



Application pack for Non-Executive Director Appointments British Geological Survey (BGS)

September 2023



**British
Geological
Survey**

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Introduction

The British Geological Survey (BGS), is a research centre under Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). UKRI's organisation brings together the seven disciplinary research councils, Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England, and the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK.

UKRI's nine councils work together in innovative ways to deliver an ambitious agenda, drawing on our great depth and breadth of expertise and the enormous diversity of our portfolio.

Through the councils, UKRI maintains and champions the creativity and vibrancy of subject areas and sector-specific priorities and communities. The councils craft and deliver both sectoral and domain-specific support.

As part of NERC, BGS research addresses major issues linked to environmental, economic and societal sustainability. Its work includes:

- investigating the role of the subsurface in achieving the energy transition to net zero
- exploring the responsible use of natural resources
- adapting effectively to environmental change
- helping to develop community resilience to environmental hazards

The new BGS strategy 2023-28, [Understanding our Earth](#), was published in May 2023.

The BGS research portfolio is reflected in our organisational structure, which has three major science challenge areas:

- decarbonisation and resource management
- environmental change, adaptation and resilience
- multi-hazards and resilience

These challenge areas are underpinned by a digital transformation programme to ensure that digital processes and innovation support our aims and meet all our partners' needs.

BGS uses its research and expertise to fulfil our mission of providing impartial, independent geoscientific advice and data to governments, the public and private-sector organisations, both nationally and internationally. It leads and maintains the National Geoscience Data Centre, a repository for knowledge





of the UK's geology and subsurface properties. It also maintains world class observation networks, such as the seismic monitoring network. The BGS is in an outstanding position to provide, maintain and make accessible reliable geoscientific data. The portfolio of successful research and data projects, underpinning both UK and global initiatives, demonstrates our ability and expertise.

BGS has a public science role to provide an accessible and accurate assessment of the subsurface of the UK to underpin public and government requirements. The public science role is delivered through UKRI/NERC National Capability science funding and, in 2022-23 we received approximately £30 million from UKRI/NERC for this role. Annual turnover in 2022-23 was approximately £54m, with approximately £24m coming from competitively won income, such as grants and commissioned research from the public and private sectors.

The Memorandum of Understanding between NERC and the BGS sets out the BGS role as being:

- to provide the national repository of data and knowledge for geoscience in the UK
- to develop services to enable Government, business and the public to benefit from the national repository archive of data and knowledge
- to provide impartial and independent advice to Government, business and the public in relation to UK geology, natural hazards and groundwater
- to provide analytical facilities, including observatory networks, in support of earth science research and Government needs
- to provide UK leadership and to make skills, expertise and knowledge available globally
- to undertake research and development in pursuit of these aims

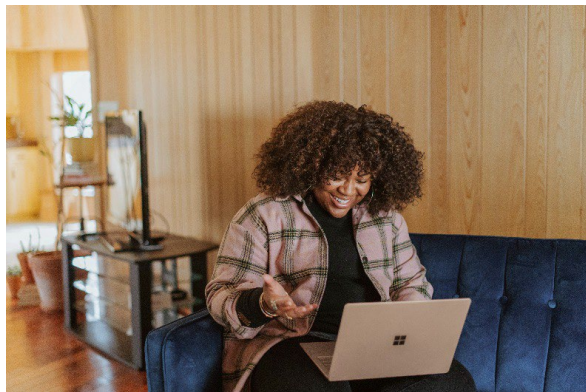
As well as the three principal BGS science challenge areas, core UK and international activities are delivered through the BGS National Geoscience and BGS International programmes. These are supported by BGS Digital, which is leading a digital transformation across BGS.

BGS headquarters are at Keyworth, near Nottingham, with offices in Edinburgh, Wallingford, London and Cardiff. BGS also has a presence in Belfast through the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland.

For further information on BGS see: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/about/>.

Board Appointments

We are now looking to appoint 1-2 Non-Executive Directors with a complimentary skill set and experience to support the overall skills composition of the board. The BGS board non-executive directors will be appointed by NERC on the recommendation of a selection panel.



The Non-Executive Directors between them have a broad range of expertise and experience in research and innovation across higher education, industry and commerce, policy and/or civil society, reflecting different characteristics and professional backgrounds.

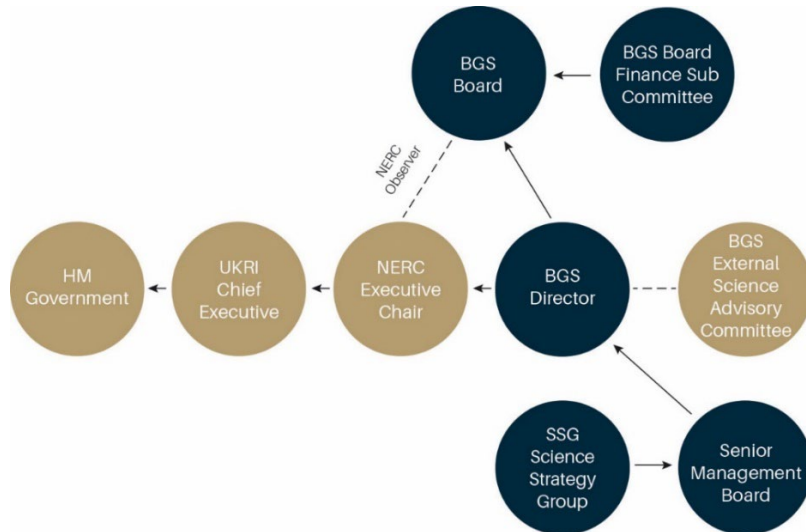
Members will be appointed for a period of three years.

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.

BGS Role and Responsibilities

The governance structure for the BGS will mirror that of a wholly owned incorporated subsidiary, controlled by NERC, as far as can be achieved while BGS is part of NERC, which is legally part of UKRI. The Chair of the BGS Board will lead and direct the Board in fulfilling the role of BGS, ensuring proper organisational governance and direction within the NERC/UKRI governance framework.

The BGS board is chaired by Sir Keith O’Nions, with six non-executive directors and a NERC Observer. Each non-executive director serves a set term. The BGS Director, and Director of Operations, also sit on the board. The board’s actions are subject to laws, regulations and the governance framework established by UKRI. The diagram below shows the governance structure.



The role and responsibilities of Non-Executive Directors

- The Non-Executive Directors will between them have a broad range of expertise and experience in research and innovation across higher education, industry and commerce, national and international scientific leadership, policy and/or civil society.
- Each member must act in what they consider to be the best interests of BGS.
- All members should act within the delegated responsibilities.
- Non-Executive Directors should adhere to the 7 Principles of Public Life
- Further Non-Executive Directors may be co-opted as advisory members as and when necessary.

A fully effective Non-Executive Director:

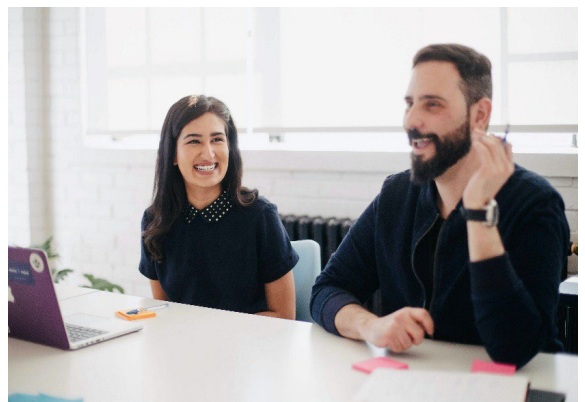
- Makes a commitment to participate actively in BGS business, providing robust scrutiny and challenge and if necessary, raises concerns about the operation of BGS
- Is willing to take on ad-hoc assignments where appropriate such as chairing subgroups and task and finish groups.
- Acts as an ambassador/advocate for BGS.
- Supports, advises and challenges the BGS Director and the BGS Senior Management Board, and provides advice to NERC.
- Actively participates in the BGS evaluation and planning efforts.
- Highlights opportunities for BGS;
- Declares conflicts of interest and, subject to the Board Chair's judgement, may be required to withdraw from discussions where a potential conflict arises.
- Is willing and able to provide other ad-hoc advice and support to BGS in the development of performance policy and practice.

Person Specification

Applications are sought from individuals with a senior leadership track record in the UK public sector/central government, specifically where scientific research or innovation (including digital) formed part of organisational delivery, policy advice or decision making.

To be successful you should be able to demonstrate the following criteria:

- An appreciation of the BGS mission, role and priorities
- A clear understanding of the contribution of the research sector to society and the economy
- An ability to advise on new opportunities within the remit of the BGS
- Evidence of providing advice and leadership at a senior strategic level, with an ability to exercise judgement across a broad spectrum of policy and research issues
- An ability to tackle and reach conclusions on sophisticated policy issues



Meeting Arrangements

Availability

Members will be expected to participate in all formal Board meetings (at least four per year). Meeting arrangements will include scope for remote participation. The precise operating model will be determined by the Board Chair in conjunction with the Board. The Board Chair may call further extraordinary meetings as necessary. For meetings to be quorate there must be at least half the Non-Executive Directors in attendance in person (plus one) or virtually.

Location

Meetings are held at various UK locations including London, the BGS offices in Keyworth (near Nottingham), and the BGS office in Edinburgh.

Honorarium

An annual honorarium payment of £6,000 will be paid to Non-Executive Directors, where eligible. This is premised on an expected 10-15 days contribution per year. Travel and subsistence is paid in line with UKRI policy. Government and public officials **are not** permitted to receive an honoraria payment; travel and subsistence should normally be met by their home organisation.

How to apply



To apply, candidates should submit a CV (limited to three sides) and covering letter (limited to two sides) by email directly to SeniorRecruitment@ukri.org by **Sunday 8 October 2023 (23:59)**.

The covering letter is an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate how they meet the person specification.

Candidates are also requested to complete the additional forms on **pages 9 and 11** and submit these with their application.

Receipt of applications (covering letter and CV) will be acknowledged, and then reviewed by selection panel against the person specification. The panel will agree selected applicants for interview. At the final appointment stages, where applicants are equally as qualified on merit, the selection panel will seek to achieve a balanced membership in terms of, for example, diversity, expertise and experience.

The BGS Chair will make the proposed recommendation of appointments to the board in conjunction with the selection panel. A list will then be presented to the NERC Executive Chair for final decision. The outcome of the committee's decision will be communicated to candidates. **Final pre-appointment vetting will be undertaken before appointments are officially confirmed.**

The selection panel for the BGS Board appointments will be led by the Chair of BGS Board, Sir Keith O'Nions, who will be joined by a diverse panel which includes the BGS Director, a NERC representative, and an independent panel member.

UKRI is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all sections of society. Applications from women, those with a disability and members of minority ethnic groups who are currently under-represented at senior levels in the research and innovation community, are therefore especially encouraged to apply.

Indicative timescale for appointments is in the table below.

Activity	Timing
Deadline for applications	Sunday 8 October 2023 (23:59)
Shortlisting	Wednesday 25 October 2023
Interviews	Thursday 30 November 2023 & Friday 1 December 2023
Appointments start	1 March 2024

Conflict of Interests

Potential or Actual Conflicts of Interest

Please give details of any business or other interests or any personal connections which, if you are appointed, could present a conflict of interest holding this role. These could include financial interests or share ownership, membership of societies, activities, associations or employment of a partner or friend in the particular field in which the public body operates.

Any potential or actual conflicts of interest detailed here will not prevent you going forward to interview but may, if appropriate, be explored with you during your interview to establish how you would address the issue(s) should you be successful in your application. If you have no interests that might be actual or perceived conflicts of interest, please write “**none**”.

Privacy Notice

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) understands the importance of protecting personal information and is committed to complying with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR).

For more information on how we handle personal data please visit our webpage [Privacy notice – UKRI](#)

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Our commitment

At UKRI we believe that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed in an environment that enables them to do so. We also value diversity of thought and experience within inclusive groups, organisations and the wider community.

To maintain the UK's world-leading position in this field, we want to become even better at attracting and nurturing people from the widest possible pool and enabling them to fulfil their career ambitions.

We believe we can inspire, engage with and learn from all our people to maximise the benefits that diversity of thought and experience can provide.

Our principles

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and are committed to:

- eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity
- identifying and removing barriers to employment and progression
- building a culture that values openness, fairness and transparency.

To read more about how we are supporting equality, diversity and inclusion at UKRI please visit our webpage: [How we support EDI in the workforce – UKRI](#)

For more information on how we handle personal data please visit our webpage [Privacy notice – UKRI](#)

Check List

Please tick items below to make sure you have included/completed the following documents when sending:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. A covering letter (2 sides max) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Potential or Actual Conflicts of Interest | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. A CV (3 sides max) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Please submit your completed application:

By email: seniorrecruitment@ukri.org Specifying the role title for attention of Jodie Lewis

Terms of Reference

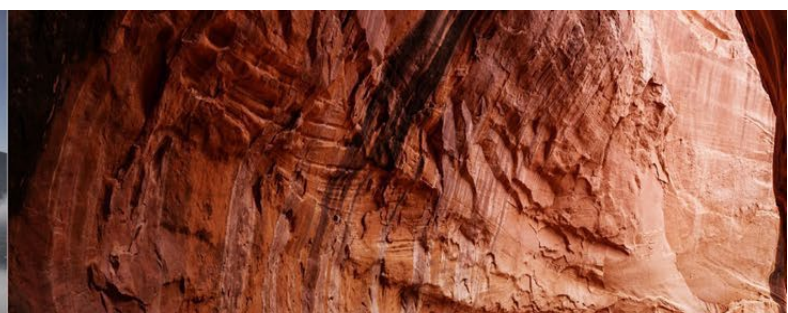
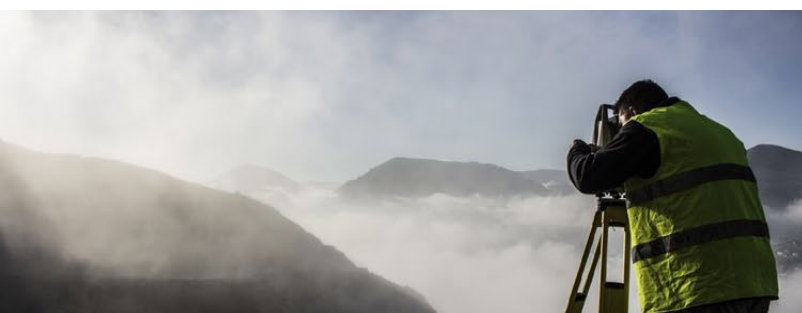
Purpose of the Board

The responsibilities of the board mirror those of a Company board and so include setting the company's strategic aims, providing the leadership to put them into effect, supervising, supporting and challenging the management of the business, and reporting to the shareholder (NERC) on their stewardship. The board's actions are subject to laws, regulations and the governance framework established by NERC/UKRI.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the BGS Board Chair and the NERC Executive Chair on 2 April 2020 defines the overarching responsibility of the board. The Terms of Reference can be found on the BGS website (<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/about-bgs/our-team/bgs-board/#info>).

Meetings and Attendance

- a) The quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of members is 50% plus one of the memberships. The quorum does not include the NERC Observer.
- b) The Board should meet sufficiently regularly to discharge its duties effectively; there will be at least four meetings in each 12-month period.
- c) Members will be expected to participate in all formal Board meetings. Meeting arrangements will include scope for remote participation. The precise model will be determined by the Chair in conjunction with the Board. The Chair may call further extraordinary meetings as necessary.
- d) The agenda for each meeting shall be agreed 4 weeks prior to each meeting through discussion between the Chair and Board Secretary, consulting other Non-Executive Directors as necessary. Papers for each Board meeting will be issued no later than 7-10 days prior to each meeting to allow members sufficient time to consider the items for discussion.
- e) The Chair shall preside at every meeting of the Board. In the event of the Chair being unable to attend a meeting (or be present for a specific item), the board will agree which of them should take on that role for the meeting.
- f) Where a vote is required on an issue, the majority view of those members present will be accepted. The NERC observer shall not participate in any vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will have the casting vote.
- g) The Board Secretary will minute the proceedings of all meetings. Draft minutes of Board meetings will be circulated to members within three weeks of the meeting following review by the Board Chair. Members will be asked to confirm the minutes at the next meeting.
- h) Each Board agenda and a summary of the meeting will be published on the BGS website for transparency purposes.



The Role and Responsibility of the Board Chair and Non-Executive Directors

The responsibility of the Board Chair

The Chair of the BGS Board will be responsible for leading the Board in order to:

- Sustain a world-class geological survey
- Maintain relationships with BGS partners
- Ensure proper governance and direction of BGS
- Enable the commercial diversification of BGS
- Support the BGS Director in meeting BGS's strategic goals

The Board Chair will report to the NERC Executive Chair.

The role and responsibilities of Non-Executive Directors

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The Seven Principles of Public Life

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way.

Consistent with the Commissioner's Code of Practice, applicants will be assessed on merit, and all candidates for public appointment will need to uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life. These will be tested as part of the selection process and the selection Panel must satisfy itself that all candidates for appointments can meet these standards; which are:

Selflessness

Holders of Public Office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

Carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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](#).

