



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



# APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN INNOVATION CENTRE, (NAPIC) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA



# CONTENTS



## 03 FOREWORD

## 04 ABOUT NAPIC

- OUR VISION
- OUR MISSION
- OUR CO-LEAD ORGANISATIONS
- PILLARS
- INVESTMENT

## 07 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- PERSON SPECIFICATION

## 09 HOW TO APPLY

# FOREWORD



**Launched in August 2024, the National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre (NAPIC) is a £15m UKRI investment supplemented by over £20m in contributions from the public and private sector. NAPIC aims to lead the UK's alternative protein knowledge and innovation ecosystem. NAPIC's vision is to make alternative proteins mainstream for a sustainable planet.**

The centre is co-led by the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, Imperial College London and the James Hutton Institute, in collaboration with over 150 national and international partners including academia, industry, regulatory bodies, investors, and policymakers. NAPIC is a cohesive pan-UK centre poised to revolutionise the UK's agri-food sector by harnessing the UK's world-leading science base through a co-created alternative protein strategy across the Discovery → Innovation → Commercialisation pipeline to support the transition to a sustainable, high growth, blended protein bioeconomy. NAPIC features four integrated activity streams: conducting research to address innovation challenges identified and prioritised by the alternative protein community; creating a national alternative protein knowledge base; developing the workforce of the future; and providing access to innovation facilities.

NAPIC is now searching for a CEO to lead the centre's mission on open innovation. Nominally based at the University of Leeds (flexible working location), the CEO will act as the senior Executive, Chair the Executive Management Board of NAPIC and report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) of the University of Leeds.

Working in close partnership with members of the Executive Management Board and other senior external stakeholders from industry and academia, you will play a critical role in setting the NAPIC strategic vision, priorities, values, culture, and implementing the innovation-to-commercialisation business plan; ensuring the NAPIC is fit for the future.

The successful candidate will be an experienced dynamic leader or someone who is ready to make the transition to a senior leadership position who can create a successful interface between NAPIC partners (government and industry), and build strong long-lasting links and strategic partnerships to deliver NAPIC's longer term aims and financial sustainability. You will bring a considerate, open, and persuasive approach to the development of NAPIC, ensuring strategic alignment whilst engaging and onboarding stakeholders. You will understand the impact of customer relationship management, building relationships and wider engagement are central to success in the role.

You will be a strategic thinker with a proven track record in Business or Research and Development (R&D) in the food, agriculture or allied technical sectors. You will have a robust understanding of the strategic business functions required to capture value and generate impact across the Discovery → Innovation → Commercialisation pipeline.

We encourage you to arrange a discussion with our search partner, Perrett Laver, to find out more about the opportunity.



# ABOUT NAPIC



**The National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre (NAPIC) was launched in August 2024 following funding by BBSRC and Innovate UK which is supplemented by stakeholders from the public and private sector.**

NAPIC will tackle the pain points from producer → consumers to enable translation of cutting-edge alternative protein technologies into new products and processes.

NAPIC will create a highly dynamic open innovation ecosystem that addresses the needs of present and future consumers for tasty, nutritious, safe, affordable and accessible alternative proteins products while understanding and addressing consumer concerns about ultra-processing.

NAPIC is a pan-UK centre that currently hosts over 30 researchers from the four institutions and more than 150 NAPIC partners across academia, industry, regulatory bodies, investment organisations and the third sector. NAPIC is creating a vibrant alternative protein innovation ecosystem and will produce a clear roadmap for a National Protein Strategy for the UK.

For further information please see [here](#).

## OUR VISION

To create a future where alternative proteins become mainstream for a sustainable planet.

## OUR MISSION

To be the innovation enabler for rapidly evolving alternative protein industries. We will contribute to development of healthy, acceptable, accessible, eco-friendly alternative protein based foods to support our food system by harnessing the UK's world-class science.

## OUR CO-LEAD ORGANISATIONS

NAPIC was launched by four co-lead organisations: University of Leeds (Leeds), James Hutton Institute (Dundee), University of Sheffield (Sheffield) and Imperial College London (London) led by 4 Co-Directors, Professors Anwsha Sarkar, Derek Stewart, Louise Dye, and Karen Polizzi, respectively.

## UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

The University of Leeds was founded in 1904, but our origins go back to the nineteenth century with the founding of the Leeds School of Medicine in 1831 and the Yorkshire College of Science in 1874. Today, they are one of the largest Higher Education institutions in the UK, and globally renowned for the quality of our teaching and research. The University is a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities, and part of the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), which comprises 23 research-intensive institutions spanning six continents. The strength of Leeds' academic expertise, across a wide breadth of disciplines, offers a wealth of opportunities for its students and staff, and has a real cultural, economic, societal, and environmental impact around the globe.

## ABOUT NAPIC

### JAMES HUTTON INSTITUTE

The James Hutton Institute (JHI) is a world-leading independent scientific research organisation based in Scotland but working in collaboration across the globe. The pioneering science of JHI innovates and finds solutions for the challenges posed by the climate and nature crises on the sustainability and resilience of our crops, land, natural resources and communities through the development of transformative tools, interventions, products and land management practices. The JHI's research is unique in that it is tested in labs and also at landscape scale on its farms, JHI combines the natural and socio-economic sciences and considers the connections between crops, resources and people.

### UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

With roots going back to 1828, The University of Sheffield (TUoS) is a research intensive university with a global reputation for excellence. TUoS is renowned for the excellence, impact and distinctiveness of its research-led learning and teaching. TUoS ranks in the top-100 World university rankings and is a member of the Russell Group of leading UK research universities. The University ranked top of the Russell Group in the National Student Survey 2024 and was voted University of the Year, in the Whatuni Student Choice Awards 2024. TUoS vision is to deliver life-enhancing research, innovation and education that not only transforms the lives of their graduates, but shapes the world we live in. TUoS epitomises an ambitious, inclusive, collaborative community which ranks 8th in the UK for progress towards sustainable development goals.

### IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

Imperial College London is a world-leading university for science, technology, engineering, medicine and business (STEMB). With a mission to achieve enduring excellence in research and education in science, engineering, medicine and business for the benefit of society, the College was founded in 1907 in South Kensington, bringing together nineteenth-century institutions including the Royal College of Science, the Royal School of Mines, and City and Guilds College. Today, Imperial collaborates extensively with neighbouring institutions, including the Royal College of Art and the Royal College of Music. From its location in this great cultural quarter, Imperial provides one of the world's best educations in STEM subjects for more than 20,000 students, over half of whom come from overseas, reflecting its status as the UK's most international university.

Our wider network of partners from the UK and beyond are a combination of industry, academia, regulatory bodies, and third sector organisations. For further details please see [here](#).

Partners interact with NAPIC through a range of mechanisms including:

- Collaborating on funded agile (direct/in-kind) projects and attending co-creation workshops.
- Co-delivering/attending NAPIC technical, regulatory and entrepreneurial training and workshops.
- Making their innovation facilities available to NAPIC partners.
- Hosting visits and placements.
- Contributing data and expertise to the National Knowledge Base.
- Advising NAPIC on our progress, strategic focus and innovation challenges.
- Being a NAPIC ambassador.

# ABOUT NAPIC

## PILLARS

Built on four interdisciplinary knowledge pillars covering the entire value chain of alternative protein supply, NAPIC will be the UK's growth engine to create a blended protein economy. As a true catalyst to accelerate the discovery-innovation-commercialisation roadmap of alternative protein, NAPIC will enable efficacious and safe translation of new transformative technologies unlocking the benefits of alternative proteins across sectors such as food, feed, services, equipment, and other protein technologies.

NAPIC will focus on valorising the natural kingdom to derive proteins from diverse sources (e.g. plant, algae, fungi, bacteria, aquatic plants), precision and biomass fermentation, cultivated meat and new alternative production systems (insects, novel aquaculture).

The four Pillars will enable partners to:

### PRODUCE

Produce alternative protein ingredients with optimum functional and nutritional quality, delivering techno-functional, sensorial and nutritional performance in final products. This pillar will create new value chains using advanced (bio)technological and modern biological tools, circular bio-economy approaches, selection of new/underutilised plant/fungal/algal/insect proteins, and re-purposing strategies to create the next-generation of APs.

### PROCESS

Use boundary-pushing physical, bioengineering and cellular processes that minimise carbon footprints, to discover and manufacture alternative proteins and healthy products providing economies of scale. The PROCESS pillar will employ precision fermentation, cell factories, new extraction/fractionation technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) model-guided scale-up to optimise AP processes.

### PERFORM

Control pre- and post-consumption product performance overcoming current bottlenecks in the functionality of alternative proteins. The PERFORM pillar will employ multiscale approaches, from validated in vitro, in silico, in vivo (production, animal feed trials, human nutrition studies and consumer studies incorporating machine learning (ML)) tools, to predict, define, control and demonstrate 'pre-production-to-biological' performance of AP foods and feeds.

## PEOPLE

Guide consumer dietary behaviour towards more sustainable and healthy alternative proteins products. Using behaviour change techniques and consumer insight methods (e.g. choice experiments), the PEOPLE pillar will inform commercial and educational strategies to increase acceptance of APs and shape the types of products/ingredients most likely to be accepted by future consumers, providing new training and business opportunities for SMEs and larger companies.

## INVESTMENT

NAPIC is supported by a co-investment of over £20m from partners from the public and private sectors alongside £15m funding from UK Research & Innovation's BBSRC and Innovate UK.

### UK Research and Innovation

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined annual budget in excess of £8 billion, employing over 7000 staff. UKRI works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to both deliver research and innovation and to create the best possible environment for it to flourish. UKRI comprises the seven disciplinary research councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC), 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.

### Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)

BBSRC invests in world-leading bioscience research and training on behalf of the UK public, helping society to meet major challenges, such as sustainable food production, climate change, and healthy ageing. Their vision is to advance the frontiers of biology and drive towards a healthy, prosperous and sustainable future. BBSRC supports research and training in universities and strategically funded institutes, a portfolio of vibrant, dynamic and diverse bioscience national capabilities with deep connections across the research and innovation ecosystem.

### Innovate UK

Innovate UK is the UK's national innovation agency. It supports business-led innovation in all sectors, technologies and UK regions. It helps businesses grow through the development and commercialisation of new products, processes, and services, supported by an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and easy to navigate.



# APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



## MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Working in concert with the Executive Management Board, your main duties will include:

### STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR NAPIC

- Drive the strategic vision, priorities, values, culture of NAPIC implementing the innovation-to-commercialisation business plan; ensuring that NAPIC is fit for the future.
- Deliver ambitious growth targets, including plans to grow and diversify sources of commercial income to achieve agreed NAPIC KPIs.
- Provide empowering leadership and instil an enterprise culture for NAPIC's long term financial sustainability.
- Chair the Executive Management Board (EMB) overseeing implementation of the NAPIC 5-year strategy and delivery of key strategic short term and long term decisions to drive NAPIC growth.
- Provide executive reporting of NAPIC performance against KPIs and budgets in close collaboration with the Operations Director and extended leadership teams i.e. Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) and the International Scientific Engagement Board (ISEB), including responsibility for ensuring all formal funder reporting requirements are achieved.
- Develop initiatives that align and deliver against strategic, business and economic objectives and deliver value creation for all partners.

- Drive success by championing translation of NAPIC's intellectual property portfolios for economic growth by creating seamless gateways with investors and industry development partners (e.g. spin outs, joint ventures and licensing).

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND LEAD GENERATION

- Lead NAPIC's stakeholder strategy, particularly in relation to engaging proactively with key stakeholders such as government at local, regional and national scale, industry (start-ups, SMEs and larger Corporates), research partners (incl. universities, catapults, etc.), the media, and other external stakeholders in the UK and internationally.
- Develop a Business Engagement Plan to identify, evaluate and establish new relationships with potential partners across multiple industry sectors.
- Be the inspiring ambassador and spokesperson of NAPIC ensuring wide recognition of the NAPIC brand and expertise regionally, nationally and globally.

These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

# APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

As NAPIC CEO, you will have:

- Accredited qualifications or commensurate experience in a relevant sector;
- Experience with senior organisational leadership in a large, complex and multifaceted research-intensive organisation or experience which reflects readiness to make the transition to this senior leadership position;
- Highly developed emotional intelligence, political awareness and flexibility, with the ability to lead an innovation centre in a matrix management environment;
- Experience in working as part of a senior leadership team to provide organisational stewardship, collectively ensuring all organisational services are complementary and the needs of all external and internal stakeholders are understood;
- Proven ability to translate strategic vision into reality, and to grasp complex policy, political and operational issues whilst making considered and high-level decisions;
- The ability to work collaboratively at a senior level, with evidence of successfully developing and maintaining effective working relationships with a wide range of internal and external partners and stakeholders, including relevant industry networks (food, feed, ingredients, biotech, agritech);
- Sound understanding of different pathways for translating research and the barriers to success for commercialisation;
- A detailed understanding of Intellectual Property and contractual requirements;
- Experience of delivering ambitious growth targets in a complex project with multiple stakeholders with competing interests;
- Excellent communication skills at all levels, including the ability to communicate with conviction the mission, vision and outcomes to stakeholders and be an advocate for the wider societal benefits and impact of an organisation;
- An extensive grasp of equality, diversity and inclusion principles and practices;
- Proven ability to work confidently and assertively with a range of executive and senior stakeholders, using highly developed negotiation, communication and influencing skills to achieve successful outcomes;
- Extensive experience and expert knowledge in funding, regulation, organisation and delivery of all types of research and innovation in the UK gained in the food sciences or agricultural industry and/or allied non-commercial research organisations.

You may also have:

- Experience of working as a senior executive in commercial R&D or higher education;
- Experience in attracting significant investments from private and public sector.





# HOW TO APPLY



NAPIC have engaged Perrett Laver to support the Search Committee with this appointment and further information can be downloaded from their website at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies> quoting reference **7698**. For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Lucy Roper at [lucy.roper@perrettlaver.com](mailto:lucy.roper@perrettlaver.com) or +(44)20 3928 7358.

Application is by submission of a curriculum vitae and a covering letter of application, addressing the job description and person specification, and including suitable daytime and evening telephone contact details. Completed applications should be uploaded at <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/> quoting reference **7698** by the deadline of **23.59pm GMT on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025**.

*Perrett Laver believes that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. A broad range of perspectives, backgrounds and opinions amongst our global community of colleagues is crucial in maintaining our culture of openness, intellectual curiosity, and creativity. We take an active role in supporting under-represented communities and groups in becoming better and more fairly represented in the leadership of all organisations. We also know that diverse and inclusive teams have a positive impact on our ability to identify, engage and secure candidates from these groups.*

*Our commitment to inclusion across race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, identity, and experience drives us every day – for clients, for candidate identification and in the recruitment, development and retention of colleagues.*

*To ensure inclusion on the basis of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, family circumstance, gender, gender identity, marital status, nationality, political or religious beliefs, race, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, we would like to specifically invite applications from under-represented groups.*

## PRIVACY POLICY

*Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.*

*Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, as defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Our legal basis for much of our data processing activity is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy/>.*