

JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Job title: Head of NIAB CUF Potato Agronomy Group Job Grouping: Management / Specialist Tier 2 Reports to: Director of NIAB Agronomy	Business Unit: NIAB Agronomy Location: Cambridge, UK Line Manages: Senior / Research Associates, Senior Technician, Administrator
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2. Main purpose of role:

The NIAB CUF Potato Agronomy Group undertakes research and knowledge exchange projects and activities focused primarily on potato crop agronomy and variety development / evaluation. The group comprises up to six researchers, four field / lab technicians (including a team leader) and an administrator, and usually hosts a PhD student registered with the University of Cambridge. The research involves field experiments based mainly at Cambridge and in eastern England. Income is obtained through: research grants from AHDB (levy), UKRI (government) and commercial companies; from consultancy and lab services; and from commercial yield & irrigation models. The Potato Agronomy Group has a long-standing relationship with the Cambridge University Potato Growers Research Association (CUPGRA), which provides an annual grant to NIAB CUF to support research and knowledge exchange. NIAB CUF also organise and deliver a series of meetings / events for CUPGRA members during the year.

The Head of NIAB CUF leads the group, and is responsible for overseeing all activities and managing key research and industry relationships (including CUPGRA and AHDB). The jobholder is directly involved in securing research funding and consultancy / service business, in knowledge exchange, and in national and international networking to maintain a high profile for NIAB CUF. They are also responsible for team development, developing and implementing the strategy for NIAB CUF, and for managing group income and expenditure, working to consolidate and grow NIAB CUF's activities and income, and hence the influence of NIAB CUF in the marketplace for potato research, information and services.

NIAB CUF forms part of NIAB Agronomy, which includes agronomy research, field trialling, laboratory services, crop management information and consultancy services across a range of field crops. The jobholder works closely with the other team heads within NIAB Agronomy, as a member of its management team. They also work with research team leads in other parts of the NIAB group, with a close connection to the Cambridge Centre for Crop Science, a translational research partnership between NIAB and the University of Cambridge.

3. Financial authority/responsibility:

The jobholder is responsible for securing group income of around £1M, and overseeing delivery of NIAB CUF activities with direct costs of c. £800K.

4. Key relationships:

Research scientists, technical staff and postgraduate students within NIAB CUF, and the wider NIAB group. NIAB Executive, and other group / team heads

External industry, sponsors and funders (in particular AHDB and CUPGRA). Academic / research staff and students in other institutions (especially the University of Cambridge / Cambridge Centre for Crop Science)

Tasks/responsibilities	Approx. % of time
Management and strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategy development • staff management and development • oversee delivery of NIAB CUF research projects, services, consultancies and knowledge exchange activities • contract management • financial management • facilities management 	40

<p>Research and knowledge exchange:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop research objectives, projects and proposals • act as principal investigator / project lead on research projects • collaborate actively within and outside the Group to undertake research projects • supervise PhD students • assess, interpret and evaluate outcomes of research • extend, translate and apply knowledge acquired to further research and practice • write or contribute to publications or disseminate research findings using other appropriate media • make presentations at conferences or exhibit work in other appropriate events 	50
<p>Liaison and networking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead relationship with CUPGRA and AHDB • develop links with external contacts such as other research and educational bodies • originate and develop external networks, for example to identify and secure sources of funding, generate income, obtain consultancy projects, or build relationships for future activities 	10

6. Working conditions:

Office, field and laboratory environments. The role will require working outside in a range of conditions.

The jobholder will be required to work outside of normal hours at times, in order to carry out time-critical field work, or to attend / present at meetings and events.

The jobholder will be expected to travel, including by car, to conduct fieldwork at external sites or to attend / present at meetings in the UK and overseas.

The jobholder may be required to conduct risk assessments and takes responsibility for health and safety of others.

7. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Education/Qualifications:

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>PhD in applied biology or agronomy (Applicants with a relevant degree / MSc only may be considered if they can demonstrate that they have equivalent skills and training)</p>	

Experience:

Essential:	Desirable:
<p>Minimum 5-10 years of postdoctoral (or equivalent) research experience in crop physiology, pathology and/or agronomy OR 5-10 years of employment in a similar research or technical role in industry</p> <p>Track record of securing project income from a variety of sources, and of managing a group, staff and projects</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of potato production in the UK, Europe and/or North America</p>	<p>Experience in physiology, pathology and/or agronomy research specific to potatoes</p> <p>Knowledge of potato variety development, evaluation and/or breeding</p> <p>Conversant with potato production systems and supply chains in the UK</p> <p>Knowledge of collecting, analysing and applying 'big data'</p>

Specialist Training:

Essential:	Desirable:
Specialist knowledge of research methods and techniques to develop research objectives, projects and proposals Competent user of Windows and Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) software Full driving licence (ability to travel by car to sites around the UK is required)	Competent user of Genstat statistical analysis software

Personal Qualities (skills, behaviours and competencies)

Essential:	Desirable:
Influential leader, with the ability to operate at both strategic and operational levels Diplomacy when dealing with customers and stakeholders Commercially astute and technically strong Accuracy, consistency of approach and attention to detail Excellent communication and presentation skills at all levels Good planning skills, and proficient at financial management Able to handle pressure and critical decision-making	

Date of description: 26/06/19**Compiled by:** Stuart Knight