, your application may not be considered further.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Innovate UK is a diverse community. We believe that encouraging these differences and drawing the best from them will build a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met.

Underpinning this is a belief that it is a fundamental right for everyone to be treated equally, with fairness, respect, and dignity. We will act directly and use our influence to ensure that this right is promoted and upheld; we encourage applications from all those who meet the criteria set-out in our role profiles.

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

Equal Opportunities

We are an equal opportunities employer, committed to employing any person who meets the criteria for our roles. When undertaking recruitment, we may require applicants to undertake certain tests or assessments, some of which will be online, and others may be in-person. If you



have a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia then you may be entitled to support with undertaking this type of assessment exercise.

Where you feel that reasonable adjustments are required to support you, we ask that you advise your recruitment point of contact in a timely fashion, providing further information. In confidence, Innovate UK will then review your application for adjustments and provide support as required.

Pre-employment screening

To enable us to hire the very best people and to safeguard our people, our assets and our important role we will conduct a comprehensive pre-employment check on successful applicants as part of the recruitment process.

UKRI supports research in areas that include animal health, agriculture and food security, and bioscience for health which includes research on animals, genetic modification, and stem cell research. Whilst you may not have direct involvement in this type of research, you should consider how this aligns with your personal values or beliefs. Our pre-employment requirements include a security check and an extreme organisation’s affiliation check.

Complaints Procedure

If you feel you have reason to complain, you should direct your concerns in the first instance to the Senior Appointments team (SeniorRecruitment@ukri.org) who will make every effort to deal with this 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 [UKRI Complaints Procedure](#).