



# HDRUK

Health Data Research UK



# Appointment of Chief Operating Officer

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## Foreword

Dear colleague,

I am very pleased you want to know more about becoming Chief Operating Officer of [Health Data Research UK](#) (HDR UK). This is an exciting time to join the organisation as we position ourselves at the centre of the UK's efforts to bring about game-changing improvements in the health of patients and populations by harnessing data science at scale.

The UK has world-renowned data resources and research capabilities. As the volume and complexity of health data increases, there is an extraordinary opportunity to harness advances in mathematics, statistics, and computer science to develop the medical science of tomorrow. HDR UK will enable us to remain at the forefront of this new field of health research by, for the first time anywhere in the world, incorporating the whole breadth of data science research from the laboratory to the clinic to the population, on a national scale.

The MRC Medical Informatics programme, UK Biobank, Genomics England, the Farr Institute and other informatics programmes have laid superb foundations in this area. The opportunity now is to find innovative ways of linking detailed epidemiological data with biological data at scale. This 'molecule to man approach' is imperative if we are to fully realise the UK's huge potential to solve the health challenges we face, to make new medicines, and to transform lives locally and globally.

As Chief Operating Officer, you will be at the heart of all we do, working closely with the HDR UK's Board and our partners in industry, academia, government, and the third sector. We can offer you responsibility, variety, and the chance to put your ideas into practice. In return, your task will be to ensure we are seen as a bold, responsive, and effective organisation that thinks big and enjoys the confidence of its partners.

Leadership, an entrepreneurial outlook, and the ability to influence a wide range of audiences will be the key ingredients of your success.

I hope you find the information that follows a helpful guide to who we are, how we work, and where we are going.

Please do not hesitate to contact our advisers at Syllogism to find out more. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,



Professor Andrew Morris CBE FRSE FMedSci  
Director, Health Data Research UK

## Health Data Research UK

Health Data Research UK (HDR UK) is the new national Institute for data science in health. Established in 2017, our UK team of experts develop and apply cutting-edge data science approaches to clinical, biological, genomic and other multi-dimensional health data to address the most pressing health research challenges facing the public.

**Our mission is to make game-changing improvements in the health of patients and populations through data science research and innovation.**

For the first time we are bringing together our unique nationwide data assets and specialists across academia, research and healthcare to unlock knowledge and deliver new insights from molecule to man. By undertaking research at scale, across a population of up to 65 million people, we have an unrivalled opportunity to use data to the highest ethical standards to drive breakthroughs in medical research. This unleashes the potential to improve the way we are able to prevent, detect and diagnose diseases such as cancer, heart disease and asthma.

HDR UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

### **How is HDR UK funded?**

Our founding funding partners are the Medical Research Council, the British Heart Foundation, the National Institute for Health Research, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Health and Care Research Wales, Health and Social Care Research and Development Division (Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland), Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates, and Wellcome.

Together they are jointly investing c£75 million in Health Data Research UK over the next five years. We are seeking additional investment through leveraged partnerships, to address key strategic challenges over the coming years.

### **Where is HDR UK based?**

HDR UK is headquartered at the Wellcome Trust in central London, with a strategic remit that is UK-wide and geographically distributed across a number of research organisation sites.

### **Who are its leading figures?**

**Professor Andrew Morris** was appointed HDR UK's inaugural Director in 2017. A world leader in the field of health of health informatics, Professor Morris previously directed the Farr Institute's centre in Scotland and was Chief Scientist at the Scottish Government Health Directorates.

The members of the HDR UK non-executive Board are:

- **Dr Graham Spittle CBE** (Chair) was until recently IBM's Chief Technology Officer, Europe, and Vice President, Software Group. Dr Spittle took on the role of Interim Chair HDR UK in July 2016
- **Professor Sir Alex Markham** is Director of the Leeds MRC Medical Bioinformatics Centre, Chairman of the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine and Chair of the OSCHR Health Informatics Group
- **Professor Jonathan Montgomery** is Chair of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics and Chair of the Health Research Authority
- **Professor Sir Jim Smith** was Deputy CEO and Chief of Strategy at the MRC and Director of Research at the Francis Crick Institute prior to joining Wellcome as Director of Science
- **Professor Dame Janet Thornton** was Director of EMBL-EBI until 2015 and played a key role in ELIXIR, the pan-European infrastructure for biological data
- **David Zahn** is Head of European Fixed Income at Franklin Templeton Investments, a Board member at The Health Foundation and a Trustee of the Medical Research Foundation

### **How large is the organisation?**

The HDR UK head office in central London hosts a small executive team, including the Director and Chief Operating Officer. Being a strategic rather than a direct-delivery body, the intention is that HDR UK will remain an organisation that is compact (growing to no more than 10 to 12 staff), focused, and high-functioning and that stands at the centre of a network of interlocking national and international partnerships.

### **What is the public profile of HDR UK?**

We believe the research we are supporting will bring huge benefits to society by advancing the understanding of disease and improving health and care for patients and the public. As such, an important role for the organisation is that of involving and engaging the public with its research.

### **Is collaboration limited to the UK?**

HDR UK was established to be as open and collaborative as possible both within the UK and internationally. The organisation will partner with academia, health and social care organisations and industry, helping to ensure that its research directly addresses the most important health challenges.

## Who are our partners?

Excellent health data science research is already taking place at research institutions and centres across the UK. HDR UK has been established to tackle challenges that individual research programmes cannot address and to complement and extend the research activities at individual institutions.

HDR UK will build on the partners' long-term investments in health data science skills, technology and infrastructure. Over recent years, these have led to advances in many areas such as stratified and precision medicine, using genomic medicine to improve patient healthcare delivery, and in understanding how the environment affects public health. HDR UK will now bring together, into a single independent organisation harmonised under a single Director's vision, the breadth of interdisciplinary skills, expertise and national and international partnerships needed to accelerate progress, analysing complex and diverse health related data at an unprecedented depth and scale.

HDR UK will also work closely with charities and the public as part of its commitment to public communication and engagement around the use of health-related data. Developing NHS and industry partnerships that can work within trusted frameworks will be important in realising the opportunities to transform health and healthcare.

Our Phase 1 investment involved an [open call for proposals](#) in August 2017. Applications to form collaborative sites – the foundation partners of Health Data Research UK – were received from organisations across the UK in October and an International Expert Review Group, chaired by Professor Dan Roden of Vanderbilt University, was convened to provide an independent assessment of the proposals.

On 7 February 2018, the [successful applicants were announced](#) as being:

- Cambridge: Wellcome Sanger Institute, European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI), University of Cambridge
- London: UCL, Imperial College London, King's College London, Queen Mary University of London, The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
- Midlands: University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, University of Nottingham, University of Warwick, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxford: University of Oxford
- Scotland: University of Edinburgh, University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Glasgow, University of St Andrews, University of Strathclyde
- Wales/Northern Ireland: Swansea University, Queen's University Belfast

These Sites are to receive an initial share of £30million investment to address challenging healthcare issues through use of data science.

## **What role will HDR UK play in capacity building?**

Capacity building (developing skills and capability) is a high priority for HDR UK. The organisation will establish a new paradigm for interdisciplinary research training that attracts and supports the brightest research and technical specialists to deliver a new cadre of health data scientists. HDR UK will promote the development of people with the right skills to find new ways of using data to improve human health. Those who understand data science but also have a health research perspective will be offered a clear career structure so the best minds can be attracted to the field.

HDR UK will promote measures that bridge the gap between disciplines that are currently distinct, given the huge potential to improve health by looking at data from across the spectrum - for example, bringing together bioinformaticians, who manage biological and genetic data, with health informaticians, who work with diverse clinical data.

A core strategic objective of the Institute will be the establishment of a capacity building strategy. HDR UK will work in partnership with funders and Research Organisations to support the development of new innovative career models that embrace imaginative approaches to research training and mentorship. For example, a key strategic partnership with NIHR is anticipated, to create a large high-energy cohort of career-track researchers across the UK. This will directly address current barriers to capacity building in health and biomedical informatics, and create a critical mass of high energy researchers with relevant skills and leadership expertise that meet the needs of academia, industry and public services.

HDR UK's integrative approach to skills and capacity building is expected to span postgraduate research, novel clinical and non-clinical postdoctoral fellowship opportunities, advanced fellowships and support for technology specialists. We envisage the foundation of new career paths, mentoring and professional development opportunities within a Team Science context, with our capacity building activities being fully integrated with the organisation's research, innovation and knowledge exchange activities.

We are committed to:

- developing flexible training opportunities, working with our partners to address un-met skills needs
- working closely with funders and partners to establish clear career structures, specific for this interdisciplinary discipline
- developing appropriate reward and recognition frameworks relevant to the specialist skills, collaborative approaches and outputs of our interdisciplinary trainees
- enabling career progression through intellectual leadership and independence

Our research partners will adopt, develop and assist in the delivery of this capacity building strategy.



## The role of Chief Operating Officer

The Chief Operating Officer is a pivotal figure within HDR UK and reports directly to the Director as a member of the organisation's senior executive team, with significant delegated authority and autonomy in the context of a matrix structure.

The COO is a high-profile internal leader, responsible for the effectiveness and development of operational delivery in HDR UK. The COO will also develop an external profile, building and maintaining the links critical to the delivery of the Director's research vision and the development of HDR UK at local, national and international levels, increasingly networking with other research establishments and key stakeholders such as the public, the NHS, and industry.

The COO is responsible for providing support and advice to the Director in his leadership and management of HDR UK. Working with the Director and other senior executives, the COO will demonstrate the strong leadership, organisational and operational skills required to embed the new institute during its critical establishment phase.

### Strategy and leadership

The COO will play a leading role in the running of HDR UK through providing vision, strategic direction, and leadership for the organisation's corporate services. This will include:

- Advising the Board on all aspects of corporate strategy, operations, and governance
- Developing and implementing measures to engage the public in HDR UK's research activities
- Leading the coordination of the quinquennial review processes and supporting HDR UK's Board and Partnership Committee (representing the constituent funding partners of the organisation)

### Management

The COO will lead all non-scientific operations (including human resources, finance and procurement, legal, public engagement, communication, health and safety, security and administration) and ensure the organisation provides a modern and responsive service, that staff are motivated to give of their best, and that the organisation's technology and processes meet its needs.

To deliver these, you will:

- Ensure HDR UK's operations meet best practice in all areas of activity
- Ensure the organisation's employment practices promote a supportive and collaborative high-performance culture and that promotion, recruitment, and retention policies serve HDR UK's needs
- Act as a champion for initiatives relating to staff wellbeing, mental health and equal opportunities
- Oversee HDR UK's strategic financial and resource planning and its commercialisation function

- Provide an annual operating plan for HDR UK
- Act as a HDR UK signature authority

## **Regulatory, compliance, governance and risk**

With HDR UK operating in a complex stakeholder, regulatory and governance environment in an area of research that can attract close scrutiny from government, media and the public, the COO will oversee compliance with legislation and best practice by:

- Ensuring that all activities and operations (including health and safety) are performed and reported as by the law and/or relevant regulations.
- Taking responsibility for risk management at both strategic and operational levels, managing HDR UK's assurance mechanisms, and advising the Director on risk management issues.

## **Infrastructure**

The COO will exercise overall responsibility for the technical and business infrastructure under the control of HDR UK, including the institute's property portfolio (such as Head Office location and related support services, including IT etc.), other facilities and related resources by:

- Developing strategic plans for the organisation's infrastructure, including longer-term strategic planning and options assessment
- Ensuring the IT infrastructure and other resources within HDR UK meet the organisation's scientific and operational needs
- Managing site developments and chairing major building development project boards (including acting on behalf of HDR UK within partner research organisations' developments)
- Ensuring the effective and efficient operation of the scientific research facilities

## **Relationships**

HDR UK's success will be built upon a culture of close collaboration and cooperation, within a framework of robust governance and an ethos of trust. The COO will play a central role in this by developing and maintaining strong, positive relationships with key HDR UK stakeholders including partner research organisations, UK government departments and related bodies, and the wider public, ensuring HDR UK's interests are recognised by stakeholders and are properly represented and protected.

The COO will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the development of HDR UK's communication and public engagement approaches
- Managing high level interactions with HDR UK's funding partners – in particular via the HDR UK Partnership Committee
- Line management (including the Director of Finance and the Office Manager)

The key working relationships are with:

- The Board and senior officers of HDR UK
- HDR UK Partnership Committee, including MRC Head Office and other partner funding agencies
- HDR UK Site Directors and respective host research organisations
- Representatives of commercial companies
- Third Party service providers

These working relations will encompass a varied range of activities including:

- Strategic discussions
- Contract, budget, facility, service level negotiations
- Recruitment and HR related discussions
- Regulatory and ethical discussions
- Business development
- Project management
- Collaboration management

## Person specification

We are looking for a person who enjoys leadership and responsibility, and who knows how to bring success to an organisation and to inspire those around them.

We have an open mind about the career background of the COO. What matters to us is that you are committed to promoting the cause of improving the health of patients and populations on a national scale, to learning and taking on new challenges, and developing HDR UK's national and international reputation through the quality of the work we do and the service we provide.

As COO, you will be responsible for all aspects of HDR UK's corporate activities. But you will not be alone. The ability to inspire others, to delegate where appropriate, and to enlist support within and beyond HDR UK will be key ingredients of your role. Moreover, you will be working for an organisation that is committed to helping you succeed. Through induction and mentoring, we will share with you HDR UK's collective knowledge and expertise, and equip you to deal with the key issues and personalities.

In this context, we are looking for the following experience, qualities, and skills.

### Experience

You must have a track record of success in:

- leading, at senior level, outstanding organisational performance
- strategic communication and the management of a wide circle of partnerships

- working closely with boards, advising on complex operational and strategic issues and implementing decisions effectively
- developing staff and bringing out the best in them
- business planning, staff performance management, and the handling of substantial and complex budgets.

## **Personal qualities**

Leading a small and busy team, with multiple points of accountability within and beyond HDR UK, you must have:

- the ability to lead, inspire trust, and find common ground among competing viewpoints
- creativity when it comes to building and strengthening organisational alliances and relationships
- a working style that is up-tempo, entrepreneurial, and consultative
- the ability to travel (occasionally internationally) and to work occasional evenings and weekends.

## **Knowledge and skills**

The role of COO calls for great versatility and the ability to move between different tasks: no area of the HDR UK's corporate activities is outside your responsibility. As such, you will need to demonstrate:

- outstanding project and programme management abilities
- high-level communication and analytical skills

## **Terms of appointment**

The appointment is on a permanent basis with a competitive salary, dependent on experience, of up to £130,000 a year. Additional benefits include:

- Access to the HDR UK pension scheme
- Flexible working arrangements, to be agreed
- 35 days paid holiday, inclusive of public holidays, per annum (based on 27 days and 8 days public holidays and including 3 compulsory bank holidays – 25 and 26 December and 1 January)
- Option to receive additional payments in recognition of exceptional employee contribution
- Access to Death in Service scheme (with 3x annual salary benefit level)

## Timetable

The closing date for applications is **10am GMT on Wednesday, 23 May 2018**.

The Selection Committee will assess all applications on merit according to the evidence presented and in line with the principle of free and fair competition. At all stages of the recruitment process, candidates will be offered the chance of feedback on their applications.

It is anticipated that applicants will be contacted by the **end of May** to let them know if they have been short-listed for the COO position, with final interviews likely to take place in **mid-June**.

## How to apply

HDR UK is committed to diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

To apply to be Chief Operating Officer, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the role and person specifications for the post. The Selection Committee will find it particularly helpful if you can cite examples of your achievements and skills, making clear the difference you personally made to the events you describe.

Your CV should include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. *Referees will not be approached until HDR UK has drawn up a short-list, and only with the prior permission of candidates.*

Applications should be emailed to [recruitment@sylllogism.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@sylllogism.co.uk) by the closing date of **10am GMT on Wednesday, 23 May 2018**.

## Contacts

For an informal discussion about the role and how to apply please contact Christopher Lake or Sabine Tilly of our advisors Sylllogism at [recruitment@sylllogism.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@sylllogism.co.uk) or telephone +44 (0) 20 3417 6076. All communications will be by email, so please check your inbox regularly.