

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Technology & Innovation Manager (National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre, NAPIC), Faculty of Environment



Salary: Grade 8 (£51,753 p.a. - £59,966 p.a.)

Reference: ENVFS1155

Fixed term until 31st May 2029

We will consider job share/flexible working arrangements

Technology & Innovation Manager, National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre (NAPIC), Faculty of Environment

Overview of the Role

Are you ready to help deliver a dynamic, internationally leading innovation and knowledge centre in alternative protein? Are you an exceptional innovation manager with the ability to translate the scientific solutions into commercial products and services? Do you have a successful track record in brokering academic/industry partnerships to drive pre-competitive research for multi-industrial benefits?

We are looking for a Technology & Innovation Manager to join the National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre (NAPIC). NAPIC was established as a £38m entity (including a £16m UKRI investment) to lead the UK's alternative protein knowledge and Innovation ecosystem, with a vision to make alternative proteins mainstream for a sustainable planet. The centre is led by the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, Imperial College London and the James Hutton Institute, in collaboration with over 220 national and international partners. This cohesive pan-UK centre is accelerating its journey to revolutionise the UK's agri-food sector by harnessing our 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 is delivering this vision through four integrated activity streams: foundational and translational research to address innovation challenges; the development of a national alternative protein knowledge base; the development of a workforce of the future; and the democratising of accessible Innovation facilities.

The Technology and Innovation Manager is the primary commercial interface for NAPIC, responsible for building a strategic partnerships ecosystem across industry, third sector, and academia. This role plays a critical hand in guiding the development of a long term sustainable business model for NAPIC, leveraging deep ecosystem insight to drive the creation of viable revenue streams. They are crucial for translating NAPIC's research into economic impact by commercialising the NAPIC influenced IP portfolio, facilitating business development opportunities, and leading engagement with policy makers.

Located at the University of Leeds this role will be a part of a dynamic Operational Management Team and reports directly to the Operations Director of NAPIC. To be



successful in this role you will be an excellent team player with a proven ability to work proactively in a fast-paced and agile start-up environment.

You will be well organised and adaptable taking a positive approach to managing a busy and complex workload. You will have excellent communication, organisational and interpersonal skills to lead the brokering of a wide range of academic-industry, and industry-industry partnerships in support of NAPIC's growing ecosystem.

You will have a proven ability to plan multiple stakeholder programmes across diverse industry sectors and you will be able to communicate new and complex information effectively, both verbally and in writing to a range of audiences. You ideally would have knowledge of alternative protein research, including across the focus area of valorising the natural kingdom (e.g. plant, algae, insects), fermentation (biomass, precision), cultivated meat and other emerging areas from food to feed to allied sectors.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Owning and driving the development and maintenance of all partnerships across the Centre's industrial, academic, and third-sector ecosystem; working with the CEO and academic co-directors to set the strategic direction of the partner ecosystem;
- Taking ownership of conducting appropriate due diligence and managing risk when exploring new partnerships. Working with the programme manager to maintain risk compliance for existing relationships and to manage contracts, including non-disclosure agreements, as appropriate;
- Holding overall ownership of the partnership and membership data within the Centre's CRM system, providing oversight of object and property definitions, and ensuring NAPIC staff compliance with proper CRM usage for robust relationship tracking;
- Owning the administration and execution of the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) and Policy & Regulation Advisory Group (PRAG), including scheduling meetings, preparing materials, taking minutes, and tracking action and conflicts;
- Leading the Centre's innovation-focused marketing strategy, actively representing NAPIC at national and international trade shows, conferences, and networking events to promote the centre and identify new commercial opportunities; as well as providing targeted content for use by the communications and outreach manager;



- Contributing to NAPIC's financial sustainability, providing insight on commercial revenue generating activities and partner needs to inform the development of a business model for the Centre. Proactively identify funding opportunities and develop grant applications to bring in funding to NAPIC;
- Line managing the Skills Development Manager, directing the design of NAPIC training initiatives guided by commercial and partner insights. Ensure alignment of the training portfolio with NAPIC's emerging business model, leveraging the opportunity to generate revenue from industry-targeted short courses;
- Leading the successful commercial conversion of NAPIC's Intellectual Property (IP) portfolio, working with business development and technology transfer teams at the co-lead institutions to leverage NAPIC influenced IP for patents, licensing, spin-outs, including leading the engagement with venture capital investors;
- Driving NAPIC's policy engagement, maintaining key stakeholder relationships with the FSA, DEFRA and GFI, and working with the CEO and academic co-directors to drive the creation of a national protein roadmap;
- Leveraging partner insights and ecosystem expertise to contribute to the scope and design of the Collaborative Programme Funding (CPF) calls and actively lead call promotion and partnership development to drive application submissions;
- Collaborating with the Impact Officer and Programme Manager to track and report on the economic outcomes and commercial success of brokered partnerships, facility access and funded projects;
- Demonstrating agility and personal flexibility, readily supporting essential centre-wide tasks to ensure overall success within the constraints of a small, startup-scale team.

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

- A PhD or equivalent background in a scientific discipline, or significant relevant industrial experience within a related field.
- A proven track record in identifying, analysing, and reporting on new trends, technologies, and market developments (ideally within the alternative protein or food-tech sectors).
- Strong experience of working with industry partners, with a clear understanding of the practical challenges and opportunities involved in commercialising research.
- A sound understanding of innovation management and the ability to navigate complex innovation ecosystems.
- Experience in coordinating and facilitating cross-interdisciplinary, multi-institution, and cross-sector collaborations.
- A track record of successful project or "activity stream" coordination within a research and innovation environment.
- Experience in developing technical data and drafting business cases to support investment or commercial decision-making.
- Proven ability to support and guide partners through the "innovation journey," acting as a reliable primary point of contact.
- A track record of contributing to the grant writing process, particularly in coordinating technical inputs and documentation for industry-linked bids (e.g., Innovate UK).
- Highly developed communication skills with the ability to build and maintain effective and productive working relationships with a broad range of commercial and academic stakeholders.
- The ability to work flexibly within a small, "startup-scale" team, taking initiative on functional tasks to ensure centre-wide success.

Desirable

- Experience in organising and facilitating high-level meetings or workshops with business stakeholders.
- An understanding of the regulatory landscape and the role of policymakers (e.g., FSA, DEFRA).



Contact information

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

Dr Andrew Lee, NAPIC Operations Director

Email: a.lee@leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, from 1 January 2021 you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen and resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, this may be your passport or status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Please note that this post may be suitable for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker visa route but first-time applicants might need to qualify for salary concessions. For more information please visit: www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa

For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Find out more about the [Faculty of Environment](#)

Find out more about the [School of Food Science and Nutrition](#)

Find out more about [Equality and Inclusion](#) in the Faculty

Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. 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.

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the School of Food Science & Nutrition we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we



welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, those who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability. »Inf

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:hr@leeds.ac.uk).

Criminal Record information

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.

