

JOB DESCRIPTION

Vacancy reference:	SRF44020
Post Title:	Chair in Agricultural Innovation and Extension
Grade:	Grade 9
School/Department:	School of Agriculture, Policy & Development, Department to be confirmed
Reports to:	Head of School
Responsible for:	any members of staff this person line manages

Purpose

Funded by the Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust (ECCT), this high-profile appointment will have expertise in agricultural innovation and a strong awareness of approaches to on-farm technology adoption in the UK and Europe and put in place practical mechanisms to ensure that both the needs of farmers are considered within the context of research and that new research and innovations are appropriately communicated and assisted on-farm when necessary. The position would suit agricultural economist/social scientist with a strong interest in farmer behaviour, change management and taking new innovations to market or an innovation-led agricultural scientist with an interest in on-farm adoption of technology.

Main duties and responsibilities

The appointed Chair would be expected to build a research group to meet a selection of the following objectives:

- To develop new innovations in the context of one or more areas of the agricultural sciences depending on their expertise
- To work with industrial partners to ensure such innovations reach the market
- To understand the barriers to adoption, the socio-economic and human behavioural constraints on adoption of appropriate technologies by farmers and within farming communities
- To listen to key stakeholders, gathering intelligence on the most urgent needs on farms that technology may be able to address
- To communicate research findings; for instance, enabling farmers to develop and integrate soil-smart and climate-smart systems, allowing farmers to advance by combining technical knowledge with advice using mobile phone technology
- To work directly with farmers and ensure the farmer's voice is fed into research, to ensure successful technology adoption and to identify and work with technology and change champions within the farming community
- To communicate with and influence key decision and policy makers within the UK/EU context.
- To contribute to SAPD educational programmes as appropriate

Added Value

Our aim is to ensure the appointed Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust (ECCT) Chair integrates across the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development to help inform and drive our strategy in relation to innovation, business creation, on-farm extension, technology adoption and knowledge exchange. We would envisage the high-profile appointment would:

- Build a strong research group within the SAPD
- Establish and build a University of Reading Farmer Champion Group
- Accelerate our current knowledge exchange work with farmers and key stakeholders across the UK
- Establish a strong on-line presence in farm-level innovation and technology adoption
- Work with our existing communications team to develop the area of technology adoption via web/social media/press releases/ trade and academic publications.
- Further develop an educational presence for technology adoption in on-campus curricula as well as via online initiatives.
- Harness our existing expertise in Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs) to provide free access to resources in order to enhance technology adoption in the UK.

There are synergies and opportunities to work with some of the existing ECCT appointments at RAU, Harper Adams, Warwick and Newcastle. The appointee would serve as a Director of the Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture ([Home | Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture \(ceiagri.org\)](http://ceiagri.org)) and represent the University of Reading on this cross-University virtual centre of expertise.

Supervision received

The appointee will become part of one of the five academic departments in the School, with allocation dependant on specific interests and disciplinary background. They would report to both the Head of Department and the Head of School.

Supervision given

It is expected that the appointee will grow their own research group.

Contact

A range of research institutions, global companies, farmers and within the University of Reading, interdisciplinary institutes including Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health, the Walker Institute for Climate Research and Agri-metrics

Terms and conditions

This is a full-time post, funded for two years by ECCT. During the initial funded phase, the appointee and associates will initiate an active schedule of applying for research grants in order to expand activities and impact.

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There are synergies and opportunities to work with some of the existing ECCT appointments. Particularly the pending ECCT Chair at Newcastle University and we see this as a distinct advantage given the various connections with the other ECCT Institutions.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	School/Department
Chair in Agricultural Innovation and Extension	School of Agriculture, Policy & Development

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Skills Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent communication skills • Team leadership 	
Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctorate in a relevant subject area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad understanding of agricultural innovation • Extensive knowledge of UK and European farming systems • Clear understanding of agricultural business and the current UK/EU agricultural policy landscape 	
Relevant Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research leadership • Successful grant winning and completion • Ability to communicate with the farming industry • Ability to provide a high quality educational experience 	
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team player • Collegiate • Ability to represent the University at a high level 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a profile or research outputs and impact consistent with a strong REF submission 	

Completed by: Simon Mortimer	Date: 4 January 2023
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