

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the following position

**National Centre Associate Director  
Professional 8  
Research Ireland National Research Centre  
Dublin City University  
3 Year Fixed Term Contract**

**Dublin City University**

Dublin City University is a leading innovative European University with a mission to ‘transform lives and societies’. DCU ranks as one of the world’s Top 350 Universities, *Times Higher Education*, and is proud to be Ireland’s No. 1 Young University. The University is known for the ‘transformative student experience’ it offers, and is also recognised for its impact in addressing global challenges in collaboration with national and international stakeholders.

**Overview of the Centre**

DCU is a co-lead partner in a soon-to-be-announced multi-institutional National Research Centre in data science and AI funded by Research Ireland. The Centre represents a transformative scale of investment, uniting all 13 of Ireland’s universities and two additional research institutes to harness the collective expertise of both internationally recognised leaders and rising stars in the Irish research ecosystem. The Centre has the critical mass necessary to position the nation as a global leader in data science and AI. By bridging foundational science with applied solutions, the Centre will create a virtuous cycle of research that addresses urgent global issues, from democratic governance to personalised healthcare. Its significance lies in its "human-centered" mission: it moves beyond technical innovation to establish an ethical, transdisciplinary framework that ensures technology enhances human dignity, privacy, and democratic engagement. The Centre will drive innovation both nationally and internationally by working in partnership with both MNCs and SMES, and by developing a vibrant PhD and postdoctoral talent pipeline, whilst stimulating the creation of a new generation of deep tech start-ups.

**Role Profile**

We are seeking a National Centre Associate Director to head up the distributed operations team for the National Research Centre. The successful candidate will be responsible for coordinating the Centre’s operations and research support functions to be delivered across 15 organisations nationally for hundreds of principal investigators, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. The successful candidate will provide leadership to support the National Centre Director to deliver on the strategic vision of the Centre, whilst also providing financial and operational oversight. The successful candidate will have multiple direct reports across the Centre at a national level and will harness their significant leadership experience in people management, influencing, negotiation, business development and strategy development to steer the Centre to realise its full potential. They will directly report to the National Centre Director.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

The duties and responsibilities of the position include, but are not restricted to, the following:

## **Strategy & Culture**

- Formulating the strategic vision of the National Centre and the plan for the implementation of that vision and leading the delivery of the strategy and its associated targets.
- Developing a shared culture and ethos across the National Centre, ensuring that all members remain aligned to the principle of an inclusive, distributed national centre, whereby the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.
- Ensure that the appropriate national processes and policies are in place, so that all members feel supported and valued, with opportunities for personal and career development.

## **Operations Management & Reporting**

- Overseeing the delivery of the National Centre's metrics and KPIs, including those defined internally by the National Centre Director and those mandated by Research Ireland.
- Reporting on the performance and efficiency of the operations of the National Centre to the Centre's Executive Management Committee, Research Ireland and various government departments, as required.
- Ensuring that all staff are professionally recruited, managed, and developed through processes directly aligned to the Centre's EDI action plan.
- Producing and delivering various reports as may be required, in a timely manner with high quality content, including leading on the production of annual progress reports, multi-annual review reports, response to reviewer recommendations, and other various reports that may be required by the National Centre Director, such as periodic independent impact assessments for the Centre, for example.
- Ensuring the systems are in place to ensure excellence in the delivery of all elements of the National Centre's research outputs, including the requirements for high-quality trained staff at postgraduate and postdoctoral levels, a commitment to open science, engaged research, and EDI across the Centre nationally and to minimising the carbon footprint of the Centre.
- Managing all internal and external National Centre performance reviews, ensuring a successful outcome.
- Putting in place Standard Operating Procedures for the running of the Centre nationally ensuring consistency in operations and research supports across 15 different organisations.
- Ensuring that all procedures and policies put in place are in line with Government, and institutional requirements and best practice in that area.

## **Stakeholder and Partner Relations**

- Working with fellow members of the Centre Executive Management Committee to ensure the National Centre is positioned as a key R&D partner of choice, and that the national and international profile of the Centre is developed.
- Building relationships with key partners to support the diversification of funding to support the Centre into the future.

## **Financial Management**

- Working with all operational teams across relevant institutions and taking responsibility for the Centre's budget, operations, and management nationally, including the delivery of agreed objectives, metrics and accomplishments; and ensuring that the Centre operates on a sound financial basis.

- Put in place the necessary governance structures and processes to ensure timely, transparent financial reporting and oversight robust enough to satisfy the most demanding internal and external audit requirements.
- Responsibility for the continuous drive to diversify the National Centre's funding model.

### **Education and Public Engagement (EPE)/Engaged Research/EDI**

- Oversee the development of the National Centre's strategy for engaged research, implementation of the Centre's national EDI Action Plan and activities to promote the work of the Centre's researchers.

### **Communications**

- Working with the National Communications Manager and with the National Centre members and their institutions, to develop strategies for nationally disseminating information regarding the Centre's programmes, activities and successes ensuring high visibility of these communications for the public, industry partners, funding agencies, government departments, etc .

### **IP and Commercialisation**

- Support the member institutions to ensure that all spin out and commercialisation activities are in line with Government and Institutional policies and procedures.

*Please note: Regular travel nationally and some international travel will be required for this role.*

### **Qualifications and Experience**

#### **Essential**

- Primary Degree or equivalent (NFQ Level 7) in a relevant discipline.
- Minimum of 10 years' senior management/leadership experience in a complex fast paced research or commercial environment, with the demonstrated capacity to lead and inspire high performers.
- Outstanding track record of achievement in collaborative research with industry in a field relevant to the Centre.
- Demonstrable success in raising and managing significant funding across public and private sources (national and international).
- Strong experience in the development and implementation of a successful strategy/strategies.
- Strong understanding of the needs of academic institutions, enterprise and government agencies, and the ability to engage productively with all of these.
- Excellent communication skills, with a strong capacity for public engagement.
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, with an understanding of how these can be progressed in a centre.
- Strong leadership skills to oversee future development.

## Desirable

- Previous experience working in Higher Education.
- Previous experience working within a research centre.
- Experience of working with government agencies at a senior level on the development of research strategy and policy.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Irish and/or International RTD environment and landscape.

## Essential Training

The postholder will be required to undertake the following essential compliance training:

- Orientation
- Health & Safety
- Data Protection (GDPR)
- Cyber Security Awareness
- Performance Review & Development (PRD)
- AI Literacy

Other training may need to be undertaken when required.

## Salary Scale:

Professional 8 - €98,783 - €130,203 (refer to [DCU Payscale](#) for the applicable payscale for the role.)

Appointment will be commensurate with qualifications and experience and in line with current Government pay policy.

**Closing date:** Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

## Additional Information

Please note this role does not meet criteria for a Critical Skills permit as stipulated by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

## Remote Working Policy

DCU operates a Remote Working Policy. Employees may be approved for up to 2 days of remote working per week (or an appropriate pro-rata amount for those part time). Any remote working arrangement will be reflective of the predominant on-campus working environment and the core University value of 'Student Focused'.

Employees will be based on campus for the majority of their working week to ensure a sustained on campus engagement and experience. The terms of the [remote working policy](#) will apply.

**For more information on DCU and benefits, please visit [Why work at DCU?](#)**

## Informal Enquiries in relation to this role should be directed to:

Professor Noel O'Connor, Full Professor, School of Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Computing, Dublin City University.

Email: [noel.oconnor@dcu.ie](mailto:noel.oconnor@dcu.ie)

Please do not send applications to this email address, instead apply as described below.

## Application Procedure:

Please submit your application through the online system. In order to be considered for the role to which you are applying for, you must upload:

- 1) Curriculum Vitae
- 2) Cover Letter
- 3) Completed application form (blank forms can be downloaded from the bottom of the Vacancy).

Please note, if all items are not uploaded, the application will be deemed incomplete, and will not be processed.

***Dublin City University is an equal opportunities employer.***

***In line with the Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015, the University is committed to equality of treatment for all those who engage with its recruitment, selection and appointment processes.***

***The University's Athena Swan Silver Award signifies the University's commitment to promoting gender equality and addressing any gender pay gaps. Information on a range of university policies aimed at creating a supportive and flexible work environment are available in the [DCU Policy Starter Packs](#)***

