



Director of the Design Factory Birmingham Digital Innovation Lab Reader/Professor of Practice in Digital Innovation

Reference: 0616-23

Salary: £56,021 - £100,747 per annum, Grade 10 or Professorial Band 1 depending on experience

Contract Type: Permanent

Basis: Full time or Part time (Job share)



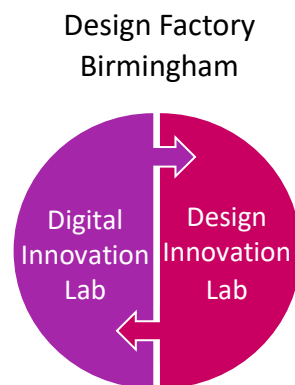
Design Factory Birmingham

Aston University is a leading university of Science, Technology and Enterprise measured by the positive transformational impact we achieve for our people, students, businesses and the communities we serve. By 2030 Aston will be recognised as a leading digital enterprise that is driving socioeconomic transformational impact in Birmingham and the West Midlands.

To support this aim, we are launching Design Factory Birmingham (DFB) as a state-of-the-art facility designed to inspire and facilitate innovation and design. It is a unique space that brings together students, staff, industry partners, and entrepreneurs to collaborate, learn, and create new products that solve real-world problems.

DFB will operate as a commercial entity and operate consultancy services providing end-to-end solutions to its clients. This can include design thinking, software development, innovation, prototyping, data services, advanced manufacturing, testing, business incubation and production, all in-house, providing clients with a streamlined and efficient process.

DFB will have dedicated staff located on-campus with its own identity. It will be supported by Aston University facilities including the Business and Enterprise Hubs, Research and Knowledge Exchange, the External Engagement Directorate, and the Alumni Office.



DFB initially consists of two innovation labs: DFB-Digital and DFB-Design that focus on different aspects of design. DFB-Digital will be managed by a director and supported by an operations manager and several software engineers. Within three years the Lab will be self-sustaining and will host up to 40 placement students working on client projects in areas such as mobile app development, data applications, AI applications, and web and cloud based systems.

Job description

The College of Engineering and Physical Science is seeking a Professor of Practice in Digital Innovation to be the Director of DFB-Digital and lead on this important development. The Director will provide leadership, management and business development expertise to the DFB-Digital Lab. The role is a joint appointment between the School of Computer Science and Digital Technologies and will be line-managed by the College Deputy Dean External Engagement.

A Professor of Practice will be an outstanding individual who brings extensive leadership and knowledge within their discipline, gained from substantial current or recent experience working with business, industry or a profession. With an exceptional national/global reputation, the post-holder will use their significant expertise gained from a discipline within industry, business or the professions to inform and lead the lab. They will have an extensive network of contacts, facilitating external links between the university and regional, national and international bodies, such as government agencies, employers, schools, colleges, professional bodies, public sector organisations, business and industry. They will enhance the College and University's reputation via a blend of external professional recognition and knowledge used to shape, implement, and deliver the DFB-Digital Lab business plan consistent with the aims of the Design Factory Birmingham and the Aston University 2030 Strategy.

We would be interested in discussing the option of a fractional post limited to the DFB-Director for a suitable candidate.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- To ensure that DFB-Digital delivers impact for its stakeholders: students, external clients, and university staff.
- To act as an ambassador for the Digital Lab, DFB, the College and the wider University. To ensure a high level of external profile for the lab through a variety of activities including hosting events and through sponsorship.
- To provide leadership in practice-based education, research and knowledge transfer within the School of Computer Science and Digital Technologies as directed by the Head of School.
- To work with appropriate offices of the University to ensure a strong pipeline of external engagements and clients for the lab.
- To provide leadership and day-to-day management for the DFB-Digital Lab, including line management of some of the DFB-Digital staff.
- To work with the DFB-Design lab as part of the wider Design Factory, to work with College Heads of School and Department, and to represent the lab to the College Executive Team as required.
- Responsibility for delivering against the DFB-Digital targets and for the day-to-day DFB-Digital Lab budget.
- To Develop, agree and implement business and operational plans aligned with the EPS College Strategy and the wider Aston 2030 Strategy.
- To agree key performance indicators for the team for specific areas of activity.
- To work across the College and broader University to ensure that the DFB-Digital Lab's activities are fully integrated with relevant research and Knowledge Exchange activities.

Person Specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	A Master's in a relevant academic discipline or equivalent experience relevant to the role.	Application form
Experience	<p>Nationally/Internationally recognised as a leading authority within the industry/ professional field, and a track record of achievement as a practitioner within the profession, comparable with the academic standing of a Professor</p> <p>Substantial conceptual and theoretical knowledge underpinned by professional practice in the specialist area</p> <p>Experience of communicating relevant subject matter to both specialist and non-specialist audiences in an engaging manner</p> <p>Significant experience in the subject discipline</p> <p>Sustained experience of collaborative working with policy and practitioner stakeholders or a record of leading original and innovative initiatives</p> <p>Experience and enthusiasm for collaborating with academic research</p> <p>Significant experience of leading, managing mentoring and coaching colleagues and fostering team working</p> <p>A record of accomplishment in securing new business, developing proposals and securing funding relevant to the discipline</p>	Application form and interview
Aptitude and skills	<p>In-depth knowledge of the profession, capable of developing new knowledge and understanding in the discipline</p> <p>Ability to forge successful commercial partnerships</p> <p>Experience of establishing, leading and maintaining partnerships and collaborations which will advance the College and University's links with professional networks</p>	Application form and interview

	Essential	Method of assessment
	<p>Ability to promote and shape the overall subject area both nationally and internationally</p> <p>Highly developed written and oral communication and presentation skills with a genuine enthusiasm and passion for imparting knowledge of the chosen profession to others</p> <p>Ability to lead and develop internal and external networks to foster collaboration and promote the profile of the College/University</p> <p>Ability to take on significant leadership responsibilities at College and University level.</p>	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	Current senior level membership of relevant professional body.	Application form
Experience	Effective management of large teams of people	Application form and interview and presentation
Aptitude and Skills	Understanding of the governance and government policy arena relevant to Higher Education	Interview and presentation

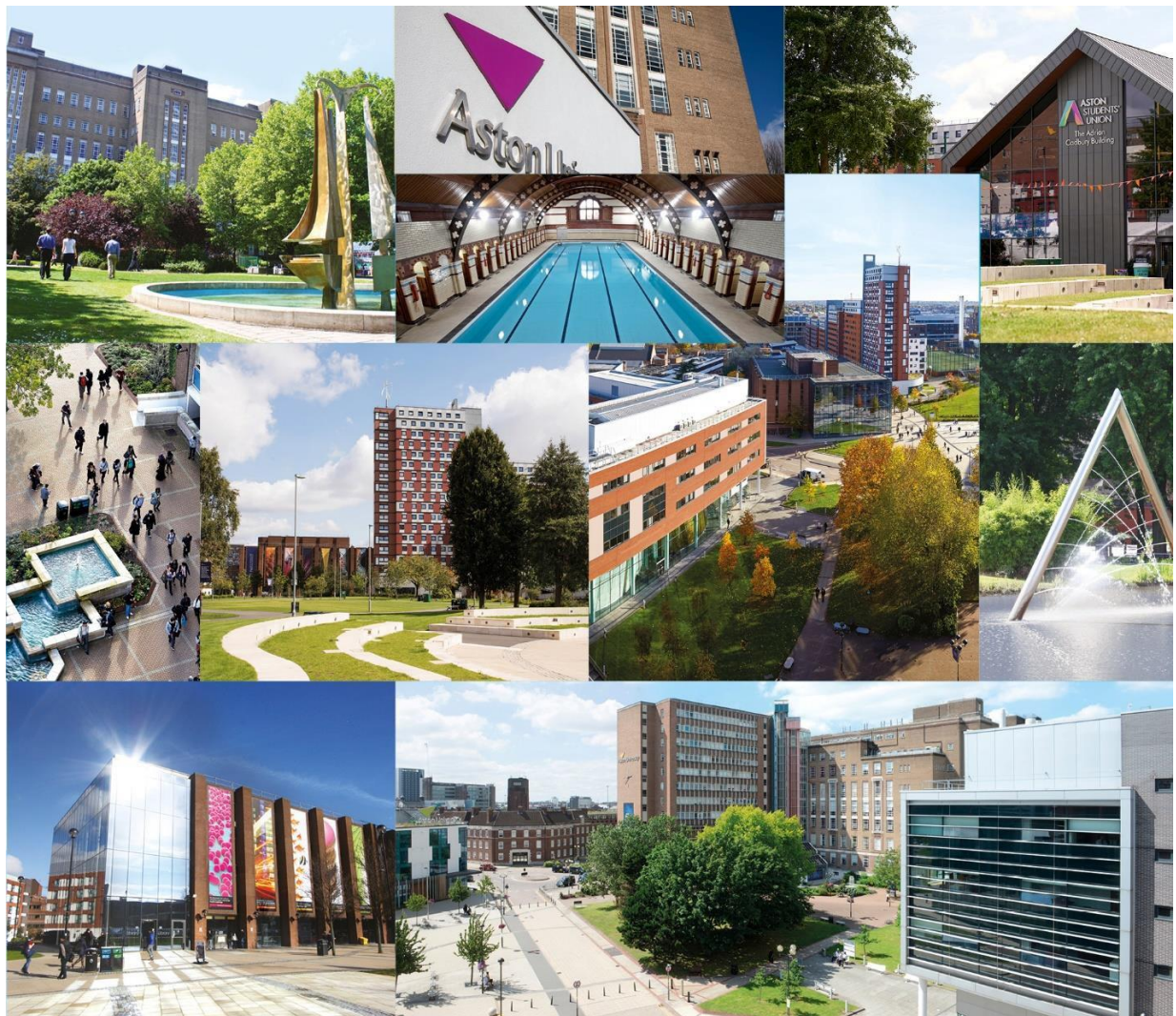
How to apply

You can apply for this role online via our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs>.

Applications should be submitted by 23:59 GMT on the advertised closing date.
All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent direct to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form then please contact the Recruitment Team via jobs@aston.ac.uk.



Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Professor Tony Clark or Professor Kate Sugden

Email: tony.clark@aston.ac.uk or k.sugden@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:

Recruitment Team via jobs@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr> for full details of our salary scales and benefits
Aston University staff enjoy

Salary scales: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index>

Benefits: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/Benefits-and-Rewards/index>

Working in Birmingham: <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham>

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK:

Post-Brexit transition period / EU Settlement Scheme

The post-Brexit transition period ended on 31 December 2020. If you are an EU/EEA citizen and you were a resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, you and your family members (including non-EU citizens need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue to live, work and study in the UK beyond 30 June 2021. The deadline for applying to the EU settlement scheme is 30 June 2021. You can apply via the Government webpage <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Irish Nationals do not need to apply for settlement as they retain the right to work in the UK.

New immigration system for EU/EEA and Swiss Nationals who were not resident in the UK before 31 December 2020

A new immigration system has been introduced for people arriving in the UK from EEA countries with effect from 1 January 2021. In addition to those who have always required a visa, EU citizens moving to the UK to work will need to get a visa in advance. You can find more information on the following website. Candidates should check their eligibility to enter or remain in the UK in advance of making any job application via the UKVI website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>. Before applying you should ensure that you meet the requirements, including meeting the English Language requirements. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful. If you require a visa to work in the UK the most common types of visa are:

Skilled Worker Visa

<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>

Global Talent Visa

If you are a leader or potential leader in one of the following fields you may be eligible to apply for a Global Talent Visa:

- Academia or Research
- Arts and Culture
- Digital Technology

Please click the following link for further information and to check your eligibility for this visa.

<https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Equal Opportunities: Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection: Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection>. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.

Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at <https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies>

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[aston.ac.uk](https://www2.aston.ac.uk)



**Where change
gets real.**