

Director Clean Energy IUK

The UK aims to double clean energy investment to over £30 billion annually by 2035 supported by multi-billion-pound funding initiatives. This is a huge ambition, and innovation will have a key role to play in achieving this.

This is an exciting opportunity to take on a leadership role and be part of accelerating innovation in this critical sector, while also being at the heart of delivering the UK Growth Mission.

Watch our video “Why Join Innovate UK?” [here](#).

Band: UKRI Band X
Reports to: Managing Director IUK
Location: Field based
Contract: Permanent

Innovate UK recognises the importance of work-life balance, and we will be happy to discuss any requests for flexible working arrangements.

Context:

Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency and part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Our vision is a UK where breakthrough ideas become industry leaders. We back innovative companies for national benefit, investing over £1 billion annually to accelerate business innovation for the nation.

We are partners in growing and scaling innovation—working with companies from early-stage startups to scaling businesses and industry leaders. We prioritise sectors, technologies and companies that deliver maximum economic impact: creating high-value jobs, attracting investment, and generating global opportunities aligned to the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy.

Our focus on the industrial strategy and programme primacy is structural, and leadership roles are being created, aligned to the six industrial strategy sectors where innovation has a key role in driving growth.

Clean Energy is central to the UK's Industrial Strategy. The UK aims to double clean energy investment to over £30 billion annually by 2035 supported by multi-billion pound funding initiatives. Focus areas include wind energy, nuclear fission and fusion, hydrogen, carbon capture, and heat pumps for sustainable energy future.

Given the scale of the sector, releasing the ambition for growth will directly impact on growth for the nation and Innovation is a key driver.

This is a senior leadership role with direct responsibility for ensuring that cutting-edge technologies are rapidly developed and scaled in the Clean Energy Sector.

In addition, the job holder will be a member of the IUK Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for shaping direction for the wider organisation and ensuring that we continue to make Innovate UK a great place to work.

Job Purpose:

Leading the design, delivery, and strategic oversight of innovation programmes that accelerate the UK's leadership in Clean Energy, aligned with the Industrial Strategy and sector priorities. The role drives cross-sector collaboration, business growth, and investment mobilisation across frontier industries.

The ideal candidate will bring clarity of vision and strategic thinking, with the ability to take multiple diverse inputs and create a seamless programme that creates future opportunities in areas in which the UK has competitive advantage.

The role is expected to have a team size of 10-15 FTE, with direct reports of 2-3.

Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

- Shape and deliver innovation programmes in response to the priorities established in the Clean Energy Sector Plan to build a pipeline of high-potential innovative businesses.
- Provide thought leadership on emerging technologies (e.g. AI, robotics and autonomous systems, Digital Technologies) and sectoral trends to inform programme design, policy development, and strategic investment.
- Identify, priorities and leverage breakthrough ideas from the Research Councils and beyond.
- Collaborate with government departments, devolved administrations, and industry bodies to ensure programmes are responsive to evolving policy, market needs, and Clean Energy priorities.
- Lead the full lifecycle of innovation programme delivery — from scoping and stakeholder engagement to launch, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Deliver interventions that accelerate UK Clean Energy SMEs with high potential business opportunities in scaling, accessing finance, and navigating regulatory and procurement pathways.
- Actively manage a portfolio of programmes and businesses to accelerate innovation, prioritising investments based on strategic alignment, feasibility, and impact.
- Represent IUK in the UKRI Clean Energy, defining the Innovation programmes required to reach the overall ambitions. Act in the role of deputy RO.
- Take an active role in managing the Clean Energy Catapults as part of the innovation ecosystem. Shape priorities for investment of core grant, ensuring maximum return on investment. Hold them to account for delivery of this and drive an increased focus on sharpened outputs and outcomes.
- Participate in shaping the evolution of the Catapult operating model to increase alignment and impact for the sector.
- Oversee governance, budget management, and risk mitigation across multiple concurrent programmes, ensuring delivery of milestones on time and in full.
- Build and maintain strategic relationships with government departments (e.g. DHSC, NHS, MHRA), trade associations, industry leaders, academia, investors, and regional innovation clusters.
- Convene cross-sector partnerships to co-create solutions and foster collaboration across supply chains, disciplines, and innovation communities.
- Represent Innovate UK and UKRI at high-level forums, conferences, and advisory boards, acting as a visible and credible ambassador for Clean Energy innovation. Actively manage relationships with relevant trade associations and industry representatives.
- As a member of the IUK Senior Leadership Team, you will provide strategic direction, foster cross-functional collaboration, and build a positive working culture. This role plays a critical role in ensuring that both IUK and UKRI deliver on their mission and long-term objectives
- As one of the most senior leaders in IUK and UKRI, you will be expected to role model organisational values, champion diversity and inclusion, and promote wellbeing across teams and partners.

This is not an exhaustive list, and you might be encouraged to undertake any other duties across the wider team and Industrial Strategy Programme, commensurate with the Band and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the key experience and/or training.

Person Specification:

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent in a relevant technical, scientific, or engineering discipline related to Clean Energy.

Experience

- Proven senior leadership experience in designing and delivering large-scale innovation programmes within manufacturing, engineering, or technology sectors. (S&I)
- Demonstrated ability to develop and execute strategies aligned to national or sectoral industrial priorities, translating policy into practical innovation outcomes. (S&I)
- Strong track record of engaging and influencing senior stakeholders across government, industry, academia, and the innovation ecosystem. (S&I)
- Proven experience leading multidisciplinary teams (typically 30–40 FTE) to deliver measurable impact across complex portfolios. (S&I)
- Evidence of managing multi-million-pound budgets, ensuring effective governance, cost control, and risk management. (I)
- Broad understanding of Industry 4.0 and emerging technologies (such as digital manufacturing, robotics, automation, and AI) and their application to UK industry. (S&I)
- Experience representing an organisation at senior national or international forums, providing thought leadership and advocacy for innovation. (S&I)
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusive innovation and developing diverse, high-performing teams. (I)

Desirable Criteria

- Postgraduate qualification in a relevant technical, innovation, or business discipline.
- Experience supporting SMEs to scale innovation, access finance, and commercialise new technologies.
- Understanding of frontier Clean Energy sectors (e.g., automotive, aerospace, energy systems, batteries, defence).
- Experience with regional innovation or cluster development programmes.
- Familiarity with public innovation funding mechanisms and government R&D investment models.
- Experience overseeing partnerships with Catapults, research organisations, or innovation intermediaries.

Skills:

- Ability to translate national policy priorities into actionable innovation programmes.
- Stakeholder management across government departments, industry and academia.
- Working knowledge of public sector financial management, budgeting and procurement.
- Inspirational leadership with a commitment to inclusive leadership, talent development and organisational culture

Competencies:

All team members demonstrate compatibility with and capability against our Core Competencies such as: **Thinking and Problem Solving – Stakeholder management – Communication skills – Influencing – Self-awareness/self-management – Strategic awareness – Working with others– Project management**

Travel Requirements:

Field-based: There will be a requirement to travel, mostly national, and there is some flexibility in this. Innovate UK staff make extensive use of telepresence tools for meetings to minimise unnecessary travel. In general, you will need to work in the Swindon office once a week and may have four to six nights away from home per month on average to attend conferences and events.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

Innovate UK is a diverse workforce of people. We believe that encouraging these differences and drawing the best from them will build a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met. Underpinning this is a belief that it is a fundamental right for everyone to be treated equally, with fairness, respect and dignity. We will act directly and use our influence to ensure that this right is promoted and upheld; we encourage applications from all those who meet the criteria set out in our role profiles.

Equal Opportunities:

We are an equal opportunities employer, committed to employing any person who meets the criteria for our roles. When undertaking recruitment, we may require applicants to undertake certain tests or assessments, some of which will be online, and others may be in-person. If you have a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia then you may be entitled to support with undertaking this type of assessment exercise. Where you feel that reasonable adjustments are required to support you, we ask that you advise your recruitment point of contact in a timely fashion, providing further information. Innovate UK will then review your application for adjustments and provide support as required.

UK Research and Innovation:

Innovate UK is partner organisation within UK Research and Innovation. If successful in securing the position, your employer will be UK Research and Innovation. More information can be found online <http://www.ukri.org/>.

Employee Benefits:

We offer a benefits package crafted to provide an excellent work/life balance. This includes 30 days' annual leave, 10.5 public and privilege days, flexible working hours, an exceptional defined benefit pension scheme, and access to a variety of support networks and discount schemes.

Flexible Working:

We understand the importance of work-life balance and are happy to discuss the possibility of flexible working with applicants.

Pre-employment Screening:

To enable us to hire the very best people we will conduct a comprehensive pre-employment check on successful applicants as part of the recruitment process.

The role holder will be required to have the appropriate level of security screening/vetting required for the role. UKRI reserves the right to run or re-run security clearance as required during the course of employment.

UKRI supports research in areas that include animal health, agriculture and food security, and bioscience for health which includes research on animals, genetic modification and stem cell research. Whilst you may not have direct involvement in this type of research, you should consider how this aligns with your personal values or beliefs. To enable us to hire the very best people we will conduct a full and comprehensive pre-employment check as a crucial part of the recruitment process on all individuals that are offered a position with UKRI. This will include a security check and an extreme organisations affiliation check.