



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy



National Physical Laboratory, Chair

Applicants' pack

February 2021



**The Commissioner for
Public Appointments**

**Welcome Message from Amanda Solloway,
Minister for Science, Research and Innovation**

Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the National Physical Laboratory (NPL).

You may already have some idea about the important work of NPL and this pack will tell you more about the purpose and the nature of the role.

NPL's mission, to provide the measurement capability that underpins the UK's prosperity and quality of life, sees it playing directly into the national challenges of health, environment and security. It is focused on using its world-leading measurement to deliver the greatest impact. This has resulted in NPL leading and delivering a number high-value, high-profile programmes such as a Cancer Research UK Grand Challenge to map cancer from the molecular to the tumour (Google Earth of Cancers), the National Timing Centre delivering a resilient source of timing to the UK and TRUTHS, a UK-led satellite launch to greatly improve the accuracy of earth observation data. There is an increasing demand from industry and government for NPL to play a leading role in major programmes to address our current challenges.

At the heart of all these challenges is the need for trusted data to give confidence in decision-making. NPL's ambition is to create a new, quality-assured digital infrastructure for the UK that ensures key decisions around our health, security and environment are underpinned by confidence in the data. As we move to a future that is more than ever dependent on autonomous systems, be they "driverless cars" or "smart cities", having trust in that autonomy is imperative to ensure public confidence.

Leading NPL on the next step in its exciting journey presents a unique opportunity to provide the UK with competitive advantage and extraordinary impact from excellent science and engineering.

If you believe you have the experience and qualities we are seeking to contribute to this important organisation, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

We welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, including those from under-represented groups.



Amanda Solloway MP
Minister for Science, Research, and Innovation

VACANCY DESCRIPTION

The Organisation:

NPL is the UK's National Metrology Institute, developing and maintaining the national primary measurement standards. It is a Public Corporation owned by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It has a partnering agreement with BEIS and the University of Strathclyde and the University of Surrey. NPL is part of the National Measurement System (NMS) which provides the UK with a national measurement infrastructure and delivers the UK Measurement Strategy on behalf of Government.

We undertake excellent science and engineering to deliver extraordinary impact for the UK and provide the measurement capability that underpins the UK's prosperity and quality of life. From accelerating new antibiotics and more effective cancer treatments to developing unhackable quantum communications and superfast 5G, our expertise is crucial in researching, developing and testing new products and processes.

The Role:

Key responsibilities of the Chair will be:

- The effective organisation and leadership of the NPL Board. They will guide and influence the organisation at a strategic level providing clear and consistent leadership and scrutiny over the strategy, plans, finances and performance of NPL.
- Strengthening the Board's oversight of the organisation and holding the Executive to account for organisational performance.
- Acting as an ambassador for the Board and for NPL, helping to build and develop collaborative strategic partnerships that support and promote NPL's core mission and further NPL's strategic objective and reputation.
- Operating within the relevant standards and duties, including the principles of the Corporate Governance Code for Central Government Departments, Managing Public Money and other relevant Cabinet Office guidance. These represent relevant benchmarks for good practice in corporate governance.
- Supporting the role of NPL's science and engineering profile, both nationally and internationally.
- Continuing to build capacity and capability at the Board and Executive level to ensure NPL has the required experience and expertise to fulfil its mission, deliver its Corporate Plan and remain sustainable.
- Operating within organisation-specific governance documents to embed effective working relationships, including the Framework Document with BEIS.

Essential criteria

The specific essential requirements for this role which you must demonstrate in your application are:

- A proven track record, as a Chair or Non-Executive Director of an organisation with comparable scale and complexity, of leading, supporting, challenging and holding to account a strong Executive team and conveying confidence in the organisation's capability to deliver on its objectives.
- Ability to show evidence of excellent judgement and analytical ability, to assimilate a range of perspectives and evidence and absorb complex information to reach reasoned and robust conclusions.
- Genuine passion for creating an inclusive environment that fosters diversity by encouraging varied but collaborative contribution.
- Strong commercial experience, along with notable financial and risk management acumen.
- Extensive experience of stakeholder engagement in public facing positions, with proven influencing and networking abilities across diverse and high-profile key decision makers.

Desirable criteria

- Understanding and evidence of leading transformational change programmes.
- Experience working in, or in partnership with, research and technology organisations and Higher Education.
- Experience in the STEM sectors and relevant industry leadership.
- An appreciation of the political context within which the NPL operates and its public sector responsibility. The Board's governance and conduct must exhibit the highest standards of governance, propriety and transparency.
- The ability to maintain discretion and engender trust in staff, peers and stakeholders.

Terms of Appointment:

The NPL Chair will be appointed for a term of 3 years and be expected to work 20 days per annum.

Remuneration

The NPL Chair will receive a remuneration package of £20,500 per annum for this commitment.

Member Liability

The Department will provide that where a Board member has acted honestly, reasonably, in good faith and without negligence they will not have to meet out of their own personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in the execution or purported execution of their Board functions.

Standards in Public Life

Candidates must confirm that they understand the standards of probity required of public appointees outlined in the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Conflicts of Interest

Applicants must disclose information on personal connections, which if they were appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such.

It is very important therefore that all applicants provide appropriate details which might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which they are applying.

If it appears, from the information provided on the form, that a possible conflict might exist, or arise in the future, this will be fully explored with the applicant with a view to establishing whether it is sufficiently significant to prevent the individual from carrying out the duties of the post. The panel will do this at interview stage.

TIMESCALES AND SELECTION

Process	Date
Closing date	18 April 2021 at 11pm
Shortlist panel meeting	w/c 26 April or 4 May (this is subject to change)
Panel interviews (held remotely)	8 June (this is subject to change)
SoS decision on whom to appoint	TBC
Successful candidate takes up post	TBC

The selection panel membership is planned to be:

- **Panel Chair and BEIS Representative:** Harriet Wallace, Director, International Research and Innovation;
- **Representative of Organisation:** Dr Peter Thompson, CEO of NPL; and,
- **Independent Panel Member:** Wendy Barnes

HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications is 11pm on 18th April 2021. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

For us to progress your application, you **must** submit one PDF document which includes both of the below before 11pm on 18th April 2021:

- A curriculum vitae; and,
- A supporting statement (see note below on content)

by email (named in the following example format: Bloggs, J – NPL Chair Application) with the email subject “NPL Chair” to publicappointments@beis.gov.uk

If you do not submit both a curriculum vitae and a supporting statement by 11pm on 18th April 2021, your application will not be progressed any further.

We also ask that you complete an online application form, including referee details and whether you wish to be considered under the Disability Confidence scheme, which can be found [here](#).

Your **curriculum vitae** and **supporting statement** must each be no longer than **two** pages in length. If you submit documents which are longer than two pages each, any **information not contained within the first two pages of each document will be disregarded and will not be seen by the assessment panel.**

Your supporting statement should:

- Cover how you meet the criteria listed under the person specification;
- Be tailored to the role, describe what you would bring, describe your vision for the role, highlight any previous career achievements etc.

As a Disability Confident Leader, BEIS will offer interviews to disabled candidates who meet the published minimum requirements for a job or role. If you wish to apply for consideration under this scheme, please complete the declaration in the Diversity Monitoring Form provided. It is not necessary to state the nature of your disability.

Whether you choose to apply under the Disability Confident scheme or not, you can still ask us to make particular adjustments for you when attending an interview.

Please note feedback will not be provided after the shortlisting stage. Only candidates who attend an interview will be provided with feedback.

If you have any questions about the application process or about the role itself, please contact Nadia Toma in the first instance at publicappointments@beis.gov.uk.

DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is committed to the principle of public appointments on merit with independent assessment, openness and fairness of process and to providing equal opportunities for all.

Applications are welcome from all, but we particularly encourage applications from women, people from an ethnic minority, people with disabilities and other underrepresented groups. The role is available to those who have evidence of having the right to work in the UK. The successful candidate will need to have or be willing to undertake SC Security Clearance for this position:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-kingdom-security-vetting-clearance-levels/national-security-vetting-clearance-levels>

BEIS offers professional training courses on public sector finance and governance for those new to the public sector. BEIS works with Government Departments to ensure they have the capacity to attract the widest field of candidates and to make the best possible appointments. All applicants are asked to complete an anonymised Diversity Monitoring Form used for data gathering information only in order to ensure Departments are recruiting from the widest possible pool.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

What is a conflict of interest?

Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?

The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a board member can be extremely damaging to the body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the

same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?

You will find a section on conflicts of interest in the application form for you to complete. This asks you to consider and declare whether or not you have a real, or perceived, conflict. If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should still complete this section, in order to give the Selection Panel as much information as possible.

If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?

No - each case is considered individually. If you are short listed for interview, the Panel will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively and impartially on the Board and how this might be handled, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the Panel believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the Board or the appointment; they can withdraw your application from the competition.

What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?

Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the Seven Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life and may terminate your appointment.

What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?

This situation may arise where the applicant is not familiar with the broad range of work which a body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the Panel, with their wider knowledge of the body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?

This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.

In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the board and the Chief Executive of the body concerned, in consultation with the Sponsoring Department, to decide whether or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.

It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the body's routine business. In such, cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the body.

Areas where a conflict could arise

There are five main issues, which could lead to real, or apparent, conflicts of interest. These are:

- Relevant pecuniary or other interests outside the organisation;
- Relationships with other parties/organisations which could lead to perceived or real split loyalties;
- Pending Government Policy could give unfair personal advantage to people with allied business interests – for example access to privileged information – trade secrets;
- Perception of rewards for past contributions or favours;
- Membership of some societies or organisations.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. Consistent with the Governance Code, applicants will be assessed on merit, and all candidates for public appointment will need to uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life. These will be tested as part of the selection process and the Selection Panel must satisfy itself that all candidates for appointments can meet these standards; which are:

Selflessness

Holders of Public Office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity

Holders of Public Office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

Carrying out Public Office business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of Public Office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of Public Office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of Public Office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of Public Office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

BEIS GDPR PRIVACY NOTICE

This notice sets out how we will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

YOUR DATA

We may process the following personal data:

name, contact details, employment history, qualifications, CV and other background information relevant to your application including sift and interview assessments, conflicts of interest, and political activity.

This may also include other information gathered as part of due diligence, including information obtained from public sources.

Purpose / Whether the provision of personal data is part of a statutory or contractual requirement or obligation and possible consequences of failing to provide the personal data

To the extent that you are providing your personal data in relation to a BEIS Public Appointments, the failure to provide this information will mean that we are unable to progress your application for the positions advertised.

Our legal basis for receiving and using your data

Our legal basis for receiving and using this information is that BEIS and the Cabinet Office have both a legal obligation, and public task, to collect this data to ensure that high quality candidates are identified via robust recruitment processes in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointment published pursuant to Article 3(1) of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019. If requested by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, this information can be shared pursuant to Article 4 of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019.

We also process your data on the legal basis that it is necessary prior to entering into a contract/terms of appointment to carry out pre-appointment checks. We may process special category data which comes to light during due diligence checks which has manifestly been made public by you, or where it is of substantial public interest in order to carry out our functions. If you have applied for a BEIS public appointment we will share your information with the members of the Advisory Assessment Panel. If requested, it may also be shared with the Commissioner for Public Appointments pursuant to Article 4 of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019. This will be in a non-identifiable way.

We also process your data on the legal basis that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. This is enabled through section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The specific category of personal data is necessary for the purposes of identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with a view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained. It is not carried out for the purposes of measures or decisions with respect to your application for a government public appointment. You can choose not to declare this data.

Special category data is personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation.

Our legal basis for processing this information is documented above.

Recipients

If you apply or have been considered for a UK Government public appointment Information you supply to BEIS as part of your application for a UK Government Public Appointment may be shared with Cabinet Office.

Diversity data which may include age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, recorded disability, faith and geographical location, principal employment sector, number of government public appointments held, and declarable political activity may be held in a non-identifiable form for up to 5 years. This information may be shared with OCPA, your name will not be included. This data may be published in summary form.

This data is shared with Cabinet Office IT suppliers in order to securely collect and store the data. Contractual obligations in line with data protection law are placed on

our data processors to guard against loss of your data and require them to take all reasonable steps to treat your data reliably and with integrity.

Retention period

Applicant data will be collected on behalf of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) via a secure section of the HM Government Public Appointments website. BEIS may store your name, a summary of biographical details you shared and the outcome of your application for up to 3 years.

Diversity data which may include age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, recorded disability, faith and geographical location, principal employment sector, number of government public appointments held, and declarable political activity may be held for up to 3 years. This information may be shared with OCPA in a non-identifiable format, your name will not be included. This data may be published in summary form.

The record of the sift and interviews will be held by BEIS for the duration of the post.

This data is shared with Cabinet Office IT suppliers in order to securely collect and store the data. Contractual obligations in line with data protection law are placed on our data processors to guard against loss of your data and require them to take all reasonable steps to treat your data reliably and with integrity.

Your rights

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.

You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.

You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.

You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.

You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where it is processed for direct marketing purposes.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where the processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller, such as the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department; the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment; the exercise of a function of either House of Parliament; or the administration of justice.

Automated decision making

The existence of automated decision making, including profiling and information about how decisions are made, the significance and the consequences. The provision of the information you provide is not connected with individual decision making (making a decision solely by automated means without any human involvement) or profiling (automated processing of personal data to evaluate certain things about an individual)

International transfers

As your personal data will be stored on our IT infrastructure, and shared with our data processors, it may be transferred and stored securely outside the European Union. Where that is the case it will be subject to equivalent legal protection through the use of Model Contract Clauses or the Privacy Shield scheme.

Complaints

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

0303 123 1113

Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

Contact details

The data controller for Public Appointments is joint between the appointing department, OCPA and the Cabinet Office. The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Contact details are, BEIS DPO at:

BEIS Data Protection Officer, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, London SW1W 9SZ.

Email: dataprotection@beis.gov.uk.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

If you feel your application has not been treated fairly and you wish to make a complaint, you should initially send an email to: publicappointments@beis.gov.uk

If you are not content with our response, please contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments at: publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

Further information on complaints procedure can be found on the [Commissioner for Public Appointment's website](#).