Interim Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager

Job Description

The Role

Job title:	Research and Knowledge Exchange (KE) Manager (Interim)
Department:	Innovation and Learning Directorate
Responsible to:	Director, Innovation and Learning
Location:	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
Salary:	Grade 8: £37,099 - £44,262 per annum dependent upon experience
Hours:	35 hours per week, flexible working options considered
Term:	Temporary (three to six months); for immediate start

About the Innovation and Learning Directorate

The Directorate of Innovation and Learning at the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) is a key delivery agent of the RAU Strategy 2023-2028, and the three strategic goals of **Quality**, **Reach** and **Sustainability**. The University's vision is *'to be the UK's global university for sustainable farming and land management, enabling communities locally, nationally and across the world to thrive in harmony with nature'.* To deliver this, the Directorate of Innovation and Learning leads and brings together activities across International and Partnerships, Learning and Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange, Learning Technology, Laboratories, and Library and Archives as part of the University's Professional Services.

The Directorate of Innovation and Learning takes a leading role in manging our external and stakeholder relationships and partnerships and strives to be the professional face of the RAU. The Team works closely with Academic staff and specifically with our entrepreneurship and business support functions in the Transformation Directorate (Farm491, the Growth Hub Cirencester and Continuing Professional Development) as well as the Enterprise and Employability Team. The Directorate of Innovation and Learning also brings together expertise in support of the University's academic endeavour by the enabling of academic staff and researchers and the enrichment of the curriculum, at our UK campus and across our international partners.

Directorate of Innovation and Learning activities are fundamentally cross-cutting to the RAU, engaging with all Departments in the University as well as engaging in cross-RAU committees and groups and contributing to cross-University Projects including Innovation Village.

Role Purpose

Research activities at the RAU need to be underpinned by professional and high-quality support and services, provided and coordinated by the Innovation and Learning Directorate. Working with the Director, Innovation and Learning, the Interim Research and KE Manager will provide fundamental pre and post research grant and award support in addition to helping to enhance our professional support structures for research and KE and support our growing team of researchers. The role will aid the University to build capacity in research and KE, support governance and ensure a professional and holistic approach to research and KE activities.

The core role of the Interim Research and KE Manager will be to autonomously lead research, research consultancy, and KE support across the research project lifecycle. This will include making key decisions on the viability of grant resourcing, finances, contract drafting (often complex and multi-faceted), review and negotiation, improving the quality and delivery of research and KE support, as well as analysing and reporting to the University Executive on the extensive portfolio of research and KE activities across the University.

The Interim Research and KE Manager will engage with a broad range of external stakeholders both in the UK and overseas, focusing on research funding opportunities and engaging with networks. Internally, this will include being a source of information and guidance and opportunities, developing communications channels to ensure the visibility for our research and KE activities.

Key Responsibilities

1. Manage, support, and coordinate the delivery of **research, research consultancy and KE activities**, including:
   - Supporting the requirements for the RAU submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2029 and Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF);
   - Managing and coordinating reviews and audits (internal and external) and providing reports to the University Executive as appropriate; and
   - Supporting the establishment of the University 'Research and KE Office' as a coordinating function for all activities relating to research and KE.

2. Lead all aspects of the **research project lifecycle** (pre- and post-award) from inception to impact, making key decisions on the viability of grants, finances and contractual arrangements. This will include liaising with external funders supporting academics bidding and contracting, research project management and delivery, overseeing project reporting and budget management, to post-project development and reporting, including:
   - Establishing and maintaining a database of research grants and research consultancy projects, including baselining, analysing, auditing and reporting on such information;
   - Understanding national and international competition requirements including for large and complex projects e.g. Horizon Europe and European Research Council, working with academic leads to meet requirements;
   - Working with academic leads to take an overview of academic capacity (via workload reporting);
   - Liaising across and working closely with University research infrastructure support including laboratories, library and archive services, and IT;

- Determining finances including project budgets, monitoring spend, arranging travel, raising invoices, preparing and submitting financial claims via funder e-portals, implementing budgets and controls to meet funders terms and conditions, financial reporting, together with academic leads;
- Reviewing, drafting and negotiating contracts for projects (Grant Agreements, Grant Offer Letters, Consortium/Collaboration Agreements, subcontracts, Non-Disclosure Agreements, contract for services, novation agreements, accession agreements);
- Ensuring grant applications are compliant with both funder and University policies and achieving University sign-off;
- Management and maintenance of grants, including preparing and submitting Project Change Requests and ensuring monthly timesheets are all completed and signed off;
- Producing monthly reports of all research and consultancy projects/applications; and
- Providing access to past successful and unsuccessful projects to guide future applications.

3. Support aspects and specific projects relating to the improvement of research **people, culture and environment** activities, including monthly Bid Club; annual programme of Monthly Research Seminars; Research and KE newsletter; bi-annual 'Research Nuts and Bolts; and Research Sandpit;

4. Oversee **postgraduate research support** from application to award, including identifying opportunities for research scholarships, working across relevant University Directorates;

5. Drive and implement **improvement and quality** of research and KE activities, including:
   - leading and supporting the establishment, development and maintenance of policies, procedures, business processes and process maps, and establishing data requirements for the end-to-end delivery and management of new and existing research and KE activities, including operational and delivery requirements, due diligence and risk management e.g. policies relating to IP and commercialisation, research security, integrity and trusted research, research ethics;
   - leading and supporting systems to address the improvement of research and KE University support, including those specifically relating to the process of achieving Research Degree Awarding Powers e.g. a Research Quality Improvement Plan; and
   - supporting and optimising, through improvements in data collection and reporting and communication of opportunities, research and consultancy income e.g. Higher Education Business and Community Income (HE-BCI) data.

6. Support the **governance** of research and KE activities through the Research and Enterprise Committee and its sub-groups (Research and KE Management Group; Research Ethics Committee; Research: People, Culture and Environment Steering Group; and Research Vision, Strategy, and Research Excellence Framework (REF)) Steering Group, ensuring the effective communication (e.g. minutes, actions, planning) across such structures;

7. Lead research and KE **external communication** activities, including:
   - with the Marketing Manager, update external communication interfaces and channels relating to research and KE activities and stakeholders, including our web presence, email and social media channels, to ensure information is up to date and of the highest professional standard and easily accessible to external audiences and stakeholders;

- Engage with sector bodies and support agencies to improve and enhance research support (e.g. Association of Research Managers and Administrators); and
- proactively horizon scan for external funding opportunities relating to research and KE, disseminating these internally in a timely manner.

8. Lead the establishment of effective **internal communication** and coordination channels to become a focus and point of contact and improving support for research and KE activities across the University, including:
   - working with the internal Development Committee to consider opportunities for philanthropic and alumni support for research and KE activities;
   - develop the Research and Knowledge Exchange MS Teams sites, facilitating their use, sharing and disseminating information across the University;
   - developing a wider suite of templates, tools, research and KE information resources and guidance for managing and aiding staff engaged in research and KE activities; and
   - supporting the development of activities to build the capacity and skills of the Research and KE Team and wider University colleagues relating to research and KE activities.

9. Undertake other duties appropriate to this post as required by the Director, Innovation and Learning.

General responsibilities:

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.

- All staff are required to act in a way that safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all times. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.

- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.

- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.

- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent.

- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on University premises other than in specifically designated areas.

University Values

As a University we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known. We are:

- Collaborative - we believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

- Open-Minded - we are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.

- Resourceful - we adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.

- Responsible - individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

- Inclusive - we acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

Person Specification

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured by: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P)
Qualifications		
Educated to Degree Level or equivalent qualification	E	A
Membership of relevant Professional Association, e.g. Association of Research Administrators, Knowledge Exchange UK	D	A
Project Management qualification and/or equivalent experience	D	A, I
Knowledge, Experience and Skills		
Excellent understanding of the higher education research funding system and demonstrable experience of working in a research environment	E	A, I, P
Excellent understanding and demonstrable experience of the research project lifecycle (pre- and post-award) managing grant applications	E	A, I, P

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Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured by: Application (A), Interview (I), Presentation (P)
for large and complex grants (e.g. Horizon Europe and European Research Council)		
Excellent understanding and demonstrable experience of the knowledge exchange and impact environment relating to higher education, including experience of developing or the process of developing Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	E	A, I, P
Excellent operational, organisational, planning and management skills with proven experience of managing multiple activities in a matrix environment with excellent attention to detail and management of information	E	A, I, P
Experience of reviewing and drafting contracts and agreements, with a degree of legal acumen	E	A, I
Experience of decision-making at an operational level, demonstrating the ability to work autonomously as well as knowing when to engage peers and colleagues	E	A, I, P
Experience of driving and delivering business improvements and efficiencies to enhance quality, engagement and service delivery to assure future sustainability	E	A, I
Experience of working collaboratively, including projects and programmes and the ability to work with broad range of internal and external teams to achieve delivery	E	A, I, P
Experience of stakeholder engagement, building successful relationships and networks at all levels with both internal and external stakeholders, specifically with funding organisations e.g. UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)	E	A, I, P
Understanding and demonstrable experience of excellent customer service practices and delivery of quality services both to internal and external stakeholders	E	A, I
Excellent communication skills, oral, written and presentational, ideally with experience in writing reports and papers	E	A, I, P
Excellent level of digital literacy and ability to use standard IT platforms and applications including Microsoft Office, with the ability to learn new systems and applications	E	A

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Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or **Desirable**	**Measured by:** **Application (A),** **Interview (I),** **Presentation** **(P)**
Experience of financial or budget management (training or qualification)	E	A, I

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role which is available for immediate start, please send:

- University Application Form together with the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk) – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add additional information.

- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.

- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to jobs@rau.ac.uk stating where you saw the advert for the role.

- Informal enquiries can be made to Dr Esther Wilkinson, Director of Innovation and Learning (esther.wilkinson@rau.ac.uk).

- **Closing date**: 6 May 2025 with **Interviews on:** 16 May 2025.

- We acknowledge receipt of all applications within two working days. If you do not receive an email from us after submitting your application, please let us know by sending a new email **without any attachments** to Human.Resources@rau.ac.uk so we can check if your application has reached us.

- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are under-represented within the RAU at this level

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