Job Description – Senior Project Manager – Life

Sciences Role Reports to Director of Projects, Life

Sciences Innovation Factory Overview

'Commercialising The University of Manchester's innovations and IP to create global social and economic impact'

The University of Manchester is committed to generating world class innovation that will create major social and economic benefit across the globe. The Innovation Factory is The University of Manchester subsidiary responsible for identifying and leading the commercialisation of its innovations and intellectual property.

The University of Manchester currently ranks 8th in the league table of European Universities and 4th in the UK ratings for the commercial impact of its patents (*Reuters Index of Europe's most Innovative Universities 2019*).
The Innovation Factory works with academic inventors from the University to identify opportunities that have the potential to create social and economic impact. It then translates these into a form where they can be used by industry and society as a whole. Access to innovations may be created via technology licensing or the formation of spin-out companies. The Innovation Factory aims to provide a world class service to academic colleagues and to attract and engage with important external stakeholders including: industry; entrepreneurs; licensees and investors; and corporate venture partners.

The Innovation Factory organisation is structured to deliver its mission. It has three main functional groups: Operations, Business Development and Corporate Services. These groups work closely together in an integrated process which begins with the identification of an idea and cumulates in the creation, exploitation and management of a high-value asset such as a commercially valuable patent or spin-out.

The Operations group - Overview

The Innovation Factory's Operations group is responsible for pro-actively identifying, evaluating and building opportunities which have the potential to create value, either as a successful spin-out or valuable licence. The group is responsible for the development and delivery of robust business plans, IP creation and the production of product demonstrators. It also plays an important role in identifying sources of investment and grant funding, developing lists of potential customers for new technologies, sizing accessible markets, identifying areas of competitive advantage and evaluating the commercial value of University patents. In some cases, projects may be considered unsuitable for commercialisation or need further development to be taken forward. If this is the case, justification for the decision and constructive feed-back and advice will be given to the academic.

Project managers are the core of the Operations group. These project 'champions' are responsible for owning and driving opportunities through the Innovation Factory's stage gate process from discovery through to a point at which they are ready to be handed over to the Business Development team.

To ensure a good understanding of the underlying technologies the Project Management roles are organised into teams with technology specialists aligned to one of the University's faculties, i) Biology Medicine and Health (FBMH) ii) Science and Engineering (FSE) and iii) Humanities (FAH). The Operations group actively engages with the University's cultural institutions and Professional Services teams and project managers work in close coordination with other units in the University, particularly the Business Engagement group.

The project manager is responsible for leadership of a project, but they will gain cross-functional input and support from colleagues in the Innovation Factory as well as external insight from specialist advisors.

When a project is considered ready for commercialisation, the Operations teams will pass ownership to the Business Development group which will then take the lead in developing the commercial proposition, marketing and then transacting the opportunity.

Senior Project Manager – Life Sciences

Key Accountabilities

- Responsible for the identification of new opportunities linked to the faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health.
- Responsible for a portfolio of Lifescience projects, ensuring their timely progression to key decision points.
- Responsible for writing well-structured analysis of each opportunity. This will include-
    - At stage 1: a critical assessment of the opportunity and technology, the target markets, routes to commercialisation, estimate of future value, potential customers and development partners, highlighting areas of risk, and options to protect the idea. Based on this, a recommendation on whether to proceed with the project.
    - At stage 2: Detailed analysis of the above. Protection of the Intellectual Property. For potential spin-outs: an outline business plan covering all technical, commercial, operational, financial, logistic and legal aspects of the project. The plan must form a clear picture of the business and is the basis for a compelling argument for investors. For license opportunities: Outline of route to market, analysis of market and value to potential licensee – reasons why they should license this IP.
- Regularly engage with the University's innovators across the whole breadth of Life Sciences to promote new commercialisation initiatives and ensure that innovative ideas are captured leading to a flow of new, innovative Life Sciences projects.
- Assess the costs of protecting IP vs. the potential value of opportunity, make recommendations on filing and risks of filing/not filing.
- Carry out prior art and freedom to operate searches for projects, interpret the results and use this to inform IP strategy. Where relevant, manage the production of a product demonstrator: Including specification, budget, engagement and management of suppliers, ensuring production deadlines are met, validation of quality and performance.
- Ensure that the Innovation Factory's processes for opportunity evaluation are fully implemented in the Life Sciences.
- In conjunction with the wider project management team, work to expand, enhance and maintain a network of internal and external advisors able to add value to our projects.
- Ensure that all work is completed within defined budgets
- Ensure that the quality of external interactions, project documentation and internal project management procedures are consistently high.

- Mentor and support less experienced project managers contributing to their ongoing professional development
- Pro-actively seek support and advice from the Director of Projects and others in the Innovation Factory and beyond to develop own knowledge and skills

Skills, Experience & Qualities

- A strong, and varied, background in Life Sciences/Medical health.
- Experience of working in an innovative, commercial environment
- Excellent critical analytical skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Proven ability to create future value and deliver results from early stage science
- Experience in the identification, development or management of IP in Life Sciences.
- Actively research and keep up to date with new developments relevant to role
- Pro-actively contribute to the development of strategies across your team and support the longer term strategic objectives of the organization.
- Consider all facts and think broadly about the organisational/commercial impact before making decisions
- Ability to see, and embrace, opportunities for improvement
- Bring fresh insights to senior leader and peer discussions
- Able to build strong and authentic relationships with a variety of internal and external stakeholders
- Excellent role model, demonstrating personal and professional integrity at all times
- Promote collaborative behaviors, encourage, support and motivate other team members and peers
- Demonstrate determination and commitment to achieving excellent performance across the team

Qualification:

- A Higher degree in a Life Sciences-related subject is essential.
- A business, or project management, qualification is an advantage, but not essential.