



UK Research
and Innovation

UK Research and Innovation

Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee

Non-Executive Members

Candidate Prospectus
September 2023





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Welcome

Dear candidate,

We are delighted that you are interested in becoming a member of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

We are at one of the most important and exciting times in the history of research and innovation in the UK. The rate of discovery and technological advance is astonishing, with unprecedented opportunities to create value for society and the economy. We must seize this historic moment of national reinvention to transform our economy and our society, embedding research and innovation across them and creating opportunities and benefits for all.



UKRI is the UK's largest public funding body for science, research and innovation with a budget of £25.1 billion over the current spending review period to 2024-2025. This funding is partly allocated to its Councils to disburse across their disciplinary sectors and partly to cross-cutting programmes working across disciplinary boundaries. UKRI and its Councils also oversee a large estate of national science institutes and infrastructure from labs, research ships and planes to data centres, synchrotrons and Antarctic bases.

All of this activity is steered and overseen by the UKRI Board, which is responsible for guiding and challenging the UKRI executive across its wide and diverse delivery portfolio. As a sub-committee of the UKRI Board, members of ARAC play a critical role in shaping and challenging our policies and processes.

You will be responsible for reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment, performance information and the integrity of financial statements.

Given the breadth of this role, we are seeking candidates from a variety of backgrounds and value diversity of thought and experience within inclusive groups, organisations and the wider community. UKRI believes 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.

Once again thank you for your interest and we look forward to speaking to you at a later stage of the process.

Best wishes,

Ruwan Weerasekera (Chair – UKRI ARAC)

About UKRI

UKRI is the UK's largest public funder of research and innovation. We invest more than £8 billion annually to advance our understanding of society and the world around us and deliver benefits for society, the economy and the environment.

Our organisation comprises nine councils – the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK, the seven disciplinary Research Councils and Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England. As a UK-wide organisation we work across the four UK nations and with the devolved funding bodies and governments to understand and support different priorities that span research and innovation in different parts of the UK.

Through our Councils and the critical national capabilities provided by our centres, units and institutes, we deliver, support and champion the creativity and vibrancy of research and innovation in the UK, for the benefit of society.

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the [Department for Science, Innovation and Technology \(DSIT\)](#).

Find out more in our new 5-year strategy, [Transforming Tomorrow Together](#)

About ARAC

ARAC is one of three formal sub-committees of the UKRI Board. It is responsible for supporting the Board and Accounting Officer by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment, performance information and the integrity of financial statements.

ARAC provides oversight and independent challenge regarding the implementation of policies and processes developed by UKRI. Its main responsibilities are set out in its Terms of Reference (see page 5).

ARAC comprises 6-10 members and is chaired by a member of the UKRI board, approved by the Secretary of State for DSIT. At least one further member of the UKRI Board will also sit on the Committee. All other members of the committee will be selected to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of skills and experience required to discharge the responsibilities of the Committee. Members are normally appointed for three years; however, this sometimes varies.

About the Role

Members of ARAC play a leading role in ensuring that UKRI's accounting policies and procedures are adequate and effective for the scale and ambition of the organisation.

This rewarding yet challenging role reaches across the full breadth of UKRI and the nine councils, enabling research and development work to be propelled forward coherently.

ARAC is an advisory body and has no executive responsibilities or decision-making powers, except where explicitly delegated. However, ARAC does have the authority to:

- request the attendance of additional participants for any item or meeting.
- co-opt additional members with relevant experience and expertise.
- conduct investigations and seek any information required to discharge its role
- establish sub-committees as required
- liaise with internal and external auditors or seek independent legal/specialist advice where necessary

Key Responsibilities

In line with its [Terms of Reference](#), ARAC will operate in accordance with best practice outlined in the HMT ARAC handbook and the Corporate Governance code of good practice for Central Government departments.

Members of ARAC will review and provide advice to the Accounting Officer and UKRI Board on:

- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's accounting policies and procedures. In particular, ARAC will review and endorse the UKRI's draft Annual Accounts for approval by the Accounting Officer
- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's control environment, including corporate governance arrangements and financial and other controls. ARAC will review and endorse the UKRI's annual Governance Statement for approval by the Accounting Officer
- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's approach to budgetary management including monitoring in year movements, underspends and overspends and ensuring optimal value for money
- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's policies and arrangements around regularity and propriety
 - the scope and effectiveness of counter fraud policy and strategy
 - review whistleblowing policy
- adequacy and effectiveness of risk management systems (financial and non-financial) including consideration of:
 - the scope and effectiveness of UKRI's risk management strategy, processes and systems.
 - the content and quality of the corporate risk register and fraud risk register

- the management of key risks (and opportunities) in line with UKRI's risk appetite as set and approved by the UKRI Board.
- adequacy and effectiveness of the management of major and business critical projects, including management of risks and response to audit or gateway reports
- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's Assurance Framework as set out in the assurance map, including the comprehensiveness, reliability, and integrity of assurance available with specific focus on grants and 3rd party relationships
- adequacy and effectiveness of the provision of internal and external audit to UKRI, including the approval of the internal audit plan
- consider the adequacy of management responses to any major internal or external audit recommendations
- oversee and review assurance on UKRI transformation programmes, including the progress towards delivering efficiencies through the integration of common business services
- overview of overall operations and performance (KPIs/dashboards etc.)
- review compliance with regulatory requirements (e.g., Health & Safety, Data Protection)
- the Research Councils' Pension Scheme (RCPS) including the review of governance and risk management activities, annual accounts and internal/external audit of the scheme
- adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements to manage material litigation
- adequacy and effectiveness of UKRI's delegation arrangements and framework documents which should be reviewed annually by ARAC on behalf of the board
- any other matters at the request of the UKRI Board or Accounting Officer





Members of ARAC will also be expected to:

- work effectively within the public sector's requirements for accountability and openness as defined in the "[Seven Principles of Public Life](#)"
- seek information from the Executive to ensure they are fully briefed
- be candid with peers and with the Executive, providing constructive challenge as appropriate
- seek to establish a culture of accountability, and diversity of thinking
- quickly obtain a good understanding of the UKRI culture and structure including organisational objectives and significant issues currently facing the organisation
- declare conflicts of interest and, subject to the Chair's judgement, may be required to withdraw from discussions where a potential conflict arises.
- document review, preparation and attendance at committee meetings

Your Skills and Experience

All our members are required to have the ability to contribute to the range of activities undertaken by the Committee. Therefore, we are seeking to complement the current members by appointing candidates that can demonstrate the following experiences and attributes:

Essential Criteria

All applications must demonstrate the essential criteria below:
1. A finance specialist who is either a qualified accountant or a member of another professional finance/accountancy body
As well as demonstrating experience in one or more of the following:
2. Significant experience in the cyber space, particularly including in cyber risk and security, digital, data and technology systems
3. Experience of operating in a public sector finance and control environment, bringing an understanding of the key challenges faced by the sector
4. Proven management of financial assurance and counter fraud
5. Delivery of significant digital public services, overseeing or managing major projects from initiation, through development and to delivery, using sound evidence to inform decisions
6. Detailed understanding of SME innovation and research commercialisation
7. Experience of managing trusted research in academia/industry

Terms of Appointment

Appointment Term: An initial period of up to 3 years

Remuneration: Members will be paid an honorarium of £3,400 per annum. Government officials, civil or public, are not permitted to receive payment

Time Commitment: It is expected that members will provide 10 days' contribution per annum

Location: Members will participate in approximately five formal meetings per annum. All meetings take place in person, usually either in London or Swindon. However, from time-to-time other locations may be used to enable members to gain a greater understanding of UKRI

Additional meetings, as determined by the Chair in conjunction with the members, take place throughout the year to discuss key business requirements and to conduct "deep-dive" sessions when needed

It is essential that the successful candidate can commit the required time and attention to the role and have the full support of their employing organisation to do so.

Timescales and Selection

The selection process will include an interview which will take place in London.

The timeline for this campaign is indicative and therefore subject to change	
Advert Closes	8 th October 2023
Panel Sift	18 th October 2023
Panel Interview	8 th November 2023
Candidates Notified of Outcomes	By 17 th November 2023

The members of the Assessment Panel are:

- Ruwan Weerasekera (UKRI ARAC Chair and Non-Executive Director, UKRI Board)
- Siobhan Peters (UKRI Chief Financial Officer)
- Fiona Sheridan (Non-Executive Member, UKRI ARAC)
- John Fingleton (Non-Executive Member, UKRI ARAC and Non-Executive Director, UKRI Board)

How to Apply

Your application must be submitted by **23:59 Sunday 8th October 2023** in order for your application to be considered complete. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

Please submit your application via the UKRI Careers Portal ([click here to be taken through](#)) by **23:59 Sunday 8th October 2023**. You will need to supply:

- A curriculum vitae; and,
- A supporting statement



Your curriculum vitae and supporting statement must each be no longer than two A4 pages in length. Please ensure your documents are named as 'Surname, first initial UKRI ARAC Non-Executive Members – CV/Statement of Suitability'.

Your Statement of Suitability should provide specific information about why you believe you would be suitable for appointment into this role. Think about your knowledge, skills, experience, personal attributes, and vision for the organisation, and take full advantage of the space available. Use practical examples where possible and ensure you refer to which of the essential criteria your application is aligned to. Again, please aim for no more than 2 A4 pages.

Please note, you will only be assessed on the content of your CV and supporting statement, and not the 'experience' section of the application.

Should you have any problem with submitting your application via the UKRI Careers Portal, please do send an email to seniorrecruitment@ukri.org and a member of our team will then be in touch.

Please note, to apply via the UKRI Careers Portal you will receive a notification confirming your profile has successfully been created (if you have not previously set up an account) and a second notification confirming your application for this role has been submitted. If you do not receive the second notification confirming your application for this role has been submitted, please contact seniorrecruitment@ukri.org, so we can ensure your application has been received.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

UKRI believes that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed within an ethical and trusted working environment that enables them to do so, and that is attractive and accessible to everyone who is interested in developing their career with us.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our board and executive positions 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 also value diversity of thought and experience and are committed to creating systems that value difference so that everyone can feel welcomed, included and nurtured throughout their time with us.

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 that 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 reasonable adjustments prior to submitting your application, please contact UKRI Senior Appointments team at seniorrecruitment@ukri.org

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

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](#).