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Director General UK Defence Innovation

Ministry of Defence

Apply before 11:55 pm on Monday 9th February 2026



Reference number

445423

Salary

£225,000

If you are successful and are from outside of the Civil Service, you can expect your salary on appointment to be between £225,000 - £250,000 per annum.

A Civil Service Pension with an employer contribution of 28.97%

Job grade

SCS Pay Band 3

Contract type

Permanent

Type of role

Senior leadership

Working pattern

Flexible working, Full-time, Job share

Number of jobs available

1

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Location

You can be based at MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol or MOD Main Office, London. Other NAD Group sites could be considered and should be discussed with Korn Ferry upon submitting an application

About the job

Job summary

Director General UK Defence Innovation (DG UKDI) is a pivotal role within the Ministry of Defence, created to deliver the UK's flagship Defence Innovation organisation. This role will lead the transformation of Defence's approach to technology and capability development, ensuring the UK Armed Forces maintain operational advantage while driving national prosperity through innovation.

Job description

DG UKDI will be the single point of accountability for the UK's Defence Innovation strategy, governance, and delivery. Reporting directly to the National Armaments Director, the role will consolidate existing innovation entities into a unified, high-performing organisation, managing a £400M innovation fund and influencing a £2BN research and development budget. It will also play a key role in shaping the £12BN Defence investment portfolio.

This is a multi-billion-pound, multi-year endeavour central to the Strategic Defence Review, which commits to embedding innovation as a military capability in its own right. DG UKDI will accelerate the adoption of cutting-edge technologies such as AI, autonomy, quantum systems, and digital platforms, while fostering collaboration with industry, academia, and international partners. The role will also drive cultural and structural change across Defence to deliver capability at pace.

DG UKDI will have the opportunity to design and implement a new operating model, establish robust governance, and build a high-performing senior team. Success will require exceptional leadership, strategic vision, and commercial acumen to influence Ministers, senior Defence leaders, industry CEOs, investors, and NATO allies.

Person specification

We are looking for an outstanding leader with a proven track record of delivering large-scale, complex programmes under conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity. You will have board-level credibility, experience in driving organisational change, and the ability to build strong partnerships across government, industry, and international stakeholders.

Benefits

Alongside your salary of £225,000, Ministry of Defence contributes £65,182 towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme. [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides.](#)

Learning and development tailored to your role

An environment with flexible working options

A culture encouraging inclusion and diversity

A [Civil Service pension](#) with an employer contribution of 28.97%

Things you need to know

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn and internal candidates may be subject to disciplinary action. Please see our [candidate guidance \(opens in a new window\)](#) for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

Selection process details

Please see the Candidate Brief attached below for more information.

Feedback will only be provided if you attend an interview or assessment.

Security

Successful candidates must meet the security requirements before they can be appointed. The level of security needed is [developed vetting \(opens in a new window\)](#).

[See our vetting charter \(opens in a new window\)](#).

People working with government assets must complete [baseline personnel security standard \(opens in new window\)](#) checks.

Nationality requirements

Open to UK nationals only.

Working for the Civil Service

The [Civil Service Code \(opens in a new window\)](#) sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants.

We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's [recruitment principles \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. As such, we run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

The Civil Service also offers a Redeployment Interview Scheme to civil servants who are at risk of redundancy, and who meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Civil Service is committed to attract, retain and invest in talent wherever it is found. To learn more please see the [Civil Service People Plan \(opens in a new window\)](#) and the [Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Apply and further information

This vacancy is part of the [Great Place to Work for Veterans \(opens in a new window\)](#) initiative.

Once this job has closed, the job advert will no longer be available. You may want to save a copy for your records.

Contact point for applicants

Job contact :

Name : Korn Ferry

Email : UKDI@KornFerry.com

Recruitment team

Email : UKDI@KornFerry.com

