**JOB DESCRIPTION**

This form summarises the purpose of the job and lists its key tasks.

It may be varied from time to time at the discretion of the College in consultation with the post-holder.

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| **Job Title:** Head of Research Contracts | **Job ref no:** RSO-0298-24 |
| **Grade:** 8 | **Department:** Research & Innovation Office |
| **Accountable to:** Director of Research and Innovation Services | **Responsible for:** Research & Business Contracts Managers (2x fte) |

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| **Job summary:**  The Royal Veterinary College is the UK’s largest and longest-established independent vet school. As a world leading specialist veterinary and biological science research institution, the RVC brings together talented individuals; all of whom share a passion for human and animal health and welfare.  The Head of Research Contracts is a critical role within the Research and Innovation Office (RIO) at RVC. As part of the RIO Leadership Team, the postholder will provide support to academic staff through the delivery of an effective service that reviews, drafts and/or negotiates a range of research and commercial agreements in biological science and veterinary medicine / science. The postholder will also play a leading role in the further development of policies and processes related to the RVC research and innovation portfolio, and working with relevant colleagues to agree mitigation strategies for identified risks at project and strategic levels. The postholder will have a good awareness of compliance and third-party due diligence, specifically as it pertains to research and innovation collaborations.  The postholder will lead and develop a small team of Research & Business Contracts Managers. The postholder will ensure best practice in the drafting and negotiation of contracts, so that the Research and Innovation Office can continue to provide a high-quality, timely service to RVC academics and their collaborators. The postholder will identify projects with a high level of risk and work closely with academic leads and senior managers, assisting informed decision making and mitigations.. The post holder will also be an adroit communicator and will take ownership of sensitive or otherwise complex matters to ensure all parties are apprised of progress and actions.  The postholder will have experience of service delivery within a university or comparable research contracts office, and an excellent practical understanding of standard types of research collaboration agreement (e.g. Lambert Agreements, Brunswick Agreements, Horizon Europe / DESCA Model Consortium Agreement), and also with a range of research-related agreements including research services, consultancy agreements, non-disclosure agreements, material transfer agreements, option and license agreements.. A sound working knowledge of the contract law of England and Wales is essential. |

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| **Competency: Leadership and Management**  **Key tasks:**   * Lead the research contracts function at the RVC, taking responsibility for its day-to-day operations including workload allocation and review, and portfolio management and support. * Promote best practice in contract review, drafting and negotiation. * Assessing risk associated with contracts and partnerships and determining where further discussion and escalation I s necessary. * Take ownerships of particularly complex or sensitive contractual documents or negotiations as appropriate, ensuring their timely conclusion. * Provide line management and direction for two Contracts Managers and play an active role in training and development. * As part of the RIO leadership team, play a leading role in the development and implementation of co-ordinated, end to end policies and processes. |
| **Competency: Research and Commercial Contracts, and Contract Law**  **Key tasks:**   * Advise academic staff and senior managers on any risk or concerns in relation to entering into particular contracts with external funders and collaborators including public bodies, research institutions, charities and commercial organisations. * Draft, amend, refine, negotiate and advise in relation to research and commercial contracts and related correspondence involving potential funders and collaborators. * Provide support for commercial transactions such as option or license agreements, identifying where external, specialist contracting support may be required. |
| **Competency: Compliance and Due Diligence**  **Key tasks:**   * Ensure that third party due diligence is complete and satisfactory as part of pre-signature reviews in line with internal processes and external expectations. * Input into development of policies, processes and best practice in relation to the external compliance environment including the NS&I Act 2021, Strategic Export Control environment and expectations around Trusted Research. |
| **Competency: Liaison and Networking**  **Key tasks:**   * Ensure the timely provision of information and guidance to academic and administrative staff across the RVC, including alerting to identified risks and contracting best practice * Establish effective and collaborative working relationships with colleagues in other professional services departments, drawing on their specialist knowledge as required. * Share expertise with professional services colleagues across the HE community and beyond, to ensure that changing practices in research contracts management and due diligence are reflected in RVC practice and policy. * Play an active role in developing and delivering outreach activities, including workshops and information sessions as part of ensuring RVC staff have access to appropriate contracting advice and guidance. |
| **Competency: Analysis and Reporting**  **Key tasks:**   * Review activities and levels of responsiveness on a continuous basis, seeking feedback from academic colleagues and recommending improvements to the design and operation of the research contracts function. * Analyse and regularly report progress and/or challenges to the Director of Research and Innovation Services , proposing such remedial action as may be required to resolve issues and optimise the allocation of resources. * Identify, collect and manage timely, appropriate and detailed management information conducive to longitudinal monitoring of risk on contracts, and the Research and Innovation Office’s performance in processing contracts. * Build and share expertise on external compliance expectations and legislation, in order to identify and manage risk. * Provide reports and/or other analyses as required for Research and Innovation Committee, Research and Innovation Working Groups and other committees where relevant. |
| **Competency: Sensory and Physical Demands, and Work Environment**  **Key tasks:**   * Out-of-hours working may be required on occasion, e.g. in order to participate in events. |
| **Flexibility**: To deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility is needed, and the post-holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above. |