

Manager – Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture

Job Description

The Role

Job title:	Manager – Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture
Department:	School of Agriculture, Food & Environment
Responsible to:	Elizabeth Creak Chair in Rural Policy & Strategy, RAU
Location:	Royal Agricultural University (RAU), Stroud Rd, Cirencester GL7 6JS
Salary:	Grade 9; up to £49,553 DOE
Term:	Fixed term for 60 months from April 2021, full-time
Relationships with:	Elizabeth Creak Chairs at University of Reading, Harper Adams University, University of Warwick and Newcastle University; Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust

Purpose

Farming needs to change fast to meet the challenges of our time, including net zero, conserving biodiversity and food security. Accelerating and better targeting innovation is an urgent priority.

While some technologies have been widely taken up by UK farmers, the adoption of innovation is patchy. Indeed, the overall return on recent public and private investment in UK agricultural R&D has been questionable: total factor productivity growth lags behind our competitors (Heisey & Fuglie, 2018); wheat yields have flat-lined, despite better varieties, more input applications and long being a top R&D priority (Marchant et al., 2019); and the industry's environmental performance remains off-target. This is despite consistent UK public spending of over £300 million/year on agricultural R&D (ONS, 2020) and performing strongly in standard measures of scientific excellence (Scimago, 2018).

The Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture is a new initiative set up to ensure agricultural and horticultural research has an impact on the ground. Specifically, it helps funders and investors to ensure the research they are supporting is *relevant* to farmers and growers. The gap between science funding and producer priorities is a key factor that currently limits the adoption of innovation in agriculture.

The Centre is a partnership between five universities (Harper Adams, Newcastle, Reading, RAU and Warwick), founded with five years' funding from the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust. The Trust already funds chairs at each of these universities who have shared interest and expertise in agricultural innovation. The Centre coordinates, supplements and targets work by these chairs and their colleagues. The Manager will be based at the RAU and report to a management board comprising the Creak-funded chairs.

The Centre's activities will include:

- Growing a community of interest among funders and researchers who become passionate about the impact of innovation, through meetings, social media, regularly updated resources and commentary.
- Collating the extensive research evidence on innovation, uptake and adoption into policy and practice briefings, creating a practical knowledge base about effective R&D funding.
- Providing advice and support to agricultural R&D funders on effective fund, call and programme design.
- Providing advice and support to researchers and farmers on effective R&D project development.
- Developing and offering relevant consultancy, for example evaluating the impact of R&D spend on behalf of funders or industry partners.
- Working with UK and international partners to develop practical toolkits and frameworks for R&D funders, policy-makers and industry to predict rates of innovation and technology diffusion.

Key Responsibilities

- Leading the activities and development of the Centre in line with the strategic direction agreed by the management board.
- Coordinating in-kind and funded contributions by the partner universities, including from senior academics.
- Coordinating the Centre's relationships with stakeholders, including research funders, policy makers, industry bodies, civil society organisations and farmer/grower networks.
- Directly delivering core activities such as events, briefing papers, reports, social media and press releases.
- Securing further income through consultancy and fundraising to grow the Centre's impact, activities and team as needed.
- Managing a small team, subject to raising further income.
- Managing the Centre's budget.
- Monitoring and reporting on progress to the management board and funders.

Person Specification

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Qualifications:		
Educated to Masters or PhD level or equivalent	D	A
Educated to Hons degree level or equivalent	E	A
Knowledge, Experience, Skills & Qualities:		
Understanding of the strategic context of the Centre	E	A, B, C
Understanding of research & innovation systems & policy	E	A, B, C
Understanding of challenges in agriculture & horticulture	E	A, B, C
Experience of working with farmers & growers	D	A, B
Experience of co-design or co-innovation with research users	D	A, B

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Strong leadership skills	E	A, B
Strong project (including budget & time) management skills	E	A, B
Experience of line management	E	A, B
Experience of successfully developing & delivering consultancy	E	A, B
Experience of fundraising successfully for projects	E	A, B
Excellent verbal & written communication skills, with the ability to inspire and engage	E	A, B
Experience of influencing policy & industry practice	E	A, B
Experience communicating via media and social media	E	A, B
Excellent relationship & partnership building skills	E	A, B
Proven IT skills, especially MS Office	E	A

References:

- Heisey, P. W. & Fuglie, K. O. (2018). *Agricultural Research Investment and Policy Reform in High-Income Countries*. Retrieved from www.ers.usda.gov
- Marchant, B. et al. (2019). Establishing the precision and robustness of farmers' crop experiments. *Field Crops Research*, 230(October 2018), 31–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fcr.2018.10.006>
- ONS (2020) Government expenditure on science, engineering and technology.
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/governmentpublicsectorandtaxes/researchanddevelopment/expenditure/datasets/scienceengineeringandtechnologystatisticsreferencetables>
- Scimago (2018) *Country Rank for Agricultural & Biological Sciences*.
<https://www.scimagojr.com/countryrank.php?area=1100&order=ci&ord=desc>

General Terms and Conditions of Employment

- This post is a full-time appointment, offered on a fixed-term basis. It will be remunerated on the single pay spine, at Grade 9 – up to £49,553 DOE. The appointment is subject to meeting all pre-employment clearances and requirements of the Person Specification.
- All new employees undergo a period of twelve months' probation and confirmation of employment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of that probationary period.
- The nature of this post is such that it is expected that you will respond to the operational requirements of the University in order to fulfil your duties in a professional manner. You will be required to work such hours as are reasonably required to discharge your duties effectively and competently. The exact number of hours in any week will vary in accordance with institutional requirements, but will not be less than 35 hours a week.
- The University holiday year runs from January to December. The post carries an entitlement to 30 working days of paid leave during the course of the holiday year (pro rata if the appointment is made during the holiday year), in addition to Statutory Bank Holidays. There may also be discretionary days and days when the University is closed on particular dates in the interests of efficiency.

Pensions and Auto Enrolment

If you meet the criteria set out below, and are not already an active member of any of our pension schemes, the University is required to auto-enrol you into a suitable pension scheme. The criteria for auto-enrolment is:

- Age - if you are 22 or over but no more than State Pension Age
- Earnings - a minimum of £10,000 per year
- Working in the UK

The pension schemes supported by the RAU are:

AVIVA CATEGORY X - all eligible RAU employees (except teachers) are automatically enrolled

- 5% (minimum) contribution by employee and
- 3% contribution by RAU

AVIVA CATEGORY Y1 - RAU Group Pension Scheme (defined contribution) - employees are able to upgrade to this scheme before their 6 month probation.

- 6.5% (minimum) contribution by employee and
- 6.5% contribution by RAU
- life assurance is an additional benefit (two times annual salary)

Staff Benefits

We offer a range of Staff Benefits including a 35 hour working week, a generous annual leave entitlement plus bank holidays (pro rata for part time posts), pension scheme, free and guaranteed parking on campus and free shuttle bus from campus to Cirencester town centre, free gym, discounted catering facilities, free library services, employee assistance programme, occupational health and counselling services, cycle to work scheme and staff development opportunities.

Further details of the full range of staff benefits available can be found on our [website](#).

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- A University [Academic Application Form](#) together with the [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk) – Please attach your up to date CV to add additional information
- A covering letter explaining your interest and motivation for applying, along with how your experience and qualifications suit you for the role
- Details for three professional or academic 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.
- In this first instance, for an informal discussion about the position, please contact Prof Tom MacMillan (tom.macmillan@rau.ac.uk), Elizabeth Creak Chair in Rural Policy & Strategy.
- **Closing date:** 4th January 2021 with **Interviews on:** 12th January 2021.
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

General Data Protection Regulations: Applicant Privacy Notice

The Royal Agricultural University collects and processes your personal data so that it can meet its statutory and legal obligations, and when it has a legitimate interest in processing personal data before, during and after the end of the employment relationship.

The data which forms part of your job application (for example, application form, CV, references, Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, shortlisting and interview records) will be stored in a range of different places, which will include the University's HR and recruitment management systems (electronic and paper based), and in IT systems (including the University's email system). Your information may be shared internally with the HR Department and with employees who are involved in the recruitment and selection process, but only if access to your data is absolutely necessary for the performance of those roles.

The University may share your data with third parties in certain circumstances. Personal data that the University uses for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and reporting is anonymised or is collected with the express consent of applicants, which can be withdrawn at any time. Applicants are entirely free to decide whether to provide such data and there are no consequences of failing to do so.

The University takes the security of your data seriously and has internal controls in place to try to ensure that your data is not lost, accidentally destroyed, misused or disclosed, and is not accessed except by the above employees in the performance of their duties. If your application is unsuccessful, your applicant data will be destroyed 6 months following the advertised closing date of the post you have applied for. If your application is successful, your applicant data will be retained during your employment and for 6 years following your leaving date. You can access and obtain a copy of your data on request and you can ask the University to change incorrect or incomplete data.

In certain circumstances you can ask the University to stop processing your data, or you can object to the processing of your data. If you believe that the University has not complied with your data protection rights, you can complain to the Information Commissioner. Further information about your rights in accordance with Data Protection and the GDPR Regulations can be obtained from the University Data Protection Officer. A detailed Employee Privacy Notice is available to view [here](#).