



Vacancy

Institute Director

Appointment brief

February 2018



Background

Introduction

Established in 1968, the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) is the UK's leading independent centre for research and evidence-based consultancy in employment, labour market and human resource policy and practice. Its work also has an international perspective. It is not-for-profit and a registered charity, its activities being funded through research and consultancy commissions and from its corporate membership programme.

It has over 40 multidisciplinary staff in its Brighton and London offices, together with a pool of UK and international expert associates who contribute to IES projects. It is totally self-funding, with a turnover of over £3 million per annum.

The **IES mission** is to bring about sustainable improvements in employment policy and human resource management. It achieves this by increasing the understanding and improving the practice of key decision-makers in policy bodies and employing organisations. Further information on IES is available at www.employment-studies.co.uk. View IES annual reports at www.employment-studies.co.uk/about-us.

The economic, demographic and technological challenges facing governments, employers and the workforce provide a stimulating backdrop to the work of IES both today and in the coming decade. The need for informed, independent analysis, evaluation, advice and commentary on the changing world of work has never been more necessary and IES already occupies a unique place in the fields of employment policy and HR practice. IES has a reputation for integrity and objectivity which provides an unrivalled opportunity to extend its influence and impact in the coming years. IES is now seeking a new Director (chief executive) with the vision and leadership skills to achieve this.

Context and challenges

IES is a successful, independent research institute. A key asset is a strong core team of staff with internationally-recognised subject and methodological expertise. The Institute works with associates and partners in the UK and internationally and is one of the largest social science research centres in the UK. Financially, it is a successful business, which has adapted well to the changing economic and policy environment of recent years, through a policy of actively diversifying its funding streams, and it has stable and substantial financial reserves.

It operates in three main work streams: UK public policy research and evaluation; international public policy research; and research and evidence-based consultancy for employers and employer organisations.

In the 50 years since its founding, IES has operated according to several key principles:

- **Independence and dissemination:** crucial to the Institute’s mission, and underpinning its charitable status is that its work benefits not just those who commission the research, but the wider community of policy- and decision-makers. This provides IES with an imperative to publish and disseminate the findings of its work widely.
- **Multidisciplinary, rigorous and ethical:** IES deploys a wide range of economic and social science disciplines in its work, approaching problems from different disciplinary perspectives and, where appropriate, combining them in its research and consultancy projects. It sets great store by the independence and rigour of its work. It is not a campaigning ‘think tank’, and it does not take a political stance. It aims to deploy state-of-the-art methodologies to its work, supported by investment in staff training and development, and it upholds high standards of research ethics in all its work.
- **Dual focus on public policy and employers:** a unique focus of IES is its dual focus on public employment policy and the HR management. This stems from a recognition that the employment and regulatory policies of the state and its agencies, and the HR policies and practices of employers are two sides of the same coin, and that to meet its mission IES must pursue a balanced portfolio of work for both sides.

IES faces a number of important **challenges**, including:

- A continuing environment of austerity among the organisations which commission much of the Institute’s work, with smaller budgets and greater demand for ‘value for money’. One implication of this is an on-going need to improve the efficiency of the Institute’s processes of bidding for research commissions, and the management and delivery of research projects.
- Adapting to the implications of Brexit for the funding and for the policy context of the Institute’s research (both internationally and within the UK).
- The continuing need to establish new streams of work (to reflect the changing needs of policymakers and employers), as well as to maintain a diversified funding base for the Institute.

The existing Director, Nigel Meager, has been with IES for many years, and has been Director since September 2004. Following a successful tenure, Nigel plans to retire during 2018, and this retirement has led to the current vacancy.

Governance

IES is overseen by a Board of Trustees (currently 10 in number), consisting of eminent people with an active interest or expertise in employment/HR matters, drawn from the private and public sectors, academia, trade unions and the voluntary sector.

Members of the Board are trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act, and members of the company for the purposes of company law (IES is a company limited by guarantee). The trustees, in their governance role, meet regularly to contribute to the development of the Institute’s business strategy, to monitor the implementation of that strategy, and approve the Institute’s annual budget and business plan. On a day-to-day basis IES is run by the Director and his/her management team.

Job description

The role

The Director has run IES in partnership with a strong and experienced management team supported by expert input from senior staff. As the most senior employee of the Institute, the Director is accountable to the Board of Trustees and particularly its chair for:

- The formulation and delivery of the strategy as agreed by the Board.
- Managing the Institute, ensuring sound finances, a coherent programme of work, and effective staffing partnerships and infrastructure.
- Developing and maintaining effective links with the Institute's diverse group of stakeholders, including government and other public policy bodies, the corporate sector, employer and sectoral bodies, professional and employee representative bodies, international organisations, funding organisations, academia and the media.
- Promoting the Institute's work with policy bodies in the UK and internationally, and in the public sector, whilst increasing its activity with private sector employers and diversifying its funding base into new and growing areas.

The Director attends and provides input at meetings of the Board of Trustees, but under the constitution of IES, is not a member of the Board.

The candidate

Candidates for this important role could come from a wide variety of backgrounds including research or consultancy organisations, universities, the civil service, public agencies and HR management in the private or public sector.

The essential requirements are:

Leadership

- A robust leader who can develop an ambitious and realistic vision for the future direction of the Institute, and has the intellectual capacity to inspire, motivate and support a high calibre team of experts in these fields.
- The ability to create an open and inclusive working culture, which supports staff to perform effectively and collaboratively to achieve organisational goals
- Experience of building, motivating and inspiring an effective management team.
- Experience of initiating and implementing change.

Strategic business and financial skills

- The strategic capability to further develop and deliver the Institute's mission and the ability to bring together and build on the Institute's main work streams, to secure greater influence across the HR and employment policy fields.
- The commercial management skills and financial expertise to be able to run a small business/organisation effectively and to exercise strong and effective stewardship over the Institute's finances and resources.

Stakeholder engagement and interpersonal skills

- The commercial acumen and networking skills required to identify new funding streams, and to develop and deliver business development and collaborative opportunities in new fields and with new clients, whilst maintaining the Institute's high profile and success in winning research commissions with its existing client base.
- The gravitas and intellectual credibility to build productive relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and to inspire, engage and unite staff, partners and funders around a compelling vision and narrative.
- The ability to represent the Institute and build its external profile in the UK and internationally as shown by a proven track record as a recognised disseminator of insight through the media, and an ability to present the Institute beneficially and influentially through such a public-facing role.

Technical and professional skills and qualifications

- Strong applied research and/or HR consultancy credentials and a recognised expertise in the substantive issues and topics which form the content of the Institute's work. This could be based on a track record of social research, publication, and/or consultancy focused on employment and HR issues.
- Evidence of educational and professional excellence and achievement.

What IES offers

This is an exciting career opportunity for the right candidate to lead a successful social research organisation into the next phase of its development.

The starting salary (circa £100K) will depend on the expertise and experience that a successful candidate brings to the job.

In addition, IES offers:

- A contributory career-average defined benefit pension scheme (USS), to which IES pays a monthly contribution of 18 per cent of basic salary and you pay 8 per cent.
- 27 days' holiday per year, plus Bank Holidays and four Institute closure days.

The post will be mainly based at IES' head office in central Brighton, although the Director would also spend time at the IES London office. The Institute has a friendly workplace culture in a congenial central Brighton location. Brighton and the surrounding areas offer a superb location in which to live with easy access to the sea, countryside, and plenty of culture and nightlife. Brighton is close to Gatwick airport (30 mins), London (1 hour) and France (2.5 hours).

How to apply

Candidates should submit a full CV with a covering letter explaining their interest in the post and highlighting how they meet the criteria. An equal opportunities monitoring form should also be completed and can be downloaded from the job listing on the IES website: <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/vacancy/institute-director>

Applications should be sent to Jane Smith, director of finance and resources, at jane.smith@employment-studies.co.uk

The closing date for applications is Monday, 12 March, 2018.

Shortlisted candidates will attend an interview with a panel of IES trustees, and will be expected to give a presentation as part of the assessment. A second stage of the process will also involve an opportunity to meet senior IES staff. Fuller details of the process will be provided to shortlisted applicants.

Shortlisted candidates who wish to will also have the opportunity for informal conversations about the job and the Institute, with David Smith (chair of the Board of Trustees) and/or Nigel Meager (current Director of the Institute).

IES is committed to equality of opportunity and we encourage diversity in the workplace.