UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH)

Overview

The UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) is an independent, not-for-profit research institute, carrying out excellent environmental science across water, land and air.

Our science tackles global environmental challenges, with a focus on mitigating and adapting to climate change, preventing and reducing pollution, and creating sustainable ecosystems. Our research extends from molecular biology to global climate modelling, and we undertake fieldwork across the world, from the semi-arid West African Sahel to the rainforests of Southeast Asia. Our 600+ staff operate from four UK locations.

With an annual turnover of over £55m, UKCEH is a global research leader, providing the data and insights that governments, businesses and researchers need to create a productive, resilient and healthy environment.

Headquartered in Oxfordshire and operating from four UK locations, UKCEH’s 400 scientists focus on mitigating and adapting to climate change, preventing and reducing pollution, and creating sustainable ecosystems. We provide the data and insights that governments, businesses and researchers need to create a productive, resilient and healthy environment.

In 2021 UKCEH’s researchers published over 450 peer-reviewed journal papers, we won 36 international bids across 27 countries, five UKCEH scientists were named on the Highly Cited Researchers List and three quarters of our outputs were rated world-leading or internationally excellent. UKCEH participated in the UN Climate Conference COP26 in Glasgow and we joined forces with other leading climate science institutes to launch the UK National Climate Science Partnership.

Many of UKCEH’s science infrastructures have a combination of characteristics that make them unique in the UK, and they generate some of the longest and most comprehensive environmental records anywhere in the world. UKCEH’s Annual Review and Accounts offer a comprehensive insight into the organisation and our future plans.

Separately, UKCEH’s Strategy 2025: Research and Innovation sets out the role of UKCEH in addressing three major environmental and societal challenges:

- Creating and enhancing sustainable ecosystems
- Reducing and preventing pollution
- Mitigating and building resilience to climate and environmental change
**Our story**

**Who we are**
We are the UK’s centre for excellence in environmental sciences across water, land and air.

**Our ambition**
We seek to understand our environment, how it sustains life, and the human impact on it – so that together, people and nature can prosper.

**What we do**
We generate the data and insights that researchers, businesses and governments need to solve complex environmental challenges.

**How we do it**
We believe that the best solutions are co-designed and co-delivered, so our strategic partnerships cross borders, sectors and disciplines.

**Our ethos**
Scientific curiosity, integrity and transparency are at the heart of how we work.

**Our history**
We have a long history of investigating, monitoring and modelling environmental change.

**Our impact**
Our science makes a difference – advancing our knowledge and understanding to benefit people and the planet.

**For example:**
- Our species monitoring and modelling informs UK, European and global policies on biodiversity, and helps to predict and prevent the spread of invasive species.
- Through our air pollution work, we assist policymakers and environmental agencies around the world to develop clean air strategies.
- Our water resources monitoring and modelling enables governments, businesses and communities around the world to plan for the future.
- Our research into hydro-climate risks improves forecasting of, and resilience to, extreme weather events, floods and droughts.
- Our soils and land use science helps prevent and reverse land degradation and informs international standards for greenhouse gas inventories.
- Our agricultural field studies help farmers optimise food production while protecting pollinators.
Role

The role of Chief Executive is to lead the organisation and be responsible for science strategy, financial sustainability, business plans and infrastructure-related activities to ensure the quality of UKCEH’s performance and outputs. As Chief Executive you will be accountable for setting the overall vision for our staff and stakeholders, nationally and internationally. The role involves a high level of responsibility, requiring ambition and commitment, with the proven ability to make pivotal decisions that support the long-term sustainability and success of UKCEH, its employees, its stakeholders and the environment.

As head of an internationally leading research organisation with charitable status, you will be responsible for the well-being and ongoing development of UKCEH, ultimately accountable to all our stakeholders and formally reporting to the UKCEH Board of Trustees. In leading UKCEH you will be supported by the executive leadership and the science leadership teams.

The Chief Executive will inspire, influence and collaborate, overseeing all operations, developing and approving organisational strategies, and communicating these strategies to internal and external stakeholders and partners.
Specific responsibilities:

- Chair the Executive Board and meet responsibilities as a Trustee Director of UKCEH
- Inspire staff and stakeholders to continue to address key global environmental science issues
- Design and deliver effective and sustainable business and financial plans
- Demonstrate the UKCEH core values of excellence, integrity and teamwork, ensuring behaviours and performance of the utmost quality across UKCEH’s executive leadership and its science leadership teams
- Lead strategic development in accordance with the UKCEH mission and charitable objectives, making sure short-term and long-term goals are appropriately aligned with the leadership and support of current and future scientific programmes and initiatives
- Ensure NERC (Natural Environment Research Council) funded National Capability and other funded programmes are effectively managed and delivered to the highest standard
- Communicate on behalf of UKCEH with trustees, government departments, key funders (e.g. UKRI, Defra) and other stakeholders nationally and internationally
- Take the necessary strategic and planning decisions and actions required to maximise UKCEH’s efficiency and effectiveness whilst assuring UKCEH adheres to its core mission
- Review financial and non-financial reports to identify areas for investment, revision or improvement to make certain UKCEH remains at the cutting edge for research delivery and innovation with the right levels of capital, skills and resources
- Lead continuous development through assessment of how the departments of UKCEH operate together to achieve our overall goals within agreed budgets
- Advance our positive organisational culture by actively promoting our core values, fully supporting diversity and inclusion and making sure environment, security and health and safety obligations are met and exceeded
- Represent UKCEH and the UK nationally and internationally in promoting the environmental sciences
- Fulfil legal and Charity Commission requirements
Attributes sought:

- Excellent leadership credentials, able to inspire, and be inspired by, our people
- Strategic, able to use relevant sector knowledge to define and agree vision and strategy, set annual plans & objectives and communicate these effectively for the benefit of the environment and the community protecting it
- Resilient, able to be decisive in all conditions with a demonstrable record of successful organisational leadership and delivery, and the ability to lead in a multi-site setting
- Outstanding ambassadorial skills, able to advocate internally and externally in a strong and convincing way
- The right values, committed to the mission of UKCEH as a research organisation existing to address the challenges facing the natural environment
- A track record of successful change management, able to demonstrate the ability to complete successful transformation with positive outcomes
- A demonstrable commitment to excellence and impact, continuous improvement and operating at the absolute cutting edge of science
- A good understanding of the relevant science to identify research opportunities nationally and internationally
- Financial acumen, with the ability to spend public money appropriately
- A commercial mindset, with an appetite to develop new partnerships, whilst being committed to the objectives and governance structure of a not-for-profit organisation
- Proven relationship management skills at the very highest level, able to command the respect of funders and be comfortable with government, engaging with stakeholders including departmental chief scientific advisors
- Collaborative, able to unite and develop teams, motivate staff at all levels and maximise their potential as individuals and as a collective
- An international perspective, credible in overseas settings
Terms and conditions

The headquarters of UKCEH is located in Wallingford, Oxfordshire which is the main place of work for UKCEH’s Directors. The appointee will have to travel as required to undertake their duties. UKCEH operates a flexible working policy across all our four sites (Bangor, Edinburgh, Lancaster, Wallingford).

Further information about UKCEH can be found at https://www.ceh.ac.uk.

An excellent remuneration package, reflecting the seniority of this role, will be available for the successful candidate.
**How to Apply:**

Candidates should apply for this role through our retained advisors Networked at -
https://www.networkedpeople.com/ukceh-chief-executive/

The deadline for receipt of applications is midnight on Monday 3rd October 2022.

Please send applications to ukceh@networkedpeople.com. Applications must include a full CV and a letter of application setting out your interest in the role and details of how your knowledge, skills and experience match the essential criteria being sought (no more than two pages of A4).

Informal questions regarding the post should be directed to Hamish Laing at Networked via -hamish.laing@networkedpeople.com or +44 (0)7861 329463.