University of Edinburgh
Job Description

1. Job Details
Job title: Product and Services Development Workgroup Leader
Planning Unit: EDINA
Unit (if applicable): Research and Geo-data Services
Line manager: Head of Research and Geo-data Service Delivery

2. Job Purpose
- Manage and facilitate a network of contacts throughout Geographic Information (GI) industry to inform and further strategic aims of EDINA and the University of Edinburgh.
- Monitor strategic technical developments as they apply to the services provided by EDINA.
- Undertake business development with the aim of acquiring access to new datasets or enhancing technical capabilities of existing services to the UK academic community.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. Liaise, communicate and build relationships within the University and with outside bodies, to support/represent EDINA services and project activities. Act as a contact point for collaboration partners, nationally and internationally, and coordinating business activities for specialist areas. 

2. Draw up and implement project plans for new services and projects, set project goals and scope, limitations and assumptions. Schedule tasks and predict workloads throughout projects. Establish and maintain an assessment of risk, registry of changes and issues for resolution throughout the duration of projects. Allocate and manage resources. Monitor progress of tasks and report on variances to plan with respect to milestones and deliverables.

3. Identify, research, manage and deliver successful business development opportunities. Undertake pro-active liaison with management within government funded organisations, commercial data vendors and JISC. Support the process of identification, approval and progression of new projects with collaborative research potential. Prepare responses to ITTs and conduct contract negotiations for funding.

4. Monitor, research and advise senior EDINA staff and ISG staff on the implications of new initiatives, standards, specifications and technology developments.

5. Contribute to the success of projects as a whole via work on specific deliverables, contributions to discussions, meetings, problem solving, liaising with other relevant services and service providers.

6. Co-ordinate dissemination of project outcomes by producing reports, publicity material and articles in the appropriate channels, and through presentations at appropriate events.

7. Contribute to the development of the overall strategy of the Geo-data services team and EDINA as a whole.

4. Planning and Organising
The post holder operates as an individual, organising and planning their own work activities. Product and service development ideas emerge from networking and tracking activities. Opportunities for projects are refined in discussion with the Head of Geo-data Service Delivery and other managers. Proposals are formulated and submitted by the post-holder, often in conjunction with external partners. Time scales vary; from 2-5 years when assisting in strategic planning; to medium term, in frequent contributions to re-prioritisation of project work load; to short term, when dealing with work scheduling in association with project management.

5. Problem Solving
The post-holder must be innovative and demonstrate a range of problem-solving skills. From aligning strategic organisational goals with emergent business opportunities in the international GI community to recommending specific technical solutions. The main guiding principle is supporting UK higher and further education research and teaching agendas. Most problems resolved independently through experience and network of contacts without escalation to the Head of Geo-data Service Delivery.

6. Decision Making
Examples at a high level: the post-holder independently provides advice to the Scottish Executive on the GI Strategy for Scotland. After consultation with senior management, the post-holder decides on how best to position the University in respect of the GI Strategy, e.g. in correspondence with the Scottish Scientific Advisory Committee. On a more regular basis, the post-holder decides on how to respond to ITTs and allocation of project tasks.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships
Whilst the post-holder will work closely with colleagues within EDINA, particularly senior managers, his primary focus is other institutions and organisations nationally and internationally. These include public sector organisations, private companies, government agencies and standards bodies. Examples include: the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Environment Agency, the Scottish Executive, British Geological Survey, the Association for Geographic Information, the Open Geospatial Consortium.

Contacts will be regular and take place by email/phone and face-to-face meetings often with senior managers and CEOs.

Relationships are geared towards either securing the delivery of new services or types of services or forging potential collaborations on projects to further that end. The post-holder will be required to participate in national and international events, conferences, and meetings of standards bodies.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job
A postgraduate degree in an area of geospatial science with 5 years experience of working in the industry. Detailed knowledge and an appreciation of the geographic information market and industry trends, nationally and internationally, are essential. The individual will be expected to be well known within the UK Geographic Information industry. Experience of project management and of leading project teams which include external organisations. Practical knowledge of relevant technologies and international standards, contemporary software engineering practices, and a technical appreciation of emergent technologies are required. Business analytical skills in conjunction with an understanding of the needs of the UK academic user community is critical.

Personal attributes will include excellent communication, organisation and IT skills, the ability to meet deadlines, present information and to conduct effective internal and external relations.

9. Dimensions
Responsible for project contracts c. £70k (2005/6)
The post-holder will deputise for the Head of Geo-spatial Services at external events.
The post-holder is expected to manage internal and external staff in relation to any project which he is assigned to lead. It is not possible to provide a definitive list of staff under the post-holder’s supervision because project teams are transient and vary in size and composition from project to project. They may contain external consultants with first line reporting to the post-holder.

Regular presentations at conferences, occasional papers and publications.
There are significant national and international dimensions, through engagement with formal partners or collaboration with other organisations.
Represents EDINA on various national and international committees.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information
The job context is provided by the role of the organisation as a National Data Centre that services the whole UK higher and further education sectors. The job therefore has national impact and has implications beyond the local, Edinburgh context. The activities the post holder is involved in are of strategic importance and serve to provide the foundation and infrastructure that enable UK academics to undertake the primary task of teaching and research. The role is a high profile one.