



**University of
East London**

Pioneering Futures Since 1898

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Senior Research Project Manager (ARENA)
School:	Sustainability Research Institute (SRI)
Grade:	G
Campus:	DL/ travelling to project partners
Responsible to:	Director of SRI
Liaison with:	ARENA Project team, UEL REDS team, GLA EPMU

ABOUT UEL

The University of East London has been pioneering futures since 1898: from the 2nd Industrial Revolution through to where we are now, the 4th. We are a careers-led university, dedicated to supporting our students to develop the skills, emotional intelligence and creativity needed to thrive in a constantly changing world.

Vision 2028 has been developed to transform our curriculum, pedagogy, research impact and partnerships to make a positive difference to student, graduate and community success. Our ambitious but achievable goal is to become the leading careers-focused, enterprising university in the UK, one which both prepares our students for the jobs of the future and provides the innovation to drive that future sustainably and inclusively.

SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Since its launch in 2001 UEL's Sustainability Research Institute (SRI) has brought together research and development of innovative eco-efficient technologies and processes, focusing on changes in the physical infrastructure that benefit the environment and promote a carbon-neutral society. Over the last ten years, the SRI has successfully delivered a wide range of publicly funded research projects, undertaken a number of consultancy contracts and contract research initiatives and built an excellent international reputation by applying ground breaking research and development in the real world. SRI's work focuses on a range of emerging research fields and pressing urban and rural sustainability challenges and is centred on three key themes:

- Green infrastructure: spanning areas such peatland ecology and conservation, the design and monitoring of urban green infrastructure and invertebrate conservation
- Resource Management: encompassing materials engineering and circular economy
- Sustainable Living: covering adaptive governance, community engagement and asset management.

ARENA – Advancing Urban Resource Efficiency and Urban Ecology Innovations

The SRI has led and partnered in a number of UK wide ERDF business support projects – supporting UK SMEs and start-ups with research and technological validation to help take their products to market. In 2019 the SRI secured co-funding from London's allocation of the England European Regional Development Fund - overseen by the Greater London Authority for the ARENA project, in partnership with Barking Riverside Ltd.

ARENA will support a minimum of 40 London enterprises to accelerate their innovations to market. The central focus of support provided to beneficiaries will be technical validation of new innovations, and in-situ demonstration trials and assessment at the new Ecology Centre and Urban Ecology Living Lab at Barking Riverside (BR). The overarching aims of the project are to secure significant business growth and job creation in research and technology areas which are exhibiting significant international growth.

Businesses experience a range of hurdles in developing and prototyping their ideas and bringing new innovations to market. The ARENA project will directly address these hurdles and has been designed to meet both the needs of businesses at different company life-cycle stages, and innovations at different product life-cycle stages. The project will deliver it business support through five key innovation support modules:

- Market knowledge and networks
- Research and development support
- Demonstration trials and assessment
- Promotion and showcasing
- Market rollout and procurement support

As the lead partner on ARENA, the SRI will take overall responsibility for delivering the full project, the target outputs and wider project outcomes and impacts. It will formalise its working relationships with the other delivery partners through SLAs, which will detail each party's responsibilities in delivering the project and outline the ERDF compliance and reporting requirements.

JOB PURPOSE

The SRI is now looking to recruit a full time dynamic and agile project manager to lead on crucial milestones, monitoring and evaluating SMEs and partners working on the project deliverables. The Research Project Manager will be responsible for overall delivery of the research aspects and R&D outputs of ARENA and take a leading role on recruiting project business beneficiaries and developing and implementing their tailored business and R&D support plans. In addition, this role will provide an additional contact point to the GLA European Programme Management Unit - EMPU (the ERDF managing authority in London) and its project monitoring officers and support the project lead in the effective management and execution of project outcomes.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Responsible for full delivery of the ARENA research outputs and assist directly with the management of the complete project lifecycle
- Overall responsibility to ensure the SRI research team adheres to ARENA processes, expenditure and record keeping are in line with and comply to guidance and stipulations of the ERDF Operational Programme 2014 -2020
- Drive innovation and new approaches to support ARENA project beneficiaries.
- Adapt a highly professional communication style to the appropriate audience with a hands-on approach, able to balance operational with strategic thinking.
- Ensuring that the project life cycle is followed in relation to the research outputs, and all governance requirements are adhered to (including the effective identification and mitigation of project risks)
- Developing detailed plans and adopting appropriate management processes to track project progress and for the early identification of issues and any necessary countermeasures regarding research milestones and deliverables.
- Building strong relationships with the Project Lead, Project Steering Group, ERDF managing authority team and all other key stakeholders and ensuring timely communication throughout the project

EXPERIENCE

- Proven experience of delivering complex grant funded environmental and sustainability projects
- Experience and knowledge of the research and innovation landscape in the fields of resource efficiency and green infrastructure
- Direct responsibility for financial management of project budgets ranging from £50k to £2m
- Detailed working knowledge of ERDF project processes and success factors
- Risk management of high-profile economic development projects
- Experience managing business-facing projects with strong research components
- Appropriate professional qualifications
- Managing resource, budgets and multiple stakeholders across the project and other key business areas
- Strong communication skills across all organisation levels
- Comprehensive knowledge of research processes, theories and methods within sustainability and ecology

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Ability to lead and manage multi-disciplinary teams
- Attention to detail and ability to cope with pressing deadlines and multiple tasks
- Successful track record of research projects and research output in a relevant subject area
- Commercially astute and risk aware

**GREATER
LONDON
AUTHORITY**



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

The ARENA project has received funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

Essential criteria;

- Educated to degree level standard or equivalent (A/C)

Desirable criteria;

- Post-Graduate qualification in a related subject Sustainability/Resource Management/Ecology. (A/C)

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:

Essential criteria;

- Experience of project management – particularly of grant funded projects (A/I)
- Experience of partnership working and partnership development (A/I)
- Experience of monitoring and reporting on financial and statistical information (A/I)
- Detail oriented and results-driven. Committed to delivering complex tasks on time and on budget. (I)
- Experienced in pre-empting potential programme risks, identifying relevant mitigation measures and implementing these in a timely manner.(I)
- Ability to remain focused and productive through sustained periods of high pressure and workload.(I)
- Experience of working in a business development or business support role (A/I)
- Good understanding of marketing and communications (A/I)
- Proficient user of MS Office suite (A/I)

Desirable criteria;

- Experience of working in the HE sector (A/I)

PLANNING AND ORGANISING:

- Ability to plan and manage own workload in collaboration with others and manage resources as appropriate to meet deadlines (I)

TEAMWORK AND MOTIVATION:

- Experience of working on own initiative and in a multidisciplinary team within a varying environment to build and strengthen working relationships. (I)

- Experience of working with industry research teams. (A/I/R)

COMMUNICATION:

- Excellent written and oral communication skills including the ability to adjust the content of information that needs careful explanation or interpretation to suit the needs of different audiences (I/R)

LIAISON AND NETWORKING:

- Excellent networking and the ability to foster and maintain business relationships (I)

SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Finance Management including forecasting, budget management, financial reporting, commercial awareness (A)
- Strong leadership skills, including the ability to motivate, develop and support teams in achieving a high level of performance (I)
- Ability to be flexible in thinking and approach, demonstrating strong problem-solving skills (I)

OTHER ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

- Commitment to and understanding of equal opportunities issues within a diverse and multicultural environment (I)
- Commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards in research (I)
- Commitment to the promotion and advancement of the university (I)

Criteria tested by Key:

A = Application form

C = Certification

I = Interview

T = Test

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