

Advertisement

Post Title: Operations Manager

School/department: University of Sussex Business School/ Energy Demand Research Centre

Hours: Full-time hours considered up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

Location: Brighton, United Kingdom

Contract: fixed term until 30 June 2028

Reference: 21228

Salary: starting at £45,585 to £54,395 per annum, pro rata if part time.

Placed on: 17 July 2023.

Closing date: 14 August 2023. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

Expected Interview date: To be confirmed.

Expected start date: To be confirmed.

An exciting opportunity has arisen at the University of Sussex for a high-performing professional to take on the management of the new Energy Demand Research Centre – an ambitious and dynamic research centre supported by a £15 million grant from UK Research Innovation, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council. We anticipate the post will be full-time with scope for flexible working.

This challenging role sits within the University of Sussex Business School and is line managed by the School's Research Manager while reporting substantively to the Centre Director Professor Mari Martiskainen in the Science Policy Research Unit. You will be responsible for overall management of the Centre, including day-to-day operations, reporting, supporting stakeholder engagement, and coordinating the Centre's programme of research. You will work collaboratively with the Director, Co-Director and the Centre Leadership Team to develop and realise the strategic vision of the Centre, and in so doing support the University's ambition to create a world-leading research centre. The Operation Manager works within a team of professional, research and academic staff, who are all working to achieve impact through the Centre's research.

As well as the University of Sussex Business School, the Centre includes eleven other UK universities and numerous non-academic partners.

For further information or to discuss the role please contact the Centre Director Professor Mari Martiskainen: m.martiskainen@sussex.ac.uk or the SPRU Research Manager: ryan.giddings@sussex.ac.uk

For full details and how to apply see our [vacancies page](#)

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds but particularly encourage people from underrepresented groups to apply.

Please note: The University requires that work undertaken for the University is performed from the UK.

1. The School / Centre

As the Operations Manager, you will support activities across the Energy Demand Research Centre and will be based in the University of Sussex Business School.

The School

The [University of Sussex Business School](#) was formed in 2009 and comprises five departments: Management, Accounting & Finance, Strategy & Marketing, Economics, and the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU). With its home in the Jubilee Building, a modern academic building at the heart of the campus, the Business School is a vibrant, ambitious and dynamic School with a strong research focus.

The School and SPRU are also home to the [Sussex Energy Group](#) (SEG), which aims to understand and foster transitions towards sustainable, low-carbon energy systems through academically rigorous, world-leading research relevant to contemporary policy challenges.

The Business School's work draws on management, economics, science, technology and innovation studies, to make an impact on the future of people and institutions the world over. We study the issues that matter, to transform our world and your future. The School draws on many of Sussex's intellectual traditions, including a critical perspective on contemporary business, political, economic and social issues and a belief that major societal challenges need expertise across many academic disciplines.

The School's vision is to be a School that collaborates across disciplines to shape global issues in business, management, and society, making an impact on policy, practice, and people. Its mission to achieve this vision is to:

- carry out high-quality research and develop innovative policy
develop current and aspiring leaders who will champion critical and original thinking
- work internationally with businesses, governments, and others to deliver innovative
- approaches to management.

Please find further information about the School here:

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/business-school>

Energy Demand Research Centre

The UK has a legal duty to become a Net Zero society by 2050, requiring a change in the way energy is used across different sectors of industry, businesses, transport and buildings. Without a significant reduction in energy demand, the UK is unlikely to meet these ambitions. Many UK homes and businesses have also faced high energy prices in the last year, bringing greater public attention to issues such as energy affordability and security. These challenges provide an opportunity for energy demand reduction to bring benefits via improved energy efficiency and broader societal changes to reduce emissions, secure prosperity, reduce inequality and improve quality of life.

As the UKRI's flagship £15 million investment in energy demand research, the Energy Demand Research Centre has a key role in providing evidence on actionable solutions

for energy demand reduction across different sectors. The Centre is interdisciplinary, covering expertise in technological, social, economic, business and policy aspects.

Our overarching vision for the Centre is to inform and inspire energy demand reductions that support an affordable, comfortable and secure Net Zero society. Our five main research themes are:

- **Futures:** to understand the underlying conditions needed to deliver a low energy future in the UK to contribute to rapid greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions.
- **Flexibility:** to assess the needs, impacts and implications of demand-side flexibility – i.e. the capacity to use energy in different locations at different times of the day or the year – and to explore solutions that enable effective and equitable deployment of demand-side flexibility.
- **Place:** to build a new approach to place-based approaches and policy making which provides actionable insights, tools and processes which enable an acceleration of the Net Zero transition.
- **Governance:** to develop a research and action programme that contributes to the Centre's delivery of short-term impact and identifies feasible models, policies and pathways to overall energy demand reductions and decarbonization.
- **Equity:** to generate rigorous, interdisciplinary and actionable evidence and knowledge on how different energy demand solutions can deliver an affordable, clean and more equitable Net Zero energy system.

Our team comprises of 45 people from different academic backgrounds and disciplines, located across 12 different universities. We are committed to the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and our core values are:

- Fair to people and the planet
- Transparent in our approach
- Bold in our thoughts and actions
- Open to different points of view
- Impactful towards the future of energy demand.

As a 5-year Centre, we have a strong focus on engagement with key stakeholders in academia, industry, policy, NGOs and the media, in order to achieve high impact for our research.

You can read more about how Prof Mari Martiskainen (University of Sussex) and Prof Sara Walker (Newcastle University), as the UKRI Energy Demand Research Champions, developed plans for the Centre via a three-stage stakeholder engagement process: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/energy/partnerships-funding/edrc/>

Official announcement of the Centre is available at <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/news/university?id=61382> and a related blog <https://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/sussexenergygroup/2023/07/13/new-funding-announced-for-energy-demand-research/>

2. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: **Operations Manager, Energy Demand Research Centre**

School/Division:	University of Sussex Business School
Location:	Jubilee Building
Grade:	8
Responsible to:	School Research Manager with day-to-day responsibility to the Centre Director Professor Mari Martiskainen
Responsible for:	Communications Manager (0.8 FTE); Senior Data Officer (0.8 FTE); Senior Administrator (1 FTE)

As Operations Manager, your main role will be to manage the day-to-day running, monitoring and reporting of the Centre. This includes overseeing key management and communications operations, working closely with the Communications Manager, Senior Administrator, Centre's Director and Co-Director, Theme Leads, Co-investigators, researchers, project partners and stakeholders..

As Operations Manager, your key responsibilities include the following:

Strategy

1. Work collaboratively with the Director, Co-Director and the Centre Leadership Team to develop and realise the Centre's overall strategy and to produce world-leading interdisciplinary research tackling issues of global significance around energy demand. This will include maintaining the Centre risk register and business continuity plan.
2. Inform the development and implementation of Impact, Communications, Engagement and External Affairs strategies for the Centre, with the aim of fostering timely and targeted dissemination of information, stimulating real-world impact and increasing the Centre's and University's external visibility.

Management

3. Line management of the Centre's other Professional Services staff, with the aim of ensuring effective management of the Centre.
4. With the Director and Co-Director, manage and monitor the Centre's operating budget and maintain financial spending plans.

Operations

5. Take overall responsibility for the operationalisation of the research programme. This will include ensuring projects are on track, working with researchers on project plans, setting metrics, reporting to the funders as appropriate and integrating new projects and activities into the Centre.

6. Oversee the preparation and management of Centre budgets and quarterly budget forecasts.
7. Manage the Centre's Flexible Fund.
8. Identify funding sources and support external funding applications to extend the Centre's programme and reach.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

9. Lead on the production of annual, interim and quarterly reports to the funders and other key stakeholders.
10. Assist with the management and production of key documents relating to the activities of the Centre, including reports to funders, briefing notes, research summaries and other materials as required.

Interdisciplinary Research Opportunities and Capacity

11. Assist with coordinate and facilitating events (workshops, policy fora, conferences and seminars) to stimulate interdisciplinary working.
12. With the Director and Co-Director, support, coordinate and facilitate any relevant institutional interdisciplinary impact case studies for submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Networks and Partnerships

13. Take a leading role in establishing a strong and cohesive Centre research community, including a distinct post-doctoral cohort.
14. Collaborating with the Director, Co-Director and Centre Leadership Team to develop and maintain a set of strategic partnerships and establish positive interactions and collaborations with key international agencies, government authorities, private sector representatives and civil society groups.
15. Collaborating with the Director, Co-Director and Centre Leadership Team to develop and maintain strong and positive relationships with other relevant investments and centres.
16. Represent the Centre and the University at relevant external events.

Communications

17. Assist the Communications Manager with internal and external communications, ensuring that the Centre engages effectively across all nations and regions of the UK and with all the major elements of UK society.
18. Oversee the organisation and management of a range of events for academic and non-academic audiences promoting Centre activities and helping to achieve impact.

19. Oversee and help to maintain the Centre website and communications infrastructure, working with comms colleagues to ensure important information is disseminated in a timely and appropriate fashion via suitable platforms.

Achieving Impact

20. Guide the Centre to achieve maximum impact by advising researchers on identifying issues on which impact is likely and possible targets, through networking and partnerships and by ensuring excellent and targeted communications with appropriate stakeholders.

Team Working

21. Maintain close working relationships with key professional services teams in Sussex (Finance, Research & Enterprise, Research Quality & Impact, Press & Communications, Web, Marketing) to ensure the smooth implementation of the Centre.
22. Maintain close working relationships with a range of faculty and other staff across the campus to encourage active engagement with the Centre.
23. Maintain effective working relationships with key internal stakeholders, including Heads of School, PVC-R, Head of Finance, Head of Research & Enterprise, and other Research Centres.
24. Maintain close working relationships with key researchers and Professional Services staff in partner universities to ensure the smooth and effective execution of the Centre work programme, including both research and impact.

Personal Development

25. Keep abreast of relevant changes in the external strategic funding and impact environments and assess and report on their implications for the Centre.
26. Regularly review professional development plans, identifying key objectives and development needs.

Other

27. Undertake other duties as required.

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.

3. Person Specification

Operations Manager, Energy Demand Research Centre

Essential qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience for the post:

Qualifications

- Educated to post-graduate degree level, or equivalent professional experience.

Knowledge

- An understanding of some of the issues related to the energy demand research.
- An understanding of applied research in relation to evidence-based policy engagement.
- Knowledge of the UK higher education and policy landscapes.

Skills/Abilities/Attributes

- Excellent organisational skills, including the ability to systematically prioritise multiple tasks and manage a large and varied workload.
- Excellent creative problem-solving skills.
- Good general research skills.
- Good ICT skills, including competence with Microsoft software packages such as Word, Excel and Outlook as well as project management tools.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills to communicate confidently and effectively with a wide range of people and audiences, including copy-writing and web-management skills.
- Ability to prepare and monitor budgets.
- Ability to work accurately and efficiently, and to maintain confidentiality where necessary.
- Excellent interpersonal and networking skills with the ability to relate to a wide range of people at different levels of seniority from industry, government, third sector, research councils and academia.
- Be a self-motivator with the ability to work well under pressure.
- Ability to work independently and use initiative, and to work as part of a collaborative team.
- A willingness to work both flexibly and to tight deadlines.
- Ability to manage a team successfully and develop a high-performing team.

- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring fair treatment and opportunity for all.

Experience

- Strong and extensive management experience preferably in a higher education or other research setting and across multiple projects and sites.
- Experience managing staff to focus their efforts, skills and enthusiasm on research activities.
- Experience in translating complex information into accessible formats.
- Experience with managing research communications, marketing, impact and stakeholder engagement.
- Experience with web content management platforms.
- Experience of organising events such as conferences, workshops and committee meetings.
- Experience using financial management and reporting tools/systems, such as Unit 4, Oracle, Hyperion or Agresso.
- Experience of working in interdisciplinary settings across the social sciences.

Personal Attributes and Circumstances

- Flexible and responsive, including a willingness to work flexible hours as necessary to meet deadlines and to travel to project meetings or workshops on occasion.