University of Edinburgh

Job Description: Deputy Director of the e-Science Institute

1. Job Details
Job title: Deputy Director of the e-Science Institute
School/Support Department: School of Physics
Unit (if applicable): National e-Science Centre (NeSC) & e-Science Institute (eSI)
Line manager: Director of the e-Science Institute

2. Job Purpose
Assist the Director of eSI in developing eSI as an internationally leading Institute for stimulating e-Science research. Under the leadership of the Directors of NeSC and eSI work jointly with the other Deputy Directors to develop and sustain e-Science and the reputation of the UoE in e-Science. Provide a contribution to the coordination of UK e-Science programme.

3. Main Responsibilities

Approx. %
of time

1. Plan, develop and execute the procedures, communications, administration, management, outreach, event programmes, visitor programmes and day-to-day operations necessary to develop the international presence and reputation of eSI as a leading venue for e-Science research. 50%

2. To develop a business plan for the Institute and to manage its financial resources properly, to ensure that it delivers a programme that is cost effective and that all reporting and audit requirements are met. 10%

3. Identify staff requirements for the eSI, recruit and manage these staff, and direct them in the implementation of the above plans, including the support staff required for the joint business of eSI, NeSC, so that the eSI functions well and NeSC and its projects are able to deliver their commitments with all staff involved treated properly and deployed effectively. 10%

4. Manage all other resources (finances, facilities and space) required for the eSI, monitor and analyse the status and adequacy of these resources and help develop campaigns (including applying for research grants) to increase those resources so that the direction and programmes of eSI and the available resources are well matched and that the University and funders are satisfied. 10%

5. Represent the Directors, eSI and NeSC at University, School and external meetings to develop the eSI and NeSC’s reputation and resources. 10%

6. In conjunction with the Directors of NeSC and eSI and the other Deputy Directors take responsibility for the policy, long-term sustainability, culture, working environment, staff, resources and reputation of eSI, NeSC and their associated projects in order to develop e-Science for the UoE and the broader community. 10%

4. Planning and Organising
Plan the programme of the eSI for the next 5 years including the development and publicity of themes, visitors and events combining short-term response with a three-year rolling plan for themes and major events. This includes planning and allocating the work of the eSI team and of the financial resources available. As Executive Secretary, plan the schedule of and prepare the submissions to the Science Advisory Board (SAB) meetings, held twice yearly, 18 months ahead. As Chair, plan the workload of the academic Programme Committee (PC) which meets on a monthly cycle.
5. Problem Solving
Deal with external enquiries and requests for commitments of eSI resources deciding which are to be encouraged and developed, which need to be referred to the Director or the PC for advice, and which need to be diplomatically denied. Support and advice are obtained from the PC and the Director. Prioritise and resolve conflicts in the demands for the facilities, resources and staff time, developing policy where necessary in conjunction with the Director. Develop new programmes (e.g. the thematic programme which was at centre stage for the recent successful application for continued funding) both in response to external client requests, and also in anticipation of changing requirements. While at meetings away from NeSC respond to requests judging whether it is in the best interests of eSI and NeSC to make commitments.

6. Decision Making
Based on general directions from the Director and the SAB, the Job Holder decides on policies and methods for developing the programme at eSI and either develops the case for a decision by the PC or the Director, or, very often, directly implements the required procedures. The job holder also decides on the target and content of the external image, publicity and reports concerning the opportunities and achievements provided by eSI. Feedback and comments may be obtained from the Director, PC and SAB. The job holder identifies the need for new operational procedures, databases and IT systems. In most cases, the job holder then arranges implementation. The job holder negotiates with the directorate of the UK core e-Science programme in committing NeSC resources, for example to support the UK annual All Hands meeting.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
Maintain effective working relationships with: (1) the international community of e-Science researchers who advise, visit and run events at the eSI, (2) the relevant staff in funding councils and the DTI, (3) those in the University who can help eSI or who require formal information from eSI & NeSC, and (4) all colleagues at NeSC and eSI.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
The job holder:
- Must be experienced in management and in the development and implementation of administrative systems, including people management, financial management, IT systems and UoE systems. This would normally require at least 5-years experience in a university with advanced IT systems support.
- Must be capable of understanding and discussing research issues and requirements in any discipline and be well informed about modern, advanced, collaborative and distributed computing systems. This will require a higher degree in a scientific discipline with research experience, ideally in the area of collaborative research and of the application of computers.
- Must have at least 5 years experience of working in an academic environment and be conversant with criteria used to establish research and academic success.
- Must be able to develop and implement complex and long-term plans taking into account diverse requirements, including funding constraints, professional popular opinion, resources, targets and the advice of many experts.
- Must be able to operate independently in order to make well-judged decisions.
- Must have first-rate communication skills using all media available and be confident in making presentations in a wide range of contexts, as well as able to edit, oversee the production of and write formal reports which form part of the deliverables of the eSI.
- Must have effective interpersonal skills, for dealing with everyone, including visiting dignitaries, contributors to events, suppliers and all roles of staff within the University as well as the ability to develop a professional relationship with long term research visitors.
- Must be able to develop a publicity programme and manage high profile public events.
9. Dimensions
The initial budget for the e-Science Institute is £0.5 million per annum for 5 years. The Job Holder is co-investigator or recognised researcher on £4.1 million of research grants. There are on average 7 meetings per month, with 8000 participant-days per year. There are more than 600 participants at each annual UK e-Science All Hands Meeting. There are 35 members of the SAB from North America, Asia and Europe. There are more than 200 senior staff in the UK with whom it is necessary to maintain effective working relationships. The job holder directly line manages 4 support staff (CD2, CN3, AA2, AD3). NeSC has 37 staff.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
The work of NeSC and eSI is on a National and International stage. Expectations, demands and vulnerability to public criticism of failures are much higher than in a normal academic context. The job holder has to shoulder responsibility unsupported while the Director is away, which is for more than 50% of the time.