

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Workforce and Organisational Development Director NIHR Research Delivery Network Coordinating Centre



Salary: Grade 10 (competitive salary)

Reference: MHNCC1677

Base: Queen Street, Leeds

Reporting to: Research Delivery Network Executive Director

Closing date: 18 May 2025

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The National Institute for Health and Social Care (NIHR) funds, enables and delivers world-leading health and social care research. The work of the NIHR is directed by the Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), who is also NIHR's Chief Executive Officer, and by the Senior Management Team of DHSC's Science Research and Evidence (SRE) Directorate.

The NIHR Research Delivery Network (RDN) launched in October 2024 and supports the country's world-class research system to deliver high quality research. Through a network of 12 Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs) and a coordinating centre (the RDNCC), the RDN operates as a single organisation across England. Through a unified approach, the RDN balances regional context, expertise and leadership with national coordination and strategy involving government policymakers.

Overview of the Role

The Workforce and Organisational Development Director is responsible for the leadership, direct management and successful delivery of NIHR RDN activities in these domains:

- Inclusion
- Organisational Development, including continuous improvement
- Workforce Development, including induction, training, and career development
- Social Value

As part of the NIHR RDN national leadership team, this high-profile national role will provide visible, dynamic and effective senior leadership, direction and oversight for workforce and organisational development. You will shape and lead the development and delivery of inclusion, workforce and organisational development across the NIHR RDN. You will lead the development of a highly-skilled professional workforce and a culture of continuous improvement, shared learning, best practice and inclusivity.

You will be responsible for embedding inclusion throughout NIHR RDN culture and practice, for driving innovation, continuous improvement, shared learning and best practice, and for providing a workforce with excellence in knowledge, skills and professional practice. This role requires knowledge and skills in both strategic thinking and planning, and in the effective operational implementation of workforce and organisational development.

You will work alongside the other Directors as a high performing team to lead the organisation-wide shift in ways of working and culture that is required to ensure the

network functions as a single organisation with a shared purpose and vision across England, as well as leading your own Directorate team through the period of transformation and beyond. The NIHR RDN is multifaceted, diverse and ambitious, and you must be able to work flexibly and effectively in a developing organisation, to manage change and to support others to deliver measurable results that make the NIHR RDN vision a reality.

This national role requires substantial national travel and may require some international travel.

Main duties and responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities for all director roles

- Provide visible, dynamic and effective leadership, organisation and management of the directorate to ensure that it provides an integrated range of high quality innovative and customer focused services meeting all contractual requirements and planned commitments.
- As a member of the RDN national leadership team, you will work in partnership with Directors from regional RDN and from the RDNCC to provide collective leadership and vision, shape the development of network-wide strategies and policies, and lead on national implementation programmes and transformational change initiatives that shift the organisation towards its overall vision and aims.
- Be part of decision-making critical to moving the NIHR RDN toward its overall goals, working with DHSC and senior leadership teams across the RDN. You will deal with complex problems, often novel to the organisation, which will require innovative and multifaceted solutions to resolve.
- Build and maintain a high level of influence both within and outside the NIHR and the University of Leeds and act as an ambassador for the NIHR RDN and NIHR vision, with gravitas, and command the respect of the senior stakeholders in public sector, charity, commercial and academic organisations.
- Direct and coordinate the directorate resources, including the direct line management of staff and undertaking staff reviews to identify training and development needs and establishing how those needs will be met.
- Advance the development of a highly professional and expert directorate team, and ensure effective delivery through performance management of each senior manager against agreed objectives.
- As part of the National Leadership Team, ensure the skills and capabilities exist across the organisation to meet current and future objectives. In order to achieve this, significant knowledge and expertise across a broad range of areas will be required, as well as the ability to use this broad knowledge to achieve organisational effectiveness.
- Drive continuous improvement, effectiveness and efficiency across all directorate activities.

Duties and responsibilities specific to this role

- Lead on the delivery of the NIHR RDN strategy for workforce development.
- Lead on workforce planning, talent management and succession planning, and the delivery of learning and development for all RDNCC and RRDN staff to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills required to deliver the RDN efficiently and effectively.
- Lead on RDN initiatives and schemes, and develop and maintain strategic links with other organisations, in order to build research capacity and capability of research delivery staff from all professional backgrounds and other groups critical to optimal and effective research delivery.
- Provide and continuously improve online tools and resource to support research workforce training and career development across the health and care system.
- Lead on the delivery of NIHR RDN commitments in government strategies and initiatives related to workforce and organisational development.
- Devise and implement service improvement initiatives, and embed a culture of continuous improvement, facilitate the sharing of best practice across the RRDNs, and ensure that RDN staff have a relentless focus on, and effective delivery of, continuous improvement.
- Foster an inclusive organisational and research culture and act as an ambassador for the RDN's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the delivery of all its work.
- Lead on organisational advancement in these government Social Value Themes: Tackling Economic Inequality, Equal Opportunity, Wellbeing.

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.

Qualifications and skills

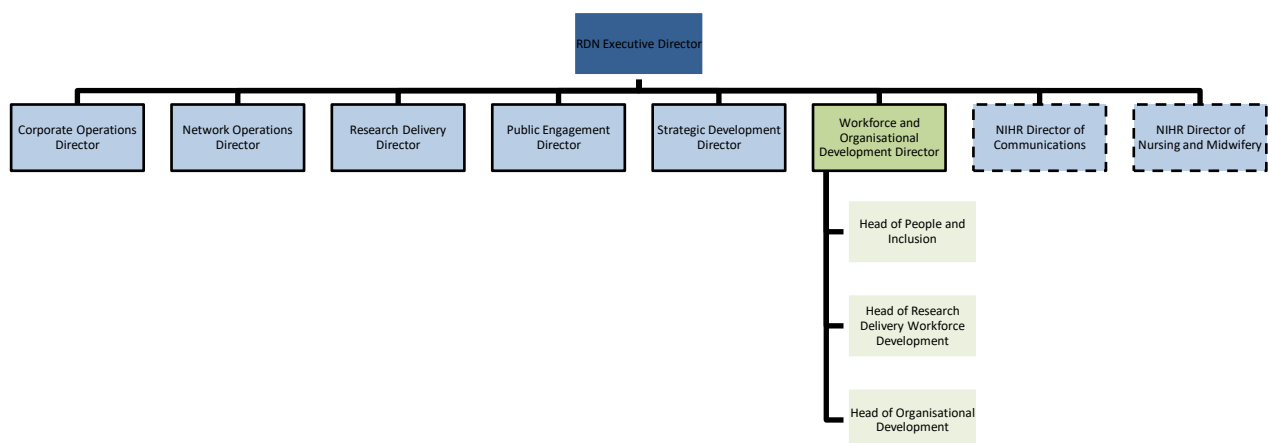
Essential requirements

- Extensive experience of senior organisational leadership in a large and multifaceted complex organisation.
- Extensive experience of leading functions relevant to this role, developing those functions collaboratively with customers and stakeholders and establishing and sustaining outstanding customer service and a high-performance management culture.
- Experience of working as part of a senior leadership team to provide organisational stewardship, collectively ensuring all organisational services are

complementary and the needs of all customers and staff are understood.

- Proven ability to translate strategic vision into reality at national scale, and to grasp complex policy, political and operational issues whilst making considered and high-level decisions.
- Comprehensive knowledge of national systems, structures and processes for supporting clinical research in NHS and non-NHS settings and of priorities and challenges in this environment.
- Proven skills in developing creative and innovative solutions, and in leading large-scale transformation programmes with evidence of motivating, supporting and coaching colleagues through substantial organisational and cultural change.
- The ability to work collaboratively, with evidence of successfully developing and maintaining effective working relationships with a wide range of internal and external partners and stakeholders.
- Highly developed negotiation, communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to articulate priorities, and effectively to engage and influence others at all levels internally and externally, including through presentations and public speaking.
- Proven general management skills, including production of proposals, business cases, plans, and reports, and proven ability in managing large budgets and expenditure control through collaboration with professional financial and business managers.
- Highly developed emotional intelligence and resilience and the ability to operate effectively in an ambiguous and uncertain environment.
- Politically astute and sensitive to the priorities and dynamics of a multifaceted complex organisation.
- Extensive experience and expert knowledge in leading organisational change, workforce development, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, in a large, complex organisation.

REPORTING LINES



How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information page. Applications should be submitted by **23.59** (UK time) on the advertised closing date.

Your application should include:

- A **statement** addressing how you believe your existing knowledge, skills and experience equip you to carry out the requirements of the role;
- Your **curriculum vitae** giving full details of qualifications and experience.

Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

Sue Hayley, PA to Professor Andrew Ustianowski, Interim RDN Executive Director

Email: sue.haley@nihr.ac.uk

Additional information

The University of Leeds is the provider of the RDNCC, working with and on behalf of DHSC. The University will be the employer for this role.

This role will be based in the RDNCC office on Queen Street, Leeds but will require substantial national travel and may require some international travel. We work in a hybrid way with an expectation that all RDNCC staff spend at least 40% of their time office based for the benefit of all staff to ensure collaboration and positive working relationships.

Inclusion

At the University of Leeds, we are committed to providing a culture of inclusion, respect and equity of opportunity that attracts, supports, and retains the best students and staff from all backgrounds. Whatever role we recruit for we are always striving to increase the diversity of our community, which each individual helps enrich and cultivate.

Information for disabled candidates

Information for disabled candidates, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found under the 'Accessibility' heading on our [How to Apply](#) information page or by getting in touch by [emailing HR via hr@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:emailing_HR_via_hr@leeds.ac.uk).

Criminal Record Information

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information page.

Working at the University of Leeds

To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.