N8 Centre of Excellence for Computationally Intensive Research (CIR) RIE Theme Leader

Job Description

Job Title: Research Infrastructure Engineering (RIE) Theme Lead

Duration and Commitment: Up to 31st July 2024 (in the first instance) at 0.2 FTE

Reports to: N8 CIR Director

Responsible for: Designing, developing and driving forward the Research Infrastructure Engineering (RIE) Theme; leading the N8 RIE community; leading the CIR Project Working Group, and co-leading the Bede support group.

Background

The N8 Research Partnership (https://www.n8research.org.uk/) is a collaboration of the eight most research intensive Universities in the North of England: Durham, Lancaster, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield and York. The N8 Centre of Excellence for Computationally Intensive Research (N8 CIR - https://n8cir.org.uk/) was launched in November 2018 to help N8 researchers gain a competitive edge in their research by developing their computational skills and facilitating access to appropriate computational resources.

A direct benefit of establishing N8 CIR is the potential to share computational training and resources, to address key challenges in the selected research areas and themes and to provide capability in cross-cutting methodologies. The two initial priority areas were decided to be Digital Health and Digital Humanities and in 2022 we added Machine Learning as the third research theme. We started with a community consultation to identify common needs and since then have been busy delivering these needs, building the RIE community and securing a Tier-2 facility (Bede) to support this.

Overview of the role

The N8 partners (along with the research councils) have each individually recognised the key role that can be played by research infrastructure engineers (RIEs) in realising benefit from, and democratising access to computational facilities. The N8 CIR was set up to build on these existing initiatives by developing an active community of Research IT staff across N8 institutions, sharing expertise and good practice, and collaborating to provide training to enhance the digital skills of researchers. RIEs are key to delivering this vision, and so this role of RIE Theme Lead was created to act as the focal point for all the RIE-focused activities of N8 CIR.

The appointee will lead activities to develop communities of practice for Research Infrastructure Engineers across the partnership and beyond, including convening the N8 CIR Project Working Group and collaborating with the team that supports the EPSRC National Tier 2 HPC facility, Bede

(https://n8cir.org.uk/bede/). They will also contribute to the running of CIR events such as the Digital Research Infrastructure Retreat (https://n8cir.org.uk/dri-retreat/).

We are looking for an effective and capable leader, currently based at a N8 institution, to head the N8 CIR RIE Theme. This will involve working closely with the N8 CIR Project Director's Group, the research and RIE community at each of the N8 partners and with the wider RIE and research community.

The successful applicant must be based at one of the N8 institutions – Durham, Lancaster, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield or York. This 0.2 FTE role will suit someone who is not already at 1.0 FTE or for whom the time can be 'bought out' from their existing role.

Key responsibilities, accountabilities and duties

- Be a community leader for RIEs across the N8, including organising regular meetings and events
- Work with the key research areas identified by the N8 Strategic Executive Group
- Contribute to the strategy of the CIR through membership of the Directors Group
- Identify cross-cutting capability (training, software tools, methodology, expertise) that could benefit multiple research groups across the N8
- Co-organise events such as the Digital Research Infrastructure Retreat
- Work with the leaders of other areas to:
    - Identify key opportunities for CIR to accelerate progress
    - Propose a joint programme of training and activities
    - Develop the existing communities of practice
- Disseminate good practice within the RIE theme
- Report on activities to University governance groups across N8
- Lead the CIR Project Working Group and co-lead the Bede Support Group. This involves managing and coordinating work across the N8 institutions by staff without direct managerial responsibility.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of high performance computing in research
- Be able to demonstrate strategic thinking and vision
- Potential and motivation to be a leader
- Be able to build and maintain good relations and networks with diverse research communities
- Ability to manage / coordinate several projects simultaneously
- Ability to organise events and chair meetings

Desirable

- Experience of Computationally Intensive Research

Application Process

Applicants should send a covering letter and a 2 page CV to matt.probert@york.ac.uk by noon on October 20th 2023. Interviews are expected to take place online w/b 6th November 2023.