**Evidence and Advice Teams; External Science Cell Adviser (Academic)**

**Background**

The role of the Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA), Sir Patrick Vallance, is to advise the Prime Minister and Cabinet on all science and technology issues. GCSA is supported by the Government Office for Science (GO-Science) who coordinate across Government, industry and academia. We are a new and high-profile area of GO-Science set up to coordinate and deliver the central science advice needed to support the Government’s ongoing response to COVID-19.

We are looking for highly motivated individuals who want to help us deliver the best possible science advice, and gain experience and insight into the mechanics and role of science advice and policy in government. We also provide scientific support to HMG in planning and preparedness for major national risks and emergencies, through the provision of the secretariat function for the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE). SAGE exists to provide timely, independent, high quality, consensus-based science advice to the PM, COBR, departments and agencies. Details of SAGE structures can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies

The COVID-19-SAGE is co-chaired by GCSA with the Chief Medical Officer, and work is coordinated and delivered by the GO-Science COVID-19 Teams. The COVID-19 Evidence and Advice area is responsible for providing rapid and accurate information to the GO-Science COVID-19 response and relevant stakeholders.

**Job description**

You will provide scientific support across the response team, and will be a key part of either the Health and Clinical or Modelling and Interventions teams, who lead on gathering and reporting evidence and advice in the GO-Science COVID-19 Response. Working with your team and your network of specialists you will advise the GCSA, the Director of GO-Science and wider GO-Science staff, as well as engaging with policy leads across government. You will be embedded in the civil service response team, and will provide scientific insights, ideas and suggestions to inform how we manage and work with SAGE and its subgroups.

Health and Clinical: This team deals with all aspects of the biology of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 disease. This includes genomics, pathology, immunology, vaccines, therapeutics, virology and the science of preventing disease transmission. The team works with various specialist science advisory groups such as the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG), the Vaccines Task Force and the SAGE Environmental and Modelling Group.

Modelling and Interventions: This team focuses on the production of SAGE’s epidemiological advice and modelling, primarily from the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M) in the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). Understanding the epidemiology of SARS-CoV-2 virus and the impact of government interventions on transmission is essential to formulating the most effective ways to control the epidemic.

Your work will include feeding information into COVID-19-SAGE, contributing to briefing and information packages, effective data visualisation and reporting, and collating evidence from literature and stakeholders. You will work closely with the other COVID-19 teams in GO-Science and departments across government, particularly DHSC (including NHS Test & Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre), Cabinet Office and No 10.

**Potential applicants should come from research backgrounds relevant to understanding the biological, health and clinical aspects of COVID-19 such as infectious disease, virology, clinical research, immunology, genetics / genomics, public health, or epidemiology.**

**Essential skills/experience:**

* Postdoctoral level or above in relevant topic.
* Excellent written and oral communication skills to audiences at all levels and seniorities, including non-technical policy and operational stakeholders.
* Ability to effectively translate and communicate scientific evidence for application in real world settings, particularly policy development.
* Quickly and accurately draw conclusions from wide range of information sources and disciplines and report findings succinctly.
* Ability to work cooperatively within a team as well as independently and proactively.

**Desirable skills/experience:**

* Experience working with, or in policy or governmental organisations.
* Relevant experience from industry (e.g. diagnostics, pharmaceuticals), clinical training and/or exposure to clinical environments, epidemic management, direct policy advice or development.
* Science communication: systematic reviews, rapid evidence synthesis, science writing

**Responsibilities**

* Provide expert scientific and academic advice to GO-Science, SAGE and the GCSA on the state of the outbreak
* Critically assess information on the outbreak and related developments, including scientific literature and open source data
* Support work across GO-Science, wider government and the research community to ensure there is a consistent understanding of the outbreak and to ensure the scientific knowledge is accurate and accessible.
* Provide expert advice and support to the specific response team best suited to their experience.
* Participate in regular team and sub-group meetings. Provide insight to discussions and help with translating technical discussions back into response team actions e.g. summarising content from sub-groups for chair’s briefs for SAGE meetings.
* Develop specific products/materials to summarise available academic research.
* Provide flexible, ad-hoc support across the response team where needed, including to GCSA.
* Leverage wider academic insights and networks to draw in new expertise and insights into the response team.
* Adhere to relevant working environment and civil service codes including actively fostering, supporting, and promoting an inclusive working environment where all opinions and challenges are taken into account.
* **Importantly, specialists should not be performing any of the core civil service functions, as these are for the core staff working on the response**

We are constantly looking to diversify our workforce to give us the broadest range of perspectives possible. We will ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided reasonable adjustments to participate in the job application or interview process, to perform essential job functions, and to receive other benefits of employment. Please contact us to request any adjustments needed. This role will be carried out remote working; there is no need to be located in London.

**Behaviours**

Seeing the bigger picture, Communicating and influencing (lead behaviour), Working together, Leadership. Making effective decisions.