



Medical  
Research  
Council



UK Dementia  
Research Institute

## Appointment of Director of UK DRI

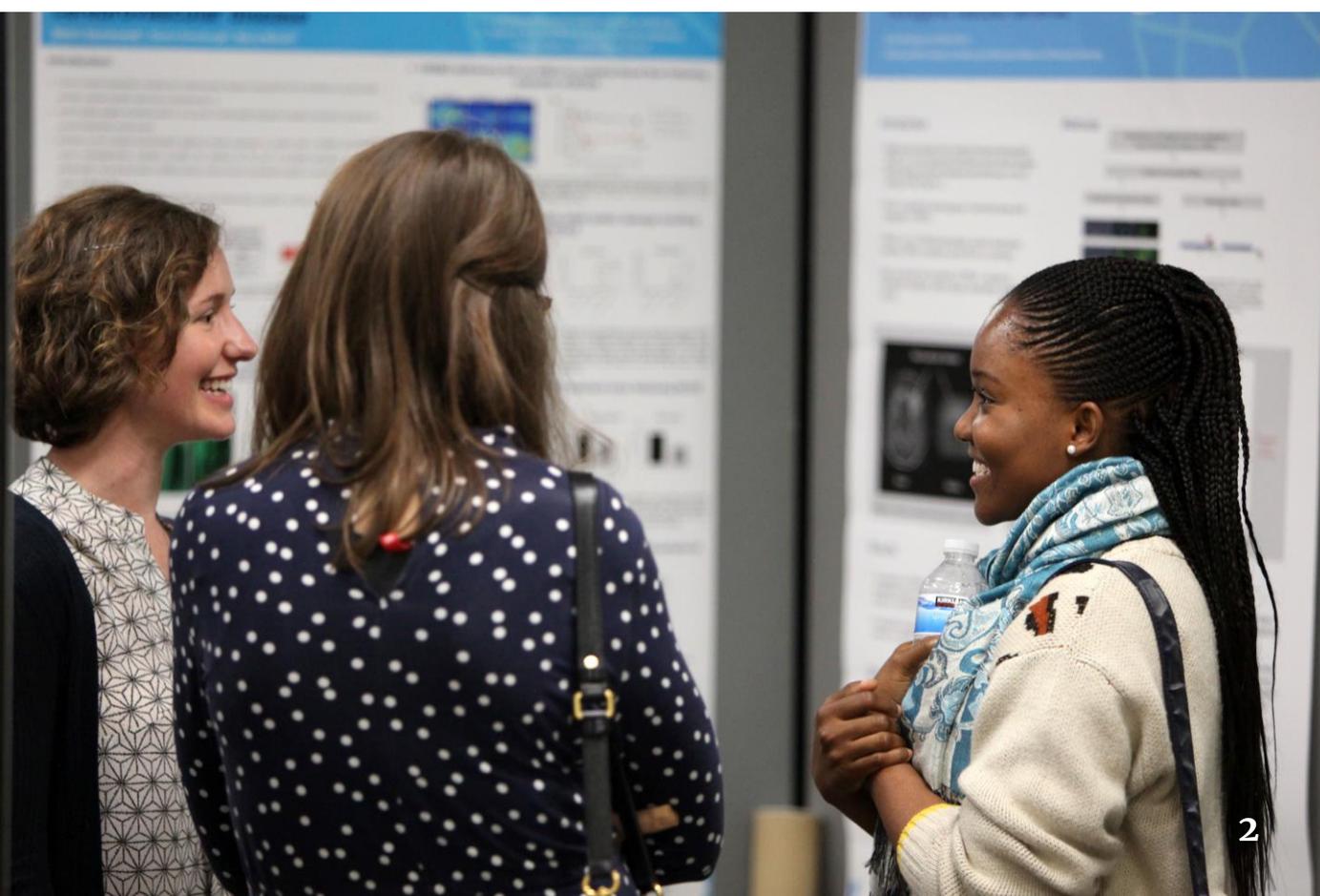
Appointment Details – January 2023

One Embassy Gardens, 8 Viaduct Gardens, Nine Elms, London, SW11 7BW

T: +44 (0) 20 7340 6200 F: +44 (0)20 7340 6201 E: [london@perrettlaver.com](mailto:london@perrettlaver.com) [www.perrettlaver.com](http://www.perrettlaver.com)

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## About the UK Dementia Research Institute – Who We Are and What We Do

Dementia represents one of the toughest medical and economic challenges facing society today. One in four hospital beds in the UK is currently occupied by someone with dementia. The UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI) is the UK's national institute dedicated to stopping dementia in its tracks - we do original, ground-breaking discovery research that will transform lives. It is an exciting time for us, having achieved great success in our first few years, and looking to the future with optimism, solid financial support and an imminent move to a new building.

Founded in 2017 with an unprecedented investment by the UK Government through the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the support and partnership of the MRC, Alzheimer's Research UK and the Alzheimer's Society, we are working to understand neurodegeneration in all its forms, with an emphasis on defining the earliest biochemical, molecular and cellular phases of disease, the mechanisms underlying its progression, and the factors that influence risk, resilience and disease progression. Our mission is to generate knowledge and transform it into real-world tools, diagnostics and treatments. We have quickly become internationally renowned for our expertise across biomedical, care and translational dementia research, and have already made many important

contributions to the field, making us one of the most cited research institutes in the field globally.

Our work is explicitly collaborative, and we look to partner with researchers beyond the Institute, the public, funders and people affected by dementia and related neurodegenerative conditions. We work across disciplines, locations, organisations and international borders. And by sharing our knowledge, our plans and our resources, we can accelerate progress and, importantly, learn from others.

We contribute to the public dialogue on age-related neurodegenerative diseases, work to influence the environment to enable dementia research to be able to thrive, and we are committed to learning from people with dementia and their carers through our Lived Experience Group.

Having recently reached our 5-year milestone, we are proud that a panel of international peers who undertook an exhaustive review of every element of the Institute, classed the UK DRI as “excellent” on all counts. On the basis of this review, the MRC has increased its core funding investment in our work, setting us up for the next phase of exciting, innovative and impactful science. In support of this, we are nearing completion of a new state-of-the-art research centre in the heart of London, closely linked to the UCL Institute of Neurology in a hospital setting. We will continue to develop wide-ranging collaborations with our many research, health, industry and charity partners, both nationally and internationally, and will consolidate our reputation as one of the most attractive places for the brightest and most exciting dementia researchers to work.





## Our Unique Structure

As a national institute our researchers and our centres span the length of the UK, in a unique structure that draws together the expertise of over 800 researchers at six of the UK's top universities, with the diverse skills and talents of their individual research teams, into one shared scientific community. This has proved successful in helping deliver a key objective for the institute, to engage expertise from other fields and disciplines into dementia research.

Although primarily funded by the MRC, the UK DRI is a charitable company with an independent Board of Trustees and is looking in the coming years to continue its success in diversifying its sources of funding.

Our administrative headquarters is physically based at UCL, which is also one of our seven research centres – the others being based at Imperial, Kings, Cambridge, Cardiff and Edinburgh universities <https://ukdri.ac.uk/centres>.

The Institute has been structured to drive a seamless interplay between its geographically dispersed centres, in terms of sharing and developing resources, technologies, facilities and data infrastructure. The Institute also provides a single point of contact for developing both academic and commercial partnerships.

Within UCL, UK DRI HQ sits within the Faculty of Brain Sciences (FBS) as an independent Institute (in 2024 it will move with Queen Square Institute of Neurology (QSIoN) to new purpose-built premises on Grays Inn Road, (shown elsewhere)) The DRI Director attends the Faculty Executive and meets with the Dean of FBS, Professor Alan Thompson, on a regular basis.

# Driving Impact

At the UK DRI, we're committed to building initiatives and infrastructure and open-science principles that provide a catalyst to ground-breaking dementia research taking place across the UK, ensuring our community stays connected and can share ideas, data and investigate neurodegeneration and dementia in new and innovative ways. For example:

- We have established pre-clinical research models (cellular, organoid and mouse-based) and technology platforms for biomarker discovery, proteomics and single cell and spatial transcriptomics that provide researchers across the Institute with access to specialist equipment and expertise for studying molecules, cells, circuits and behaviour at an unprecedented level of detail.
- The UK DRI's Biomarker Factory is world-leading in establishing novel, highly sensitive assays that can be used for the identification of new biomarkers.
- In 2022 we launched a major data science informatics programme to harness the power of data resources and tools.
- Our Care, Research & Technology centre uses home-based technology and an expert monitoring team to enable people affected by dementia to remain living at home safely for as long as possible.
- We work closely with industry, both on discovery science and its translation.
  - We have signed multi-year strategic agreements with five leading companies.
  - In 2020 we spun out AviadoBio with seed funding of £12m and a subsequent series A of \$80m.
  - In 2022 we signed a partnership agreement with LifeArc, providing UK DRI with £30m over 5 years to fund our translational agenda.
- We have a focussed and effective EDI programme that promotes and improves diversity and inclusion across the entire Institute.

As a result of these and many other activities, the UK DRI is a vibrant and exciting leader in the field and already at the forefront of research productivity, (based on the total number of publications in the 'Web of Science Core Collection, and the average number of citations/published paper).



## Our People

UK DRI is made up of researchers, technologists, academics and operational experts who think differently, challenge one another and take risks. The Institute's creative culture, collaborative ethos and leading-edge resources help attract and keep the best talent, from those who are just starting out in their career to some of the worlds most established neurodegenerative science leaders. We also actively recruit scientists who are new to the field, bringing new ideas, skills and insight to our work. Further innovation emerges from the intersection of engineering, science and medicine such that our work is relevant to patients and those at risk.



# Funding and Governance

The UK DRI was founded by three high profile and sector leading founding funders - the MRC (as a part of UK Research and Innovation), Alzheimer's Research UK and the Alzheimer's Society. All three provide financial support and champion our mission through collaborative working.

UK DRI is governed by a [Board of Trustees](#), chaired by [William Rucker](#). The Board of Trustees meet quarterly and are responsible for the management of the institute's activities.

The 'Scientific Strategy and Operational board' is responsible for managing the delivery of the UK DRI's scientific objectives. Members includes the UK DRI Director, UK DRI COO and UK DRI Centre Directors, who meet monthly.

Our research centres are embedded in the university environment, benefitting from intellectual capital, resources and infrastructure that directly and indirectly support our work. Each Centre has also established a Scientific Advisory Board of thought leaders from across the globe, helping to guide our work.

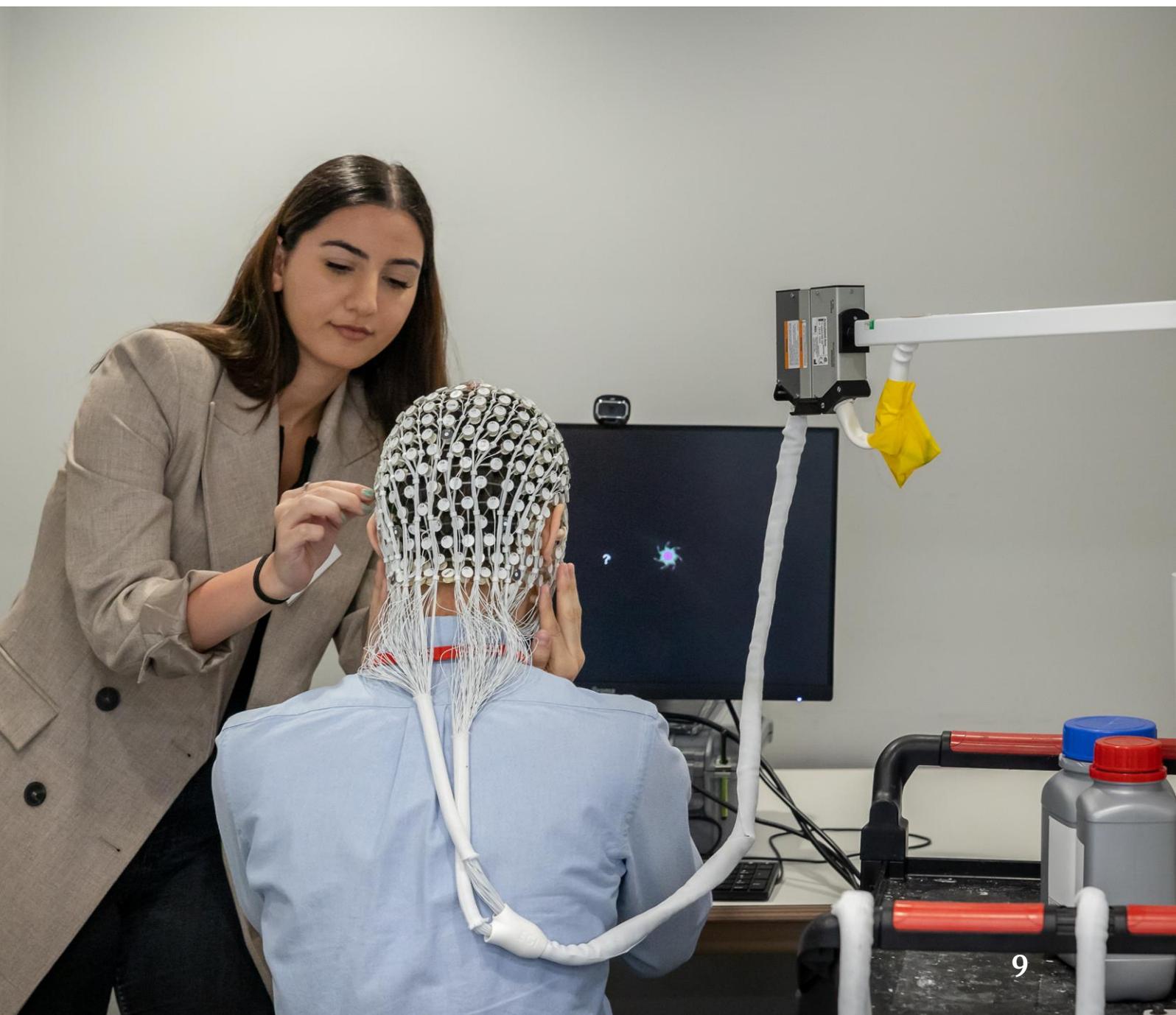
<https://ukdri.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-boards>



## The Appointment of the UK DRI Director

The UK DRI Board of Trustees are looking to appoint an outstanding scientist and visionary leader as the Director of UK DRI. The incoming Director will be employed by UCL and work collaboratively to develop and implement the strategy and vision to take UK DRI into the future. The new Director will engage with a variety of key stakeholders including UK DRI's partners, government, funders, HEI's and industry to enhance UK DRI's research and impact and accelerate translation.

The successful candidate will bring an outstanding international reputation in a related research field and demonstrable leadership and management experience. They will have experience in complex stakeholder environments and working in collaboration with higher education and research partners, charities and other funders, industry, health systems and government.





## Key Responsibilities of the Director

### 1. LEADERSHIP

- Provide leadership, motivation and strategic direction for the Institute and its constituent scientific programmes of the UK DRI (including the Director's own programme where relevant) so as to maximise high-quality scientific delivery, output and outcomes.
- Participate fully in strategic and quinquennial scientific reviews of the UK DRI and the implementation of outcomes. Ensure the effective resourcing of the research programmes within delegated authority.
- Drive collaborative activities and strategic partnerships of benefit to the UK DRI's mission that complement external UK strengths across diverse areas of biomedical, clinical, care provision, data science and population research, as well as engage novel technologies and commercial and international opportunities.
- Promote and implement the opportunities for technology transfer and translation of research into clinical, health and social care.
- Promote the UK DRI's key role in UK and international dementia research to policy makers and the general public to inspire effective engagement and participation in research.

- Support and represent the broader corporate interests of the MRC (as core funder), Alzheimer’s Research UK (as strategic partner) and other key funders such as the Alzheimer’s Society and LifeArc, and in particular embed both organisations’ core values within the UK DRI, in terms of promoting scientific and methodological excellence, supporting long-term and cross disciplinary science, and promoting a positive research culture, open science and effective public engagement.

## 2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Working with the Chief Operating Officer, plan and manage all resources including staff, finance, capital assets and management information systems, in an effective and efficient manner, ensuring adherence to MRC (UKRI) policies and security of assets and records.
- Manage the UK DRI’s budget to ensure that capital and resource funds deliver value for money and implement agreed efficiency improvement and sustainability programmes.
- Manage the UK DRI in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation and the MRC’s (UKRI’s) health and safety policies and guidelines.
- Actively engage in fund-raising activities, in a manner consistent with the UK DRI’s scientific strategy and do not compromise the MRC or Alzheimer’s Research UK’s reputation for independence and maintaining high ethical standards.
- Take all necessary steps to protect the UK DRI’s interests in intellectual property in accordance with UK DRI Ltd’s principles.

## 3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Work closely with the UK DRI HQ team and Centre Directors to ensure joined up leadership and direction for the UK DRI.
- Ensure that UK DRI Programme Leaders and other direct reports have a clear statement and understanding of their areas of responsibility and accountability.
- Provide a high-quality training and development environment in the UK DRI.
- To lead and promote ‘Equality and Diversity’ activities which will provide a diverse workforce, a commitment to ‘Women in Science’ and fairness.
- Provide an effective and regular process for staff communication and consultation across all levels within the UK DRI.

## 4. GOVERNANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT

- Implement and reinforce MRC’s policies and processes as summarised in the ‘Directors’ Annual Statement on Internal Control’ (DASIC), with guidance from MRC Head Office Administrative staff on delegated authority and public accountability.

- Ensure compliance with corporate reporting requirements. This includes provision of up-to-date information on current research programmes and on research outputs and achievements.

## 5. CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

- Promote and maintain the standards set out in the MRC's Code of Conduct; ensure that this is communicated to and fully understood by all UK DRI staff.
- Ensure that the UK DRI's research fully meets current ethical standards and adheres to guidelines from MRC (UKRI) and other relevant bodies on ethics and good research practice.
- Identify and manage conflicts of interest which may arise in any aspect of the UK DRI's activities.
- Ensure that any personal external interests and activities that may present a potential conflict of interest to the UK DRI Board, the MRC, Alzheimer's Research UK, the Alzheimer's Society, LifeArc and any other future significant funders are reported to and resolved by reference to the Chair of the UK DRI Board, or the Chief Executives of the MRC, Alzheimer's Research UK, the Alzheimer's Society or Life Arc, or relevant representatives of other future significant funders.

## 6. EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Promote, through the research of the UK DRI and through the management of its external relations, the objectives of UKK DRI and all of its key funders and stakeholders relating to public communications and international relations.
- Maintain effective relationships with the host institution and other key stakeholders locally and nationally.



# Person Specification

1. A proven track record of international stature, vision and inspiring leadership, and delivery of international quality research in the field of neurodegeneration / diseases of the CNS, including supporting junior researchers to build successful careers and building and shaping capacity at all levels (within research, academia or industry).
2. Ability to develop and implement discovery and translational research agendas within the UK DRI and in collaboration with partners, including implementing commitments made by UK DRI through its recent funding review (known as Quinquennial Review or QQR) and working towards new treatments for neurodegenerative diseases.
3. Good political antennae, with understanding of the national and international strategic and political landscapes of the biomedical research environment, and ability to navigate them effectively.
4. Ambassadorial skills in leading collaborative enterprises and fostering /maintaining partnerships and stakeholder relationships, including an ability to communicate effectively and constructively with research funders, university partners and NHS Trusts, the life science industries, Government Departments and politicians, Trustees, patients/carers, the wider public, and the media.
5. Understanding of and enthusiastic commitment to promoting a positive research culture and the practical implementation of core values such as Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and research integrity.

## Other attributes:

- Commitment to working full time in London at the UK DRI hub at UCL.
- Willing to commit the time required to leading the institute, with appropriate dovetailing of the scope and scale of personal research accordingly.
- Clear understanding of value and role of data science in neurodegeneration research.



# About the Medical Research Council and UK Research and Innovation

## *The Medical Research Council*

The Medical Research Council (MRC) is a core funder of the UK DRI. MRC is a member of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and has a mission is to improve human health by investing in world-class medical research, from fundamental science to early clinical trials and preventive medicine. For the good of society, we strive to find better ways to treat and prevent disease and to advance people's health worldwide. Working in partnership with other UKRI councils, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and devolved administrations, the NHS, charities and industry, we are a dynamic organisation continually evolving and embracing new opportunities to achieve a mission first framed over a century ago.

The MRC is at the forefront of scientific discovery to improve human health. Founded in 1913 to tackle tuberculosis, the MRC now invests taxpayers' money in some of the best medical research in the world across every area of health. Thirty-three MRC-funded researchers have won Nobel prizes in a wide range of disciplines, and MRC scientists have been behind such diverse discoveries as vitamins, the structure of DNA and the link between smoking and cancer, as well as achievements such as pioneering the use of randomised controlled trials, the invention of MRI scanning and the development of a group of antibodies used in the making of some of the most successful drugs ever developed. Today, MRC-funded scientists tackle some of the greatest health problems facing humanity in the 21st century, from the rising tide of chronic diseases associated with ageing to the threats posed by rapidly mutating micro-organisms.

UK DRI is one of five MRC-funded institutes which represent major long-term investments in cutting-edge biomedical and health research. The others are the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, LMB (Cambridge), the MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences (Imperial College London), the Francis Crick Institute (London) and Health Data Research UK (pan-UK).

## *UK Research and Innovation*

Established in 2018, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

UKRI brings together the seven disciplinary Research Councils (including the MRC), Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England, and the UK's innovation agency Innovate UK.

With a combined annual budget of c. £8.4 billion (2023/24) our component organisations work together in innovative ways to deliver an ambitious research and innovation agenda, drawing on our great depth and breadth of expertise and the enormous diversity of our portfolio. Our Councils shape and deliver both sectoral and domain-specific investments.

Whether through Research Council investments, quality-related block grants from Research England, or grants and wider support for innovative businesses from Innovate UK, we work with our stakeholders to understand the opportunities and requirements of all the different parts of the research and innovation landscape, maintaining the health, breadth and depth of the system.

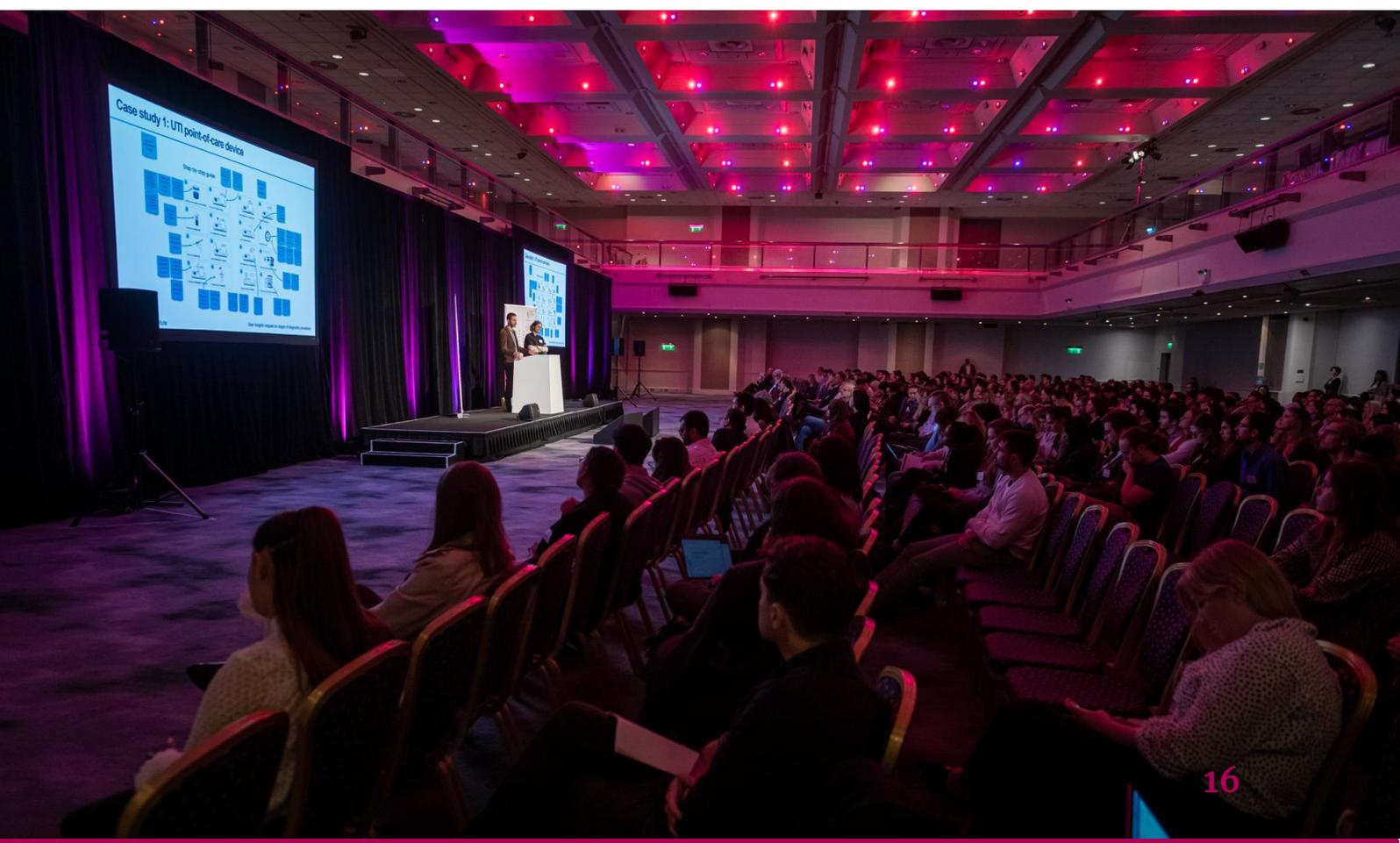


## About Alzheimer's Research UK

Alzheimer's Research UK is a Strategic Partner of UK DRI, and a leading dementia and Alzheimer's disease research charity. Our vision is a world where people are free from the fear, harm and heartbreak of dementia. We power world class studies that give us the best chance of beating dementia sooner.

Alzheimer's Research UK funds world-leading research into understanding the diseases that cause dementia across the UK and beyond, with a Research Network of over 2,000 scientists, and key research initiatives aimed at improving diagnosis, finding out more about how to reduce risk, and developing treatments. We provide trusted information about dementia to people affected and their families, helping improve understanding around the condition and the potential for research to defeat it. We campaign to keep dementia research on the political agenda, working to ensure government funding for research is a priority and that the environment is right for biomedical research into dementia to succeed. We are building a social movement behind our cause, connecting with thousands of people who are helping to power the fightback against dementia.

[www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org)





# UCL

## About UCL – London's Global University

UCL is a diverse global community of world-class academics, students, industry links, external partners, and alumni. Our powerful collective of individuals and institutions work together to explore new possibilities.

Since 1826, we have championed independent thought by attracting and nurturing the world's best minds. Our community of more than 43,800 students from 150 countries and over 14,300 staff pursues academic excellence, breaks boundaries and makes a positive impact on real world problems.

We are consistently ranked among the top 10 universities in the world and are one of only a handful of institutions rated as having the strongest academic reputation and the broadest research impact.

We have a progressive and integrated approach to our teaching and research – championing innovation, creativity and cross-disciplinary working. We teach our students how to think, not what to think, and see them as partners, collaborators and contributors.

For almost 200 years, we are proud to have opened higher education to students from a wide range of backgrounds and to change the way we create and share knowledge. We were the first in England to welcome women to university education and that courageous attitude and disruptive spirit is still alive today. We are UCL.

## UCL Strategic Plan

UCL 2034 is the university's 20-year strategy setting out our vision for the future. Our distinctive approach to research, education and innovation inspires our community of staff, students and partners to transform how the world is understood, how knowledge is created and shared, and the way that global problems are solved.

The UCL [Strategic Plan 2022-27](#) was developed in line with [UCL 2034](#) and sets out plans for investment in our programme of Grand Challenges to enhance our institutional impact. UCL Grand Challenges brings researchers together from across UCL, setting the agenda for future research, while building bridges with external partners. The programme has become part of our university's institutional fabric. The programme is having a major impact on solving some of the world's most pressing problems. The five areas laid out in the Strategic Plan are:

- Climate crisis
- Mental health and well-being
- Data-empowered societies
- Inequalities
- Intercultural communication

## Neuroscience

UCL is a global leader in neuroscience and home to one of the largest groups of neuroscience experts in the world. We are at the forefront of the mission to translate neuroscience discovery into diagnostics and treatments for patients with neurological diseases. UCL is the top-ranked university in the UK for research power in Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience according to the UK's Research Excellence Framework 2021, with more than 90% of our research rated as world-leading (4\*) or internationally excellent (3\*). UCL is consistently ranked as a globally-leading institution for neuroscience research and is the top ranked institute in Europe (US News / Clarivate, Research.com 2022 rankings). UCL is closely associated with the National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery (NHNN), which is the UK's largest dedicated neurological and neurosurgical hospital. Along with the UCL Dementia Research Centre, the NHNN forms a nationally leading hub for patient-centred research into dementias.

[www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk) | Follow [@uclnews](#) | Read news at [www.ucl.ac.uk/news/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/) | Listen to UCL podcasts on [SoundCloud](#) | Find out what's on at [UCL Minds](#)

## How to apply

The UK DRI Board of Trustees will be supported in the appointment process by the executive search firm Perrett Laver. Perrett Laver will support the Search Committee in the discharge of its duties, both to assist in the assessment of candidates against the requirements for the role and to identify the widest possible field of qualified candidates.

Applications should comprise a full curriculum vitae along with a covering letter of application addressing the role and person specification. To apply, or to download further information on the required qualifications, skills and experience for the role, please visit <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/> quoting reference **6361**.

For an informal and confidential conversation about the role, please contact Dr Urvashi Ramphul on [+44 \(0\)20 7340 6280](tel:+442073406280) or [Urvashi.Ramphul@perrettlaver.com](mailto:Urvashi.Ramphul@perrettlaver.com).

Applications will close at **9am GMT on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023**.

Interviews are expected to take place in late April.

Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, as defined under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.

Our legal basis for much of our data processing activity is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <http://www.perrettlaver.com/information/privacy-policy/>.

### Terms and Conditions

Terms and Conditions of Employment will be agreed and negotiated upon appointment and will be competitive and commensurate with the significant contribution and profile of the Institute.

