

Director of the Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research into Ageing (MICRA)

1. Context

The Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research into Ageing (MICRA) is one of The University of Manchester's flagship interdisciplinary Research Institutes. See: <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/research/structure/interdisciplinary/>.

Spanning all three of the University's Faculties (Biology, Medicine and Health; Humanities; and Science and Engineering) MICRA serves as the focal point for Manchester-based researchers in the field of ageing and ageing societies, bringing together a community of more than 300 researchers, with a portfolio of more than 60 projects and programmes.

Capitalizing on this major investment, the University seeks to appoint an outstanding individual as MICRA's next Director. Applicants from any cognate discipline within the University will be considered, the particular academic background of the appointee being less important than the overriding requirements of being able to demonstrate world-class standing in a pertinent area of research combined with proven capabilities as a research leader.

The post provides a major opportunity to develop MICRA as a world-leading institute for the study of ageing and ageing societies. The Director will possess the necessary skills and insights to realize this potential, developing with colleagues, as appropriate, the strategic vision and operational capabilities necessary to ensure that research into ageing and ageing societies across the University the as a whole enhances its reputation, both nationally and internationally.

The Director of MICRA will report to the relevant Head of School and Faculty Vice-Dean for Research. The post holder will ensure the strategic development of the Institute against key performance measures, as agreed at its annual strategy board, ensuring its robust contribution to the University's research strategy and goals.

It is timely at this point in MICRA's development, and the changing external policy and funding environment that MICRA reviews and refreshes its strategy, including the composition and structure of its academic management group. The incoming Director will lead this activity, working closely with the Vice-Deans for Research, and report the recommendations to the UMRI Board.

2. Purpose

MICRA's vision is to advance multidisciplinary research on all aspects of ageing, from the individual level through to societal challenges and policy. Reflecting the breadth of its vision, MICRA's current portfolio of work covers a wide range of topics, from biomedicine through to the study of inequalities in later life. The five-fold mission of MICRA is as follows:

- Establish the University as a world-leading interdisciplinary centre for research into ageing and ageing societies.
- Develop a global presence by working with national and international partners in seeking solutions to the economic, health and social challenges associated with population ageing.
- Advance knowledge about ageing through the pursuit of high quality research.
- Transform public and professional perceptions of ageing.
- Engage with older people and organisations working on their behalf.

MICRA works with a variety of agencies in Greater Manchester, including Manchester City

Council and Public Health England. MICRA has also developed research and knowledge transfer partnerships with UK organisations working on behalf of older people, notably Age UK and the International Longevity Centre-UK. It has established partnerships with leading international research centres concerned with the study of ageing populations in Europe, North America and Australia.

The Director will:

- Champion the provision of internationally recognised excellence in research and research impact, and related activities, ensuring a stimulating, and well-managed environment.
- Contribute to the delivery of the University's Research & Knowledge Exchange, Business Engagement, Social Responsibility and Internationalisation strategies.
- Be responsible for the effective and efficient use of allocated Institute resources to maximise the Institute's contribution to the University's overall strategy, with a particular emphasis on delivering world class research.
- Be responsible for the career development and performance management of academic staff within the Institute, and ensuring alignment with the University's Strategic Plan.
- Be accountable for the effective governance and management of the Institute, including adherence to academic, research and university principles and policies.
- Act as an Ambassador for the Institute and University raising their profile externally including internationally and embodying good practice.
- Be accountable for ensuring the overall delivery of the Institute's strategic plan, and the reporting requirements for an institute within the UMRI governance framework.

3. Main Duties & Responsibilities

- Provide academic leadership to advance the research objectives of MICRA.
- Develop and implement the Institute's research strategy, and associated financial and operational plans.
- Develop cross-faculty interdisciplinary collaborations in the University with research groups working in the field of ageing and ageing societies.
- Sustain and develop the academic and professional standing of the Institute, locally, nationally and internationally in collaboration with other HEIs, research organisations, and other relevant bodies.
- Ensure that the Institute capitalises upon funding initiatives from UK research funding agencies and, where appropriate, through business engagement and international sources.
- Oversee and promote the Institute's academic programme of conferences, seminars and lectures.
- Maintain a research culture where staff can flourish.
- Support the production of internationally excellent research by academic colleagues at all career stages.
- To work with the Institute Manager to ensure the effective governance of MICRA including preparing the necessary documentation (annual report, business plan) required as part of the governance and annual reporting process to the University of Manchester Research Institute (UMRI) Board.
- Represent the Institute on relevant UoM and external bodies.
- Maintain and develop a personal professorial load within a relevant disciplinary area.

4. Person specification

Qualifications

- Academic – Professorial, Reader or Senior Lecturer
- PhD or demonstrable evidence of equivalent training and experience

Experience and knowledge

Essential

- A leading researcher in a relevant field of ageing and ageing societies, evidenced by:
 - A strong publication record;
 - A successful and sustained record of winning high levels of research income;
 - An assortment of accolades commensurate with the required level of research achievement (e.g. learned society roles and/or fellowships, keynote speeches, major prizes, editorships and/or editorial board membership of leading journals and/or major books and book series in the field).
- Extensive successful and sustained research leadership and team building, for example, as evidenced by one or more of the following:
 - Development and delivery of successful cross-disciplinary research initiatives and collaboration;
 - A history of successful training and development of early career researchers, including PhD students;
 - Proven experience of managing staff and their performance;
 - A demonstrable track record in strategic and operational management and planning;
 - Experience of financial planning and resource allocation;
 - Experience of leading and successfully initiating and implementing change.
- Well-developed understanding of the priorities, operation and strategy of relevant funding bodies, as evidenced by a track record of funded research.
- A thorough awareness of research ethics issues.
- Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills with an ability to influence, negotiate and network at a senior level, both internally and with external bodies/partners, including the media.

Enabling skills

Demonstrable ability to:

- Identify, create and articulate a coherent academic vision for the Institute.
- Deliver successful outcomes from large scale, long term thematic research.
- Combine and integrate the skills and expertise of highly motivated staff into multi-disciplinary teams, developing and building upon existing collaborations as well as creating/facilitating new opportunities.

- Engage a range of internal and external stakeholders to collaborate in identifying problems and appropriate solutions, within agreed timetables and budgets.
- Manage resources to ensure that the Institute is self-sustaining from income generated from research funders and other sources.
- Represent and promote the Institute in the UK and internationally to the research community, the public and other stakeholders.
- Operate effectively within a collegiate environment within the framework of the School, the Faculty and the University.

Desirable

- Experience in engaging with practitioner, community and impact-orientated research.
- Experienced in encouraging and supporting entrepreneurial activity.