Job description and person specification

Post Title: ELIXIR CTO/Technical Coordinator

Grade: 7

Responsible to: ELIXIR Director

Reports to: ELIXIR Director

Main appointment site:

The post will be based at the Genome Campus in Hinxton near Cambridge.

Overview

The main purpose of this role is to ensure the successful implementation and delivery of ELIXIR services through the collaborative development and execution of the ELIXIR technical strategy. ELIXIR is a distributed research infrastructure and the key responsibility of this role is to foster and support the technical collaboration between the Nodes to ensure coordinated progress towards a sustainable European infrastructure for biological information, supporting life science research and its translation to societal benefit. The ELIXIR CTO/Technical Coordinator is also expected to take the lead role in development and writing of the technical components of grant applications and proactively, in collaboration with Nodes and other partners, identify new grant opportunities in the technical domain.

Thus the ELIXIR CTO/Technical Coordinator will work closely with the ELIXIR Director and Nodes to lead the planning for technical risk and growth of the distributed infrastructure, stay abreast of technical developments and hot topics as well as demonstrate the necessary strategic thinking, people and communication skills to build a high performant, innovative and collaborative team across the ELIXIR centres and national nodes. The ELIXIR CTO/Technical Coordinator will also drive the implementation technical standards from key European framework projects to ELIXIR (e.g. BioMedBridges) and be responsible to ensure that there are effective interactions between ELIXIR and the European e-Infrastructures.

Key responsibilities:

Technical strategy & planning

- In partnership with the ELIXIR Director, Head-of-Nodes and Node technical coordinators, identify opportunities and risks for delivering ELIXIR services including identification of opportunities for innovation, and assessment of obstacles and technical hurdles to the ELIXIR success.
- As appropriate advice the Director and Heads-of-Nodes in establishing governance processes of direction and control to ensure that objectives are achieved, risks are managed appropriately and the organization's resources are used responsibly.
- Proactively work with Nodes to identify, evaluate and implement appropriate technology platforms (including web application frameworks and the software deployment stacks) adoption of good practices and innovative solutions for delivering of ELIXIR services.
- Set timetables for the evaluation, development, and deployment of services.
• Establish a governance process that meets government, partner, and company expectations for customer information privacy within ELIXIR.
• Lead the development and execution of an ELIXIR information security plan that protects the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data and servers.
• Communicate the ELIXIR technology strategy to partners, users, and stakeholders with the ELIXIR secretariat.
• Identify technology and scientific trends and that may support or impede the success of ELIXIR.

Implementation & Deployment

• As a member of the ELIXIR Hub management team lead the strategic planning of ELIXIR technology by identifying and supporting prioritization of ELIXIR pilot actions and technical parts of ELIXIR grant applications.
• Ensure the establishment of effective collaboration tools for ELIXIR such as a wiki, blog, chatroom, project management together with ELIXIR Node technical leads
• Lead ELIXIR Technical Coordinator forum, in group meetings as well as frequent one-on-one meetings, to stay aware of technical as well as operational developments at each of the nodes, to keep current best practices up to date and support nodes in their implementation, to support the identification and implementation of new technologies and standards.
• Effectively manage the portfolio of ELIXIR pilot actions and technology projects through regular personal interaction with their project leaders to monitor progress, help identify risks and blockers to delivery and ensure that initiatives are appropriately resourced and run.

Operational Management

• Maintain up-to-date knowledge of technology standards, industry trends, emerging technologies, and software development best practices.
• Collaboratively define and communicate ELIXIR mission and standards for acquiring or developing systems, equipment, or software within the organisation.
• Ensure that technology standards and best practices are maintained across the organisation.
• Share knowledge, mentor, and educate ELIXIR staff, partners, users, and stakeholders with regard to the technological vision, opportunities, and challenges through participation in meetings, personal interactions and contributions to ELIXIR media.
• Responsible for recruitment, training, retention, and organization of technical Hub staff in accordance with the ELIXIR hiring process, personnel policies, and budget requirements.
• Take responsibility for the technical operating and capital budget at the ELIXIR Hub and proactively work with ELIXIR Director to ensure that financial targets are met with appropriate risk management.
• Establish standards of performance and monitor conformance for ELIXIR Hub technical staff (through performance review) and vendors (through setting criteria for service delivery and monitoring the service providers).
• Ensure that ELIXIRs internal technological processes and customer-facing services comply with community expectations and applicable laws and regulations for privacy, security, and social responsibility.
• Contribute to standardization of technologies, and evolution of best practices by collaborating with peers outside the organisation, releasing code, presenting at conferences, and writing for publication (online or offline).
Person Specification

Education and Certification

University degree in the field of life-science, computer science, or another rigorous discipline with solid interest and experience of bioinformatics / medical informatics research. An advanced degree in one these fields is a plus.

Knowledge and Experience

- Demonstrated ability to lead and motivate technical teams in a distributed environment to deliver against challenging goals and timelines.
- Demonstrated ability to envision web-based services that meet user needs or solve business problems. Ability to discern user requirements and develop specifications.
- 5+ years experience in a life-science informatics research environment
- Familiarity and experience with more than one software development methodology. Contribution to collaborative open source projects is an asset.
- Robust understanding and experience from data-intensive high performance computing with demonstrated ability to predict and project technical developments and needs.
- Knowledge of Internet protocols, database management systems, and revision control systems.
- Familiarity with network technologies, database management systems, web standards and data integration techniques including semantic data integration. Demonstrated understanding of information security vulnerabilities and risk management.
- Knowledge and practical experience of business process development, governance processes, management, budgeting, and administrative operations.

Personal Attributes

- Results oriented with proven ability to lead teams in distributed and matrix-managed environments with excellent interpersonal skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and preferably one other European language.
- Ability to articulate ideas and vision to engage and inspire both technical and non-technical audiences.
- Exceptionally self-motivated and directed.
- Superior analytical, evaluative, and problem-solving abilities.
- Exceptional service orientation.
- Awareness and understanding of European research policy and funding opportunities

This will be a busy role with frequently changing priorities so it is essential that the role-holder is able to:

- set and manage priorities judiciously with a minimum of supervision
- meet deadlines and handle a heavy workload
- work to a high level of accuracy and attention to detail
- show a flexible approach, self-motivation and resilience
- work occasionally outside normal office hours if required
- travel to ELIXIR nodes