



Head of Strategic Partnerships & Operations, Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC)

Faculty of Biology, Medicine & Health

Candidate Briefing Pack
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Welcome from the Director of MCRC

Welcome to the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC), a unique and world-leading research partnership founded in 2006 by The University of Manchester, Cancer Research UK and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust,

The MCRC represents the research-intensive programmes within the largest single site comprehensive cancer centre in the UK or Europe. Together with its partners, the MCRC drives a consistent and integrated strategy for cancer research and innovation in Manchester. Our vision is to unite science and drive clinical excellence to create a future free from the burden of cancer utilising “precision oncology for all”.

The MCRC partnership has helped drive an integrated cancer research strategic approach and delivery programme with international credibility and recognition. Since its inception, the MCRC partnership has broadened cancer research activities across multiple NHS trusts, cancer research funders and the University of Manchester.

As the University of Manchester enters its third century in 2024, our motto of ‘Knowledge, Wisdom and Humanity’ remains the driving force across our collective institutional efforts towards improving the lives of people across the world. It has a proud heritage, reputation and ambition and is top in both the UK and Europe, and second in the world, for

meaningful contributions toward the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) in the 2023 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. Indeed, we are the only University in the world to feature in the top ten of this ranking since its inception. The MCRC research assets and extramural collaborations is a major contributor to this ranking.

The growing MCRC research portfolio and grant income are indicative of international research excellence akin to national and international comparators accredited by the National Cancer Institute/NIH and Organisation of European Cancer Institutes. Bringing together world-leading researchers with diverse interests across a range of specialisms, the MCRC Team Science approach enables active collaboration between multidisciplinary groups towards the common goal of building excellence in basic and translational research and drive this to improve patient outcomes.

The Head of Strategic Partnerships and Operations aligns closely to the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health at the University of Manchester and is a critical role for both the delivery of the research strategy and portfolio of the MCRC and to demonstrate operational leadership. We are looking for a highly skilled, organised and motivated individual who can positively influence and work with multiple stakeholders from different sectors and help us maximise the research opportunities and impact for the MCRC at the national and international level. We would welcome conversations with potential candidates ahead of applications and look forward to working with you soon.

Professor Robert Bristow

Director MCRC

Director CRUK Manchester Centre
Chief Academic Officer, The Christie



The University of Manchester



The University of Manchester is one of the largest single-site institutions in the UK, with an annual turnover in excess of £1 billion, some 12,500 staff and over 40,000 students and a significant ongoing investment programme.

We were the first and most eminent of the civic universities, furthering the frontiers of knowledge through teaching and research, but also contributing to the wellbeing of its region and society more widely. These aims have guided the University ever since and continue to drive its strategic vision.

[Our Future](#), the University's vision and strategic plan, builds on the rich heritage of discovery, social change and pioneering spirit that is at the heart of the University and the city region. Our vision is to be recognised globally for the excellence of our people, research, learning and innovation, and for the benefits we bring to society and the environment.

To achieve our ambitious vision, we will continue to attract and retain the very best people to work across a range of academic disciplines and support functions, who bring our shared values to life.

It is a place with a rich history of pure and applied research, where students experience outstanding teaching and learning, helping them to develop into tomorrow's leaders, and where all activity is enriched by a commitment to social responsibility. The Academic Ranking of World Universities currently rates Manchester as the 41st best university in the world, 10th best in Europe, and 6th best in the UK.

Our University is strongly committed to [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\)](#) and we have a wide range of means through which we support this strategic priority.





The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH)

The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health has an integrated structure that enables us to develop and deliver the highest quality education and training for health professionals and life scientists in partnership with the NHS and industry. We contribute to the University's tradition of innovation and improvements in the health of people around the world.

With 11,000 students, 3,200 staff, over 30 undergraduate courses and around 90 postgraduate taught courses, the Faculty integrates discovery biology, clinical application and patient care. We are the largest supplier of healthcare graduates to the NHS in the north-west of England and produce highly trained and skilled professionals who are increasingly sought-after by employers across the health industry.

This is supported by a programme of continuing professional development in teaching and learning for the academic staff and health professionals who teach our students. We take our social responsibility to contribute to the 'greater good' seriously.

The Faculty's matrix structure facilitates interdisciplinary working and enables us to learn from each other and share best practice; our [vision and strategy](#) is supported by a Faculty teaching and learning strategy.

The University's Silver award [2023 Teaching Excellence Framework](#) demonstrates commitment to continuously improving our students' experience and we are especially proud of our Gold award for student outcomes.

About Manchester Centre for Cancer Research (MCRC)

The Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC) is a unique cancer research partnership founded in 2006 by the University of Manchester, [Cancer Research UK](#) and [The Christie NHS Foundation Trust](#). Since its creation, the MCRC partnership has since expanded to encompass cancer research activities across multiple NHS trusts, cancer research funders and the University of Manchester, driving a consistent, compatible and integrated cancer research strategy and delivery programme at the level of an international comprehensive cancer centre. The MCRC's ultimate aim is to create a future free from the burden of cancer utilising "precision oncology for all".

The MCRC Team Science approach is focused on enabling multidisciplinary groups to collaborate towards a shared goal – building upon excellence in basic and translational research and drive this to improve patient outcomes. The MCRC therefore brings together world-leading researchers with diverse interests across a range of specialisms. The internationally leading research programmes within the MCRC partnership includes activities across multiple tumour site groups and Faculties and has programmes linked to a range of themes covering basic, translational and clinical research. Overall, the MCRC portfolio and activities are viewed as a comprehensive cancer research centre to be competitive with similar research programming

within to National Cancer Institute and Organisation of European Cancer Institute / European Academy of Cancer Sciences accredited comprehensive cancer research centres.

The Head of Strategic Partnerships and Operations will drive both operational leadership and delivery of the research strategy and portfolio of the MCRC. They will be responsible for the strategic management, research development, stakeholder management, business engagement and commercialisation activities in order to maximise the research opportunities and impact for the MCRC at the national and international level.

The post holder will be a proactive, highly skilled, organised and motivated individual with proven experience of managing multi-partner cancer or other biomedical research projects. They will need to influence and work with multiple stakeholders from different sectors, to provide operational leadership for one of the premier biomedical research programmes in the UK . They also will ensure its alignment with Health Innovation Manchester (HInM), the Greater Manchester (GM) Cancer Plan and other research structures pertinent to the MCRC strategy.

**MANCHESTER CANCER
RESEARCH CENTRE**



The MCRC: At a Glance

Key metrics from the Manchester Cancer Research Centre and its partnership covering the full cancer research spectrum and Centres of Excellence.

£150m

in active research grants across all cancer research

230,000

patient samples now held in the MCRC biobank for use in research

300

postgraduate cancer trainees across the MCRC partnerships

1,000

research papers published every year

64,000

patients treated each year at The Christie

800

clinical students currently active at the Christie incl. Phase 1-4 and observational studies

100K

radiotherapies delivered each year at The Christie

100K

systematic therapies delivered at The Christie each year



About The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

The Christie is Europe's largest single-site cancer centre and a global leader in cancer care, research, and innovation. Treating over 60,000 patients each year, The Christie is recognised for its pioneering spirit, world-class expertise, and unwavering focus on improving outcomes for people with cancer.

As the first UK centre accredited as a Comprehensive Cancer Centre by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI), The Christie has delivered over a century of groundbreaking discoveries and continues to shape the future of cancer services in partnership with academic and healthcare collaborators.

A Unique Opportunity

This is a joint post with The University of Manchester, a globally renowned research institution and a key partner in our cancer innovation ecosystem.

The Christie, together with its MCRC partners, invested £150 million in the new Paterson Building. This co-locates researchers, clinicians and staff from The Christie Research & Innovation, Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute and Division of Cancer Sciences, enabling seamless cross-organisational collaboration and a true Team Science approach.

Why The Christie?

- Serving a population of 3.2 million across Greater Manchester — with 25% of our patients referred nationally.
- One of Europe's largest early-phase clinical trials units, with more than 600 trials currently open, including targeted and immunotherapy studies.
- Leading outcomes-focused research using real-world data, and ePROMs/ePREMs.
- The UK's most advanced radiotherapy centre with access to SABR, MR-Linac, proton beam therapy, and radiobiology research.
- National centre for specialist surgery for rare and complex cancers.
- One of the UK's largest chemotherapy facilities.
- OECI Comprehensive Cancer Centre accreditation.

Join a high-performing, values-driven team at the forefront of global cancer research and care. If you're ready to lead strategically, influence nationally, and deliver meaningful impact — we'd love to hear from you.



About Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK (CRUK) is the world's largest charitable funder of cancer research.

Cancer Research UK are valued supporters of research in Manchester investing in infrastructure, networks and development opportunities for researchers. Specifically in Manchester, CRUK supports:

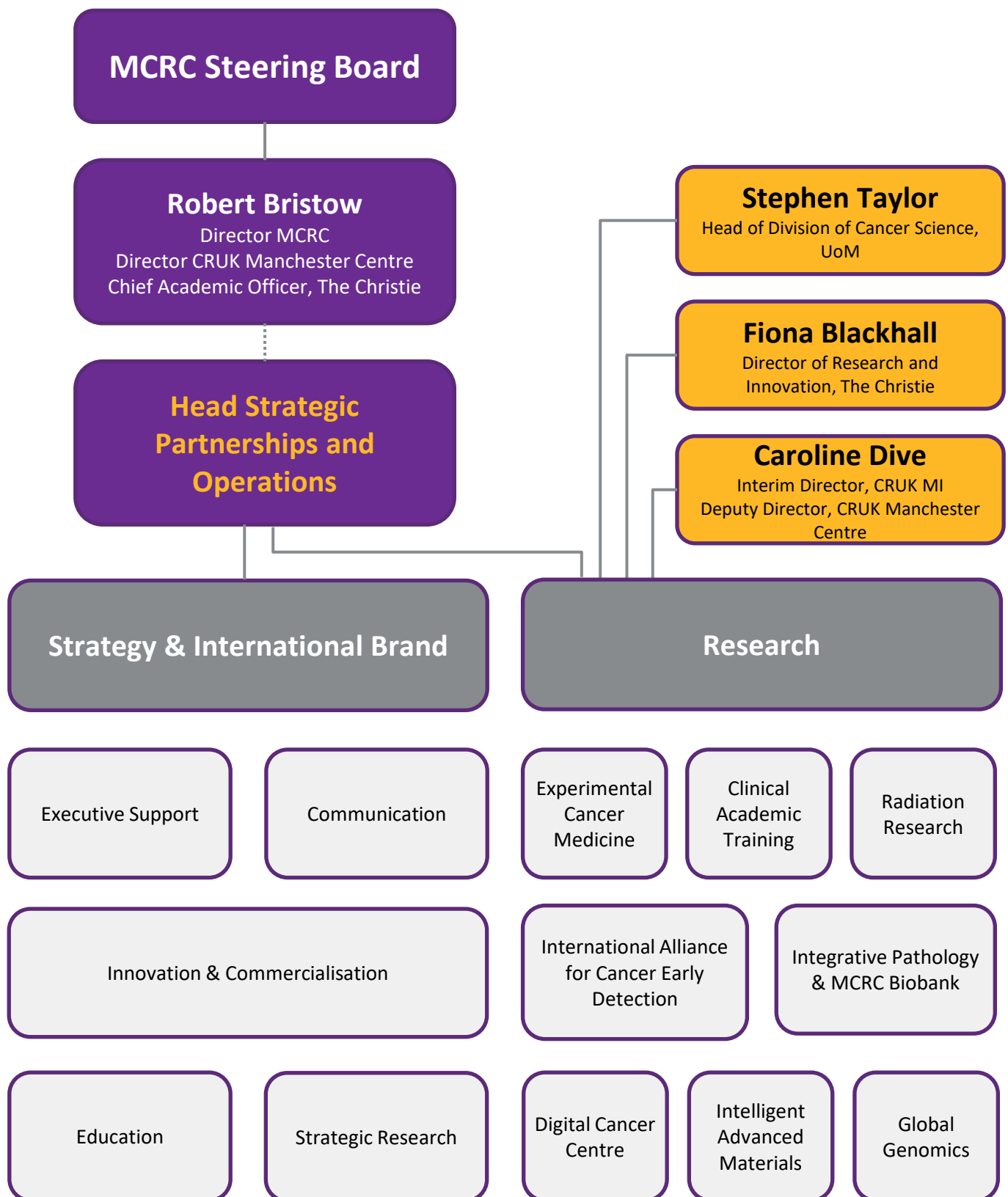
The CRUK Manchester Institute (CRUK MI) is a leading cancer research institute within The University of Manchester, covering the whole spectrum of cancer research – from investigating the molecular and cellular basis of cancer, to translational research and the development of therapeutics. The Institute supports several investigative programmes, spanning both basic and translational cancer research. It has state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and outstanding core services, including genomic sequencing, high resolution microscopy, bioinformatics, histology, and mass spectrometry-based proteomics. The Institute is made up of over 400 Postdoctoral Scientists, Clinical Fellows, Scientific Officers, Operational and Technical staff, Postgraduate Research Students and Visiting Fellows.

Manchester is also home to the **CRUK Manchester Centre**, part of a network of seven dedicated cancer centres across the UK. The Centre benefits from strong partnerships across Manchester and works collaboratively to improve the translation of science from the lab to the clinic and to ultimately improve outcomes for patients with cancer. The Centre supports ground-breaking research across five core cross-cutting research themes: cancer biomarkers, integrative pathology, experimental cancer medicine, radiotherapy bio-adaption and cancer early detection.

CRUK also supports the International Alliance for Cancer Early Detection (ACED), RadNet Manchester, Lung Cancer Centre of Excellence, Clinical Academic Training programme, National Biomarker Centre, as well as many other programme-level awards.



MCRC Organisational Chart



Job Description

Main Purpose:

The Head of Strategic Partnerships and Operations will report to the Director of School Operations, School of Medical Sciences and liaise with Professional Services in the School of Medical Sciences staff and similar key senior professional services or operations leads in the CRUK and Christie and other partners.

The Head of Strategic Partnerships and Operations will co-report to the Director of the MCRC to deliver on the MCRC Strategy. They will work closely with researchers and leads at the CRUK Scientific Advisory Board, the Directors of the CRUK Manchester Institute and National Biomarker Centre, the Chief Executive and senior R&I staff of The Christie, the Dean office of the Faculty of Biology Medicine and Health (FBMH), the offices of the Head of Division of Cancer Sciences-SMS as well as the offices of the Vice Deans for both Research and Innovation, Internationalisation and the Associate Vice Dean for Research through UMRI.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

Major areas of activity and associated responsibilities of the role will include:

Research Strategy

- Provide leadership to develop, implement and monitor the MCRC strategic objectives at a national and international level.
- To develop strategies and operational plans to support continued investment to ensure sustainability of the MCRC's activities and impact.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with the relevant funding bodies, Government departments and policy-makers, ensuring that the MCRC is able to drive and capitalise on relevant funding opportunities and policy changes.
- Support the Director and the MCRC-associated scientific advisory and steering boards with respect to strategic initiatives and their implementation within MCRC's priority research areas.
- Develop, implement and sustain a Cancer Team Science approach to MCRC research.
- Coordinate and write large-scale proposals, bids and tenders to support programmes of research and to draw in new and sustainable income sources.
- Anticipate future strategic developments and ensure that the MCRC is best positioned to respond at both national and international levels.



Job Description (continued)

Research Operations

- Ensure MCRC partner programming and research delivery within the new Paterson building, the Oglesby Cancer Research Building, the Christie, NCA and MFT trusts and diverse Faculties within the University of Manchester.
- Provide oversight of current and new infrastructure awards including the Alliance for Cancer Early Detection (ACED) and the Radiation Research Network (RadNet).
- Oversee the governance and reporting structures for the MCRC and participate in relevant committees.
- Research support operations across the MCRC aligned with programmes within Health Innovation Manchester (HInM), the MAHSC Cancer Domain and the Greater Manchester Cancer Plan.
- Responsible and accountable for the MCRC budgets, including the CRUK Manchester Centre and other CRUK Centre related awards.
- Be responsible for the line management of senior MCRC staff, conducting PDRs and inductions.
- Maintain effective working relationships with the University's Directorate of Research & Business Engagement and similar directorates in CRUK and the Christie to ensure mutual benefit to all partners through the MCRC.
- Coordinate translational training and development of institute staff to foster contract research projects, sponsorship, spin-out activities, effective consultancy, and partnering with major corporates.
- Drive successful partnerships and research strategy alignment across R&I programming within the University of Manchester, CRUK (including the CRUK MI and NBC) and the Christie NHS Foundation Trust (and other Trusts as warranted).
- Make a significant contribution to the design and implementation of effective and efficient management practices; developing and reviewing priorities against wider strategic plans.
- Manage and be accountable for budgets assigned to the functions for which responsible, ensuring effectiveness and value for money.
- Play a key role in establishing and maintaining the MCRC's reputation and profile nationally and internationally.
- Benchmark and develop KPIs where appropriate so that the MCRC can be seen as a leader exemplifying best practice, sharing it as appropriate and learning from the experience of others.
- Ensure a culture of excellent performance within the team.
- Embed a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration, consistency and innovation, and lead on change initiatives.
- Establish and agree protocols for the systematic and ongoing review and improvement of processes, ensuring that requirements are prioritised on the basis of agreed strategic objectives and operational priorities and are progressed on a timely basis through agreed internal governance routes.

Key Accountabilities

- Drive the ongoing development and implementation of strategic and policy priorities to realise the MCRC's strategic ambitions at a national and international level.
- Provide leadership, organise, motivate and direct the work of the team(s) so that objectives are met, and they are operating efficiently and effectively.
- Responsible for compliance with and promotion of university policies, procedures and requirements including health and safety; equality, diversity and inclusion; and information governance.
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in both the MCRC team and research strategy delivery.



Person Specification

Candidates must be able demonstrate that they meet the requirements of this person specification to be considered for the role:

- Experience of working in an interdisciplinary research environment, or transferable experience.
- Evidence of strategic, research-related management in an academic or industry setting.
- Knowledge of research funding initiatives with proven successful experience of coordinating and writing large funding proposals or of securing external income.
- Significant experience of leadership with a proven record in effectively leading and managing a team.
- Substantial professional experience and evidence of progressive professional development.
- Significant experience of setting and achieving clear and challenging performance goals.
- Ability to manage large projects and operations within budget.
- Substantial experience of policy development and the delivery of large projects.
- Ability to think in strategic terms and exercise leadership across a broad area.
- The capacity to innovate and drive change management and the ability to create and communicate plans.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to engage and influence colleagues and work collaboratively across organisational boundaries in the pursuit of local and university strategies.
- Demonstrable personal and professional commitment to the MCRC's strategic goals, themes and values.

Appointment Process

The University of Manchester has appointed Veredus, an executive search agency, to assist with this appointment(www.veredus.co.uk).

To apply for this post, you will need to submit the following documentation to us by no later than **24th April 2025 (end of day)**:

- A **CV** setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements.
- A **Supporting Statement** of not more than two A4 sized pages succinctly highlighting your motivation, experience and skills against the requirements of the role, with reference to criteria in the person specification.
- A completed **Diversity Monitoring Form and Candidate Supporting Information Form**. Forms can be downloaded from the Veredus job page.

Applications should be sent via Veredus website - www.veredus.co.uk, quoting reference number **17769**.

All submissions will receive an automated response. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt when submitting your application, please contact us on education@veredus.co.uk.

Further Information

For a confidential discussion about the role, please contact our advising consultants at Veredus:

- Reece D'Alanno on 07522 624875 or reece.dalanno@veredus.co.uk
- Veronika Dergal on 07547 769762 or veronika.dergal@veredus.co.uk

Indicative Timeline

- Closing date: 24 April 2025 (end of day).
- Final interviews: end of May 2025

Please note these dates are indicative and may be subject to change.

GDPR

At Veredus, we take care to protect the privacy of our candidates and clients. To read more about how we collect, store and share your data please read our privacy notice which can be accessed here: <https://www.veredus.co.uk/privacy-policy/>

