

The UKRI logo consists of the letters 'UKRI' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. To the right of the text is a graphic element made of several overlapping squares in shades of purple and magenta.

Innovate  
UK

Applicant Pack

# Innovate UK Managing Director

May 2026



# About UKRI

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. UKRI is the largest public funder of research and innovation in the UK, spanning all disciplines and all sectors, investing £9 billion each year on behalf of the UK government.

UKRI inspires and enables talented people to push the boundaries of discovery, support innovative businesses to grow and scale, and target solutions to national and global priorities.


UKRI connects the seven research councils, Innovate UK and Research England, and works with the funding agencies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to deliver an ambitious agenda. It does so by drawing on its great depth and breadth of expertise and the enormous diversity of its portfolio.

UKRI maintains and champions the creativity and vibrancy of disciplines and sector-specific priorities and communities. Its councils shape and deliver sectoral and domain-specific support and work together to ensure a fully joined-up research and innovation investment portfolio.

Whether through research grants, quality-related block grants from Research England, or grants and wider support for innovative businesses from Innovate UK, UKRI works with its stakeholders and partners to understand the opportunities and requirements of all the different parts of the research and innovation landscape, maintaining the health, breadth and depth of the system.

We fund people and teams in over 140 universities, 60 institutes and 3,600 companies across the UK, supporting a diverse range of research and innovation environments. Our investments in research and development (RandD) deliver benefits across the whole of the UK.

# About Innovate UK



The UK has one of the strongest research bases in the world. But we do not have as many globally scaled companies as that strength should produce. Why? What is stopping our big ideas from becoming big businesses?

The UK excels at making discoveries, generating intellectual property (IP), spinning out and starting up. Yet when it comes to scaling, too many innovative businesses fail, stall or move overseas. Innovation is in our blood. We must focus on industrialising that innovation, because fast-growing businesses are built on innovation and are what drive real economic value.

That is the gap Innovate UK exists to close.

Our vision is a UK where breakthrough ideas, from research, from labs, from anywhere in this country, can become industry leaders. Industry giants. Where those with potential, realise the potential. We are here to back the UK's most promising innovators: to give them the support, validation, connections and capital pathways that, together with others, help them to start, scale and stay in the UK.

The world is becoming more uncertain and more competitive. But it is also filled with opportunities. The UK must seize the opportunities of the transformational technologies coming through today, not only using them, but creating and shaping them. Innovation, done right, can be the UK's real strength.

That is what we are here to deliver.

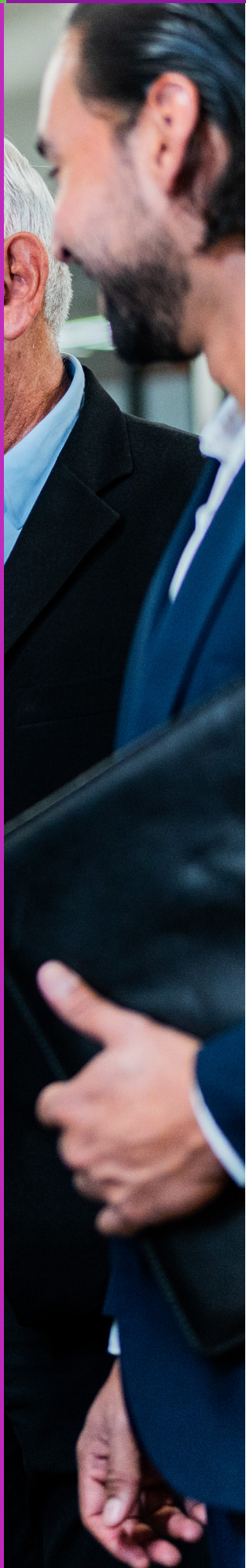
This is the start of the next chapter for Innovate UK. We are recalibrating. Read our latest strategy here: <https://www.ukri.org/publications/turning-breakthrough-ideas-into-the-uks-next-industry-giants/innovate-uk-turning-breakthrough-ideas-into-industry-giants/>

# About the role

As the most senior executive role under the Innovate UK Executive Chair, the Managing Director plays a pivotal role in shaping and delivering the UK's national innovation agenda.

This role partners with the Executive Chair to lead Innovate UK's strategic direction and funding portfolio, with full accountability for execution and performance across innovation programmes, strategic investments, and organisational leadership.

The Managing Director is a high-profile representative of Innovate UK, engaging directly with government ministers, business leaders, and national stakeholders to drive UKRI's innovation mission and the UK's global competitiveness.



# Key Responsibilities

## Strategic Leadership and Accountability

- Lead business and organisation performance, embedding a cross-team matrix structure that will deliver the new Innovate UK strategy, effective programme primacy and business-first prioritisation.
- Partner with the Executive Chair to co-lead the development and execution of Innovate UK's strategic vision in alignment with UKRI and national industrial strategy.
- Take direct accountability for the successful delivery of Innovate UK's multi-billion-pound innovation portfolio across sectors including AI, clean energy, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, creative industries and defence.
- Lead Innovate UK's operational and programme performance frameworks, ensuring targets are met across investment outcomes, economic impact, and policy objectives.
- Collaborate with senior UKRI leaders, providing leadership on business innovation across UKRI strategic priorities.

## People and Organisational Leadership

- Provide executive leadership to the entire Innovate UK organisation, with overarching responsibility for organisational effectiveness. This includes accountability for an organisational wide core budget of £1bn and oversight of an additional £800m in externally managed programmes, ensuring alignment of resources, people, and operations to strategic priorities.
- Directly manage a senior executive team, including Directors and programme leads, overseeing a talented and multidisciplinary workforce and a wider community of experts totalling more than 1,000 people across the Innovate UK group of companies.
- Champion a high-performance culture, inclusive leadership practices, and cross-functional collaboration.
- Drive organisation-wide capability development, succession planning, and talent strategy in coordination with UKRI corporate services.

# Key Responsibilities

## Influence

- External Influence at 'C' level and Policy Engagement across multidisciplinary stakeholders
- Serve as Innovate UK's lead representative to ministers, special advisers, select committees, and cross-departmental groups - shaping the innovation policy landscape.
- Act as a public ambassador for UKRI's innovation mission, leading strategic engagement with FTSE CEOs, investors, academia, and mission-driven partners.
- Influence the positioning of Innovate UK in UK-wide and global innovation ecosystems.
- Advocate for UK national policy and regulatory changes as a consequence of programme results and findings to accelerate UK high potential businesses.

## Decision-Making and Governance

- Lead strategic decision-making in politically complex environments, balancing economic, social, and scientific priorities.
- Oversee governance, risk management, and assurance processes for innovation programmes and investment decisions.
- Maintain full accountability for regulatory compliance, financial stewardship, and public value delivery.



# Your skills and experience

(S) – Assessed at shortlisting

(I) – Assessed at interview

(SandI) – Assessed at shortlisting and interview

## Essential Criteria:

- Proven track record of senior executive leadership within government innovation agencies, major research funders, or within high-profile industrial, corporate RandD, or innovation-led organisations. (SandI)
- Demonstrable authority and credibility in influencing senior stakeholders, including briefing ministers, boards, investors, and regulators, and contributing to innovation strategy and policy development at a national or international level. (SandI)
- Deep experience leading complex, cross-sector innovation initiatives with national or global impact, involving significant public and/or private investment. (SandI)
- Strategic leadership of multi-disciplinary senior teams, with a strong track record of embedding a culture of delivery, performance, and excellence within complex organisations. (SandI)
- Recognised as a leader in innovation ecosystems, including innovation funding, public-private partnerships, corporate venture or RandD investment, and the delivery of industrial or commercial strategy. (SandI)

## Desirable Experience:

- Sector expertise in one or more frontier technologies: AI, engineering biology, quantum, advanced connectivity, cybersecurity, or semiconductors.
- Experience navigating UKRI or similar governance frameworks and participating in cross-organisational initiatives.
- Postgraduate qualifications or equivalent senior executive leadership training desirable.

# Behaviours and Capabilities:

Aligned with the UK Civil Service Success Profiles for Senior Civil Service (SCS) Directors, with emphasis on:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Driving strategic vision and execution with national economic impact.
- **Communicating and Influencing:** Representing Innovate UK at the highest levels of government and industry.
- **Seeing the Big Picture:** Connecting macroeconomic, scientific, and sectoral dynamics to long-term innovation outcomes.
- **Decision-Making:** Making bold, accountable decisions in complex policy, funding, and economic landscapes.
- **Working Together:** Driving alignment across central government, devolved administrations, business, and academia.
- **Delivering at Pace:** Ensuring exceptional delivery of funding, innovation programmes, and operational excellence.

## Why this role matters

As Managing Director, you will be at the forefront of delivering the UK's innovation strategy - translating policy into impact, aligning investment with national goals, and building an agile and high-performing Innovate UK. This role is instrumental in driving economic growth, positioning the UK as a global innovation leader, and enabling UKRI's mission to deliver social, technological, and industrial impact.

# Terms of appointment

**Reporting Line:** Reports directly to the Executive Chair, Innovate UK

**Salary:** £145,000 – £155,000 per annum, plus potential discretionary performance-related bonus

**Hours:** Full Time

**Contract type:** Permanent – This role will consider a secondment or fixed term contract for the right candidate

**Location:** Field based with regular travel to London and Swindon offices, and stakeholder events

**Grade:** UKRI Band Y

**Summary of benefits: UKRI can offer the successful candidate:**

- access to Civil Service Pension Scheme
- flexible working
- 30 days annual leave + public holidays
- various everyday discounts through our dedicated provider

[Visit our dedicated benefits webpage for more info: Benefits of working at UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\)](#)

**Timescales and selection**

Closing date **23:55 Sunday 31st May 2026**

Interviews **w/c 29th June 2026**

Please note, dates and details are subject to change.

The proposed assessment panel for the role are:

Tom Adeyoola, Executive Chair of Innovate UK (Panel Chair)

Annalisa Gigante, Council Member, Innovate UK

Alexandra Jones, Director General for Science, Innovation and Growth (DSIT)

Professor Michele Dougherty, Executive Chair, STFC

# How to apply

Please submit your application via the UKRI Careers Portal by **23:55 on Sunday 31st May 2026**. You will need to supply:

- a curriculum vitae (CV)
- a supporting statement/covering letter demonstrating how you meet the essential criteria

We reserve the right to close the advert early if required.

Your CV and supporting statement must each be no longer than two A4 pages in length.

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 problems with submitting your application via the UKRI Careers Portal, please do send an email to [seniorrecruitment@ukri.org](mailto:seniorrecruitment@ukri.org) and a member of our team will be in touch.

# General information

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 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
- 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.

# General information

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

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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 friends.

### Objectivity

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When 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.

### Openness

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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.

### Leadership

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

### Integrity

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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.

### Accountability

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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.

### Honesty

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

# 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](mailto:SeniorRecruitment@ukri.org)) who will make every effort to deal with these 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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