



MRC
and EPSRC

Finance Director, MRC & EPSRC
UK Research & Innovation
Candidate Prospectus
April 2025

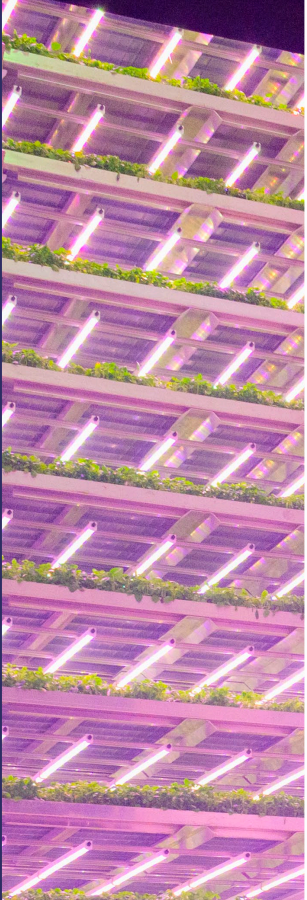
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About UKRI



UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is an independent, non-departmental public body, which invests £8bn per annum in research and innovation. We bring together nine executive council partners (the seven Research Councils, plus Innovate UK, and Research England) with a shared vision to ensure the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. UKRI also provides coordinated strategic advice to the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology on the balance of funding between research disciplines.

We employ 8,000 staff who support some of the world's most exciting and challenging research projects. We develop and operate some of the most remarkable scientific facilities in the world and work collaboratively with industry, academia and government in exciting partnerships. We are pushing the frontiers of human knowledge through blue skies research and delivering benefits for UK society and the economy through world-class research and business-led innovation.



About the role

This high-profile role offers the opportunity to provide expert financial management support to the Executive Chairs of the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). These Councils fund cutting-edge research to prevent illness, develop therapies, and improve human health (MRC), and create knowledge in engineering and physical sciences to benefit society and the economy (EPSRC). You will play a key role at the forefront of two of the nine Research Councils within UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), supporting a combined budget of over £2bn.

You will be responsible for enabling the strategic, efficient, and effective deployment of funding to meet the Councils' objectives, ensuring sound governance, and compliance with financial standards, policies, and procedures. This will involve supporting the UKRI Chief Executive as Accounting Officer, safeguarding public funds, and protecting the Councils' financial integrity.

The role requires substantial senior-level experience in accountancy or finance, along with exceptional diplomatic and influencing skills, and the ability to evaluate and communicate complex financial issues. As a member of the Councils' Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs) and an active participant in advisory Councils, you will contribute to high-level decision-making and strategy.

You will also lead and inspire a team of 21 finance professionals through a period of significant change, including the transition to a new cloud system. This will involve guiding your team and the wider finance department through the changes, driving the development of a new operating model, and finding efficiencies in processes using the new tools available.

Reporting to the UKRI Deputy Finance Director, you will be accountable to the UKRI Finance Director for ensuring effective financial management across Council finances. This includes, ensuring Councils deliver within budget, forecast accurately, and implement a robust Finance Business Partner model. As a key member of the Finance Senior Leadership Team, you will take the lead on managing key financial risks and safeguarding public money. You may also be tasked with corporate responsibilities, including serving as a subject matter expert in a specific technical area or contributing to the development of UKRI Corporate Services.

You will provide strategic financial analysis and advice to the Executive Chairs of MRC and EPSRC, helping them manage their finances effectively and drive the execution of key Council programmes.

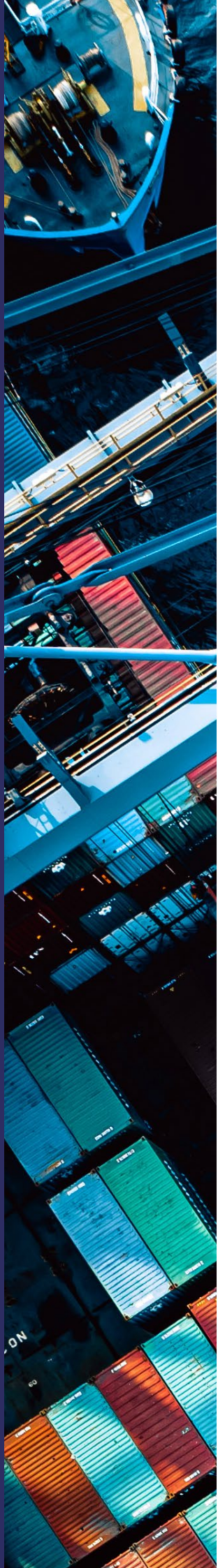
Key Accountabilities

Leadership / Teamwork / Collaboration:

- Collaborating closely with Exec Chairs and senior teams to ensure the effective management of the Council's finances and advising on complex financial issues to maximise the effectiveness of Council funding.
- Build robust and strong relationships with senior stakeholders within the Councils' communities, such as institutes and centres, and wider UKRI functions and portfolio to ensure effective stewardship of UKRI funding
- Demonstrating and modelling a personal commitment to UKRI's strategy and finance's vision, mission, values and strategic objectives
- Leading the effective delivery of a high performing Finance service, through the further development of the Finance Business Partnering function, ensuring that the high standards within the team are developed and maintained
- Leading the team, and wider finance, through the embedding of our new systems and the introduction of revised ways of working and processes that those systems enable. Building a culture of one finance, across finance teams, including role-modelling close collaboration with the strategic finance, management reporting, and financial control teams.
- Actively managing three direct reports, ensuring that PDRs, probationary meetings (where applicable) and regular one-to-one meetings take place to develop the skills and behaviours of the Finance team. Ensuring high line management standards within the whole team including active talent management, in collaboration with SLT colleagues, and succession planning.
- Playing an active role in UKRI's senior finance team, led by the UKRI Finance Director. Being a highly visible ambassador for the function, and leading cross-cutting workstreams (e.g. within the finance function's transformation programme)

Delivery / Programmes / Projects / Process:

- Providing strategic financial analysis and advice in support of Council decision making, supporting performance and continuous improvement in support of Councils' objectives, working closely with the Chief Operating Officers, Executive Chairs, and other Executive Board colleagues
- Accountable for supporting budget holders in the delivery of a financial outcome consistent with Councils' budget allocation, working closely with the Executive Team
- Developing and maintaining a long-term planning view for Councils that is fully aligned with broader UKRI and DSIT priorities

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- An aerial photograph of a port area. In the foreground, there are numerous shipping containers stacked in rows, colored in shades of blue, red, and yellow. Above the containers, there are metal structures and cranes. In the background, a ship's deck is visible with various equipment and structures. The overall scene is industrial and brightly lit.
- Senior finance representative on major programme boards; providing advice and guidance on the creation and subsequent delivery of robust, achievable project and programme business cases, including financial sign-off of cases requiring UKRI investment committee approval
 - Ensuring sound governance and compliance with financial standards, policies and procedures; ensuring MPM and AO considerations are fully taken into account, working closely with Council and UKRI Governance, Risk and Assurance teams, UKRI Financial Controller, and senior Council colleagues
 - Supporting the UKRI Finance Director, by acting as the Finance lead on a range of different organisational projects and responsibilities

Your Skills and Experience

We understand that individuals might hesitate to submit an application if they don't meet each of the criteria. Whilst there are lead criteria for this role, if you're enthusiastic about joining our organisation and meet most of the skills or experience required, we still encourage you to apply. We value diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, and believe they enhance our work environment, and we actively welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria throughout the recruitment process:

Essential:

- CCAB/CIMA Qualified Accountant with current membership (Lead Criteria)
- Proven ability to lead a significant portfolio, demonstrating strong teamwork, development, and collaboration skills (Lead Criteria)
- Excellent communication, relationship building and influencing skills, with the resilience to navigate complex challenges
- Capable of operating at a strategic level, demonstrate clear strategic vision and making a substantial contribution to corporate plans and decision making
- Experience in leading teams through change, focusing on achieving results, continuous improvement, and managing ambiguity
- Strong capability to balance the conflicting demands from multiple stakeholders whilst protecting the integrity of key financial processes and the Accounting Officer position

Desirable:

- Experience of public sector accounting, budgeting and controls (e.g. Managing public money requirements)

Terms of Appointment

Band:

UKRI-Band X

Salary:

£91,943 – £99,000 per annum (depending on skills and experience). This role also qualifies to participate in the UKRI senior bonus scheme.

Hours:

Full time

Contract Type:

Two-year fixed term appointment, or secondment, with the potential to transition to a permanent role once the future finance operating model is confirmed following ongoing system and data changes.

Location:

Swindon, Wiltshire – hybrid working available, with semi-frequent travel to London and other sites.

Timescales and Selection

The selection process will likely consist of a panel interview and main panel interview, which may include a presentation. Interviews will be held in person. It is anticipated there will be one-stage interview. Please note, dates and details are subject to change.

Process	Date
Closing date	Monday 5 May 2025
Shortlist panel meeting	w/c 12 May 2025
Panel interviews	Friday 23 May 2025

How to Apply

Please submit your application via the Careers Portal by 23:59 on Monday 5 May 2025.

You will need to supply:

- A curriculum vitae (up to two pages)
- A supporting statement / cover letter (up to two pages)

Your Statement of Suitability should provide specific information about why you believe you would be suitable for appointment for 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, failure to provide a supporting statement/cover letter or failure to address the above points may result in your application not being considered further.

You will only be assessed on the content of your CV and supporting statement, and not the 'experience' section of the application of Careers Portal.

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 or experience issues applying, 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 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.

As a Disability Confident Leader, UKRI will offer interviews to disabled candidates who meet the published minimum requirements for a job or role. Whether you choose to apply under the Disability Confident scheme or not, you can still ask us to make particular adjustments for you when attending an interview.

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

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.

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.



Standards

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 will need to uphold the standards of the UKRI Code of Conduct and conduct set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life, 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](#).



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