

Post Details		Last Updated: 02/03/2023		
Faculty/Administrative/Service Department	Research and Innovation Services			
Job Title	Senior Impact Officer			
Job Family	Professional Services	Job Level	Level 4	
Responsible to	Interim Director of Research and Innovation Services			
Responsible for (Staff)	None			

Job Purpose Statement

To develop and embed activities that will maximise the use and benefit of the University's research. Contributing to the University's ambitions and strategy; "contributing greater societal benefit", embedding a culture of research impact and supporting any future research assessment exercises.

The post will form part of a wider network of specialist support across the University that build collaboration and engagement into research design and maximise the benefit and impact of research outside academia. With proven abilities in understanding, evidencing, and communicating the impact of academic research, the post holder will work closely with academic staff to capture, evaluate and communicate research impact.

Key Responsibilities

SUPPORTING/ENABLING

1. Provide practical and strategic support for impact strategy at individual, group, departmental, school and faculty level, accelerating outcomes of research. Working with Associate Dean (Research & Innovation) Research Directors, Heads of School.
2. Build relationships with academic and professional services staff, leading or supporting the development and delivery of immediate, short-term, and long-term impact outcomes and impact case studies – ensuring these are curated and shared as appropriate.
3. Work with colleagues in Communications and Public Affairs, Marketing, Innovation Strategy, International Partnerships, etc to champion support available across the University and to support the delivery of the University's strategy -raising awareness and understanding of research impact.
4. Keep up to date with external funding, priorities and best practice relating to research impact and routes to achieving impact, ensuring internal strategy and advice reflects this.
5. Identify training and development needs for maximising research impact, and work with colleagues in faculty and across the University to ensure these are met, including through internal, external training opportunities, events and resources.

CAPTURING and EVALUATING

6. Provide effective administrative, strategic, and logistical support for the development of impact case studies for future research assessment exercises (potentially REF 2028) Maintain an active database of potential REF impact case studies and co-ordinate reviews/assessment where necessary.
7. To use initiative and judgment to analyse and interpret data and information as evidence of the impact of research and significance of research impacts. To search and retrieve (or oversee) evidence of the impact of our research and sufficient for inclusion in impact case studies. The information is located in a wide variety of sources including but not limited to: databases; libraries; e-repositories; world wide web; commercial, industrial, public sector and charity organisations.
8. Develop expertise in recording outcomes of research. Including but not limited to Research Fish submissions, REF submissions requirements. Work with the wider Research support team to ensure internal support and associated guidance is in place to capture outcomes, and that internal and external reporting is optimised.

The external requirements and best practice for research impact is subject to frequent change, so the post holder will be expected to contribute to other activities as required.

Note: As duties and responsibilities change, the job description will be reviewed and amended in consultation with the postholder.

N.B. The above list is not exhaustive.

All staff are expected to:

- Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students in accordance with the University of Surrey Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Work to achieve the aims of our Environmental Policy and promote awareness to colleagues and students.
- Follow University/departmental policies and working practices in ensuring that no breaches of information security result from their actions.
- Ensure they are aware of and abide by all relevant University Regulations and Policies relevant to the role.
- Undertake such other duties within the scope of the post as may be requested by your Manager.
- Work supportively with colleagues, operating in a collegiate manner at all times.

Help maintain a safe working environment by:

- Attending training in Health and Safety requirements as necessary, both on appointment and as changes in duties and techniques demand.
- Following local codes of safe working practices and the University of Surrey Health and Safety Policy.

Elements of the Role

Planning and Organising

- The post holder is expected to manage a diverse workload with relative autonomy.
- Success in this role is heavily dependent on building strong, successful relationships with active research staff and nurturing impact awareness across the University, building and maintaining an extensive network of contacts.
- The post holder will be required to quickly assimilate the key technical, commercial, and societal advantages of research, utilise a network of contacts to assess the value and potential for its exploitation and creation of impact.
- For research identified as having possible commercial (or significant non-commercial) impact, the post holder will liaise with the appropriate specialists across the university, including Technology Transfer, Legal and Business Development.
- The post holder should be aware of external deadlines and the competing demands within the university. They should plan work effectively to take account of availability of academic colleagues. The post holder will be required to plan and organise tasks to meet internal and external requirements and deadlines to deliver high quality final reports and impact case studies. The post holder will think creatively to support and stimulate impact activity. Strong planning skills are needed to ensure that short terms deliverables feed into the long-term aspirations of the University, reporting of progress on REF preparations is required for various stakeholders.

Problem Solving and Decision Making

- The post holder will have the freedom to take a pro-active approach to problem solving and have the delegated authority to resolve problems using their initiative, experience and judgement. The post holder will refer complex or unprecedented issues to the Interim Director of Research and Innovation Services for guidance.
- The post holder will require the ability to research, interpret detailed or complex guidelines and decide how best to distil and communicate this to a variety of audiences.
- A key facet of the role will be the ability to understand and discuss an individual's research; offering creative and helpful advice and signposting the individual to support available within the university or externally.
- The post holder must be a confident, effective and empathetic communicator so they can work closely with academics and professional services colleagues.

Continuous Improvement

- The post holder will show initiative and resourcefulness in recommending improvements in processes, particularly with regard to the methods used to organise and manage information on impact activity and impact case studies.

- Recommendations for process improvement once developed, would be discussed with the Interim Director of Research and Innovation Services for feedback.
- They will be expected to be aware of changes in the research environment and to react accordingly, proposing creative solutions which provide the best fit for the university.
- The post holder will take a pro-active approach to inputting to policy consultations, discussions of strategic importance across the sector.
- Building relationships and influencing academics and professional services colleagues will be key to succeeding in the role.

Accountability

- The post holder is required to work proactively and without supervision and is accountable to The Interim Director of Research and Innovation Services.
- As the main point of contact for impact expertise, the post holder will be expected to give professional and accurate advice to senior management, academic and research staff.
- Decisions taken will affect the quality of impact activity and subsequently the preparation for submission to the next Research Excellence Framework (REF). Failure to capture impact activities could detrimentally affect our ability to submit a strong return to the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) leading to increased financial and reputational risk to the University.

Dimensions of the role

- Post holders will be aligned to one of Surrey's three faculties: Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Supplementary Information

- This role forms part of a network of specialists across the university, and may be managing new and exciting potential impact, where there is little policy or guidance. Therefore it is critical that the postholder utilises this network and recognises when to bring in a specialist.

Person Specification

Qualifications and Professional Memberships

Degree, HND or NVQ 4 qualified, plus a number of years practical relevant experience in similar or related roles.

OR

Substantial vocational and relevant management experience, demonstrating management ability in an appropriate professional or specialist area, and success in similar or related roles, supported by evidence of significant appropriate knowledge.

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Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge) This section contains the level of competency required to carry out the role (please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed and the Job Families Booklet).

**Essential/
Desirable**

**Level
1-3**

Experience in research, innovation, or knowledge exchange or impact evaluation

E

3

Excellent written and oral communication skills

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3

Track record of working successfully and developing strong networks with senior colleagues, external clients and contacts

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3

Ability to understand and communicate complex and specialised information to non-specialists

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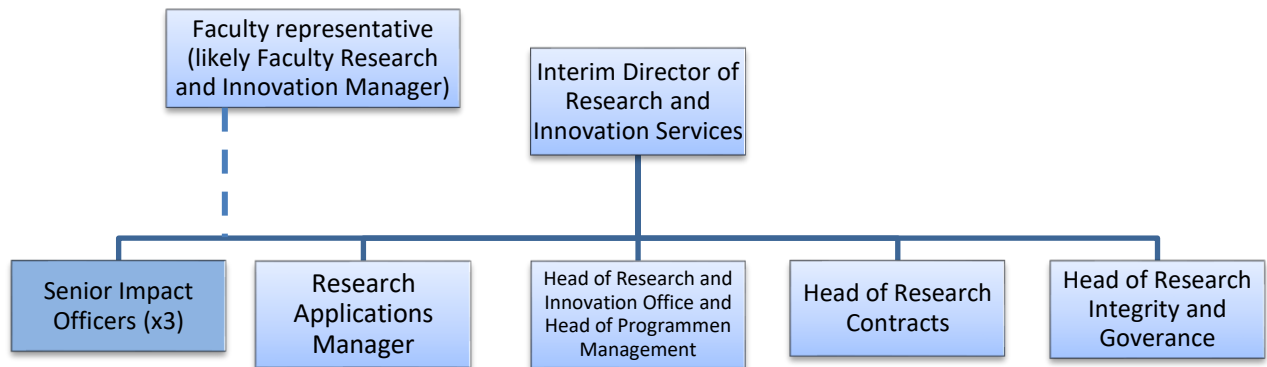
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Knowledge of the routes research can take to produce real world impact

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2

Experience of the research assessment exercise (REF)	D	n/a
Special Requirements:		Essential/ Desirable
Willingness to occasionally travel to attend external conferences and HEI events based in the UK		E
Core Competencies This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). n/a (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade.		Level 1-3
Communication		3
Adaptability / Flexibility		2
Customer/Client service and support		2
Planning and Organising		3
Continuous Improvement		2
Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills		2
Managing and Developing Performance		1
Creative and Analytical Thinking		3
Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills		3
Strategic Thinking & Leadership		2
<p>This Job Purpose reflects the core activities of the post. As the Department/Faculty and the post holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and possibly to the emphasis of the post itself. The University expects that the post holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training where necessary.</p> <p>Should significant changes to the Job Purpose become necessary, the post holder will be consulted and the changes reflected in a revised Job Purpose.</p>		
Organisational/Departmental Information & Key Relationships		
<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <p>Research and Innovation Services (RIS) comprises around 30 staff and is responsible for providing specialist support services to develop the University's research income, to ensure compliance with research governance legislation and the delivery of research projects and programmes in a timely manner. The RIS activities are closely aligned with the University's Research Strategy. RIS works collaboratively with the Faculty Research and Innovation Offices (FRIO) in each faculty.</p> <p>The post holder will develop a very diverse network of contacts that will include academic and professional services staff within the organisation.</p> <p>The post holder will be aligned to a particular faculty. Faculties have some variation in their set-up and innovation/impact-related staffing, therefore it's possible that key stakeholders will vary.</p>		



Relationships

Internal

- The post holder will have regular contact with academics, namely impact champions, Associate Deans (Research and Innovation) Heads of School, Research Directors, and REF leads.
- Colleagues in the Faculty Research and Innovation Office (FRIO)
- Innovation Strategy colleagues
- Research and Innovation services colleagues
- Research strategy colleagues
- Post-Award Finance
- Strategic Communication Business Partner
- Colleagues associated with public engagement, public affairs and Impact acceleration accounts

External

- Impact Officers (or equivalent post) at other HEIs to share best practice, build a network of contacts and engage in sector wide impact related discussion.
- Impact Managers at key sponsor organisations for strategic overview of expectations
- Key research users, organisations that support the variety of routes to impact