JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	ISD Programme Manager (Digital Innovation and Transformation)
MANAGED BY:	Head of Innovation and Sector Development
GRADE:	Grade 13

BACKGROUND

Working at the West of England Combined Authority
The West of England is a fantastic place to live and work; a place where ideas flourish and businesses grow, and a diverse population calls home. With a highly-skilled workforce, innovative businesses, rich cultural and natural assets, and excellent connections, the West of England competes on a global scale.

In 2017, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) was formed to bring the region together to drive economic growth. A West of England Mayor was elected, and significant powers and funding were transferred to the region to support work to ensure residents have better skills, more job opportunities and a better quality of life. We're working with our regional partners and with Government to protect the environment and ensure the West of England continues to be a thriving, successful and innovative place for future generations.

WECA is made up of three of the region's local councils – Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Building on a strong track record of partnership working in the region, the West of England Combined Authority continues to work closely with North Somerset Council. The Combined Authority is also the accountable body for the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.

Covid-19 has had a big impact on the West of England, and we are leading the regional economic recovery, bringing people together to ensure our region remains a thriving, successful and innovative place to live and work. By joining WECA, you will be helping us with this important work.

WECA is an equal opportunities employer, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, and invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support needed during the recruitment process.

The Role: Digital Innovation and Transformation Lead

The West of England Economic Recovery Taskforce identifies green and inclusive digital transformation as essential for innovation to happen in business and communities, and a strategic contributor to improving the region's productivity, resilience building and crisis recovery. The Taskforce agreed a series of high-level priority areas for digital transformation within the West of England:
- Digital Leadership
- Digital Infrastructure

- Digital Skills
- Digital Business
- Digital Culture and Behaviour

Instrumental for progressing regional digital transformation for WECA and the West of England will be the Smart Alliance: derived from the LIS, the overarching purpose of the SA is to convene as an effective, future-facing forum for collegiate and impactful collaboration between WECA's constituent authorities as well as with national and regional digital protagonists significant to the region. While work to develop the Smart Alliance framework was paused due to the intervening pandemic, WECA is now rebooting it pursuant to the WofE Recovery Plan: the post-holder will be responsible for reconvening the alliance and further develop it to drive and accelerate its strategic role of maximising green and inclusive economic impact of digital innovation and transformation on the region's recovery and resilience building. This will involve identifying and collaboratively maximising synergies between WECA's and the local authorities' digital activities across sectors and communities, with an aim to help shape a coherent and attractive digital landscape of the West of England as a smart region.

The post-holder will be WECA's lead officer in delivering progress across the region against these five priority areas, reconvening, rebooting and chairing the Smart Alliance, and generally driving the digital innovation and transformation agenda for the region, collaborating closely with teams within the authority as well as with the unitary authorities and major external stakeholders.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

We are looking for someone who is strategic to support digital innovation and transformation of the region, its businesses and communities. Somebody who can work corporately to identify the complex synergies/opportunities across WECA teams and across regional stakeholders under the umbrella of the Local Industrial Strategy and the West of England Recovery Plan, lead a digital work programme for the benefit of the region, and identify funding opportunities and mechanisms for delivery.

The post-holder will be reporting to and working closely with WECA's Head of Innovation and Sector Development and will be WECA's lead Digital Innovation and Transformation Officer for the region, reconvening, rebooting and chairing the Smart Alliance. They will generally lead WECA's digital transformation and innovation work, delivering progress across the region against the Taskforce's five priority areas. They will be collaborating closely across teams within the authority as well as with the unitary authorities and major external stakeholders, measurable against the LIS' and the West of England Recovery Taskforce's priorities. This will include the post holder to:

- Develop and shape a West of England Digital Transformation roadmap and build and drive WECA's capability and capacity to lead or join digital transformation and innovation initiatives and smart region activities across the West of England, the UK and internationally.

- Reboot the West of England Smart Alliance to ensure that its role as a strategic driver of digital innovation and transformation envisaged in the Local Industrial Strategy fully develops into pathways to impact in the five priority areas identified by the Recovery Taskforce.

- Lead and shape the digital innovation and transformation work and narrative internally within WECA, connecting the different teams and directorates fully to contribute to a cohesive, focussed and identifiable WECA programme of digital innovation and transformation work.

- Working closely particularly with WECA's unitary authorities, build strong relationships with regional, national and international stakeholders in the digital transformation space (including the Institute of Coding; the Digital Catapult; DCMS; Open Data Institute; network providers; connectivity businesses; digital leads of other CAs and LEPs; universities)

- Provide expertise, input and guidance across WECA in respect of regional and national digital transformation and innovation themes and developments (for example for purposes of project design, bid writing or presentations) and proactively lead on proposals and responses to national consultations and funding competitions regarding digital matters (such as for example DCMS' National Data Strategy consultation, MHCLG Digital's initiatives; funding calls).

- Identify and drive work and activities that increase WECA's visibility and capability to champion and foster digital transformation and innovation projects.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Smart Alliance
- Progress as its lead officer and convene the Smart Alliance, working closely with the Unitary Authorities to shape and drive a WECA roadmap to regional digital transformation, including applying the post holder's specific expertise to:
  - Creating pathways to impact in the Recovery Taskforce's five priority areas.
  - Developing and delivering a forward plan for attracting relevant government funding to the region.
  - Leading an improved joined-up approach between the Unitary Authorities to making the West of England an attractive and enabling environment for private sector investment into enhanced ubiquitous digital connectivity.
  - Working with partners and the private sector, identifying future commercial plans for provision of fibre, radio cells, masts or other infrastructure required to deliver full mobile and fixed connectivity across all parts of the region, and determining where public sector investment could best enhance or accelerate these commercial plans.
  - Working with BDUK, joining-up/improving the impact of BDUK investment within the region.

External Engagement
- Lead on collaborations or partnerships with Local Authorities, Government departments, businesses, regulators and organisations on regional projects aligned with local and national priorities, maximising opportunities for support, funding and investment where available.
- Lead on proposals and responses to national consultations, funding competitions and requests regarding digital matters (such as for example DCMS' National Data Strategy consultation, MHCLG Digital's initiatives).
- Build strong relationships with regional, national and international stakeholders in the digital transformation space.
- Engage with senior digital transformation colleagues from other combined authorities and LEPs, and with digital transformation projects, events and initiatives nationally and internationally with a view to knowledge and good practice exchange.

Internally

- Advocating and influencing at senior level and working closely with the Business & Skills and Infrastructure Directorates, provide specific digital innovation and transformation expertise, input and guidance to ensure the coherent development, support and delivery of innovative and smart digital skills, business support and place-based projects, initiatives, business cases, bids and expressions of interest across the authority, and to secure funding where applicable.
- Identify and make visible the portfolio of digital transformation projects across the authority, working collaboratively with Heads of Service and Directorate towards a cohesive and easily communicable approach and clear links with WECA and national strategies pertaining to digital innovation and transformation.

Management

- Lead meetings and deliver key reports/presentations to senior colleagues and stakeholders.
- Deputise for the Head of ISD.
- While supported by the ISD team during the term of the role, in the second year of the role produce a forward plan identifying resources, budget, governance and processes required to ensure continuing future growth of WECA's capability to lead, champion and implement digital transformation and innovation.
- Design and develop subsequent business cases, implementation plans and programme design for new areas of digital innovation and transformation, if required.
- Present complex digital transformation issues and projects clearly and concisely in plain English to a range of stakeholders.
- Internally across the authority, and externally in the region, champion the beneficial economic development role that digital innovation and transformation plays in business, skills and infrastructure, and vice versa.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Education to degree level or able to demonstrate equivalent professional experience in a relevant sector.
- Knowledge of the authority's role and challenges in supporting economic growth and public benefit through digital innovation and digital transformation
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the digital infrastructure landscape, regulation and industry in the UK.

Experience

- Considerable relevant work experience in digital infrastructure or digital transformation, commensurate with the role.
- Significant experience of working with relevant national entities, government bodies, regulation and policies that impact on the post-holder's job role (e.g. BDUK, OFCOM, private sector organisations, DCMS).
- In-depth experience of developing and managing relationships and delivery partnerships, sharing commercial objectives across a arrange of internal stakeholders and public and private sector partners.

- Experience of working in a complex stakeholder environment and demonstrated ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships even when faced with conflicts or challenging circumstances or people.
- Experience of strategically leading programmes of work of some significant size and value, including governance, creating roadmaps to impact, and assessing and aligning cross-disciplinary business cases to achieve the desired programme impact.
- Experience of setting up and managing a budget, people and resources.

Skills and Competencies

- Highly developed skills in collaborative and diplomatic working to agree shared priorities and achieve ambitious joint outcome, including advocating and influencing at senior level.
- Ability to use online collaboration tools to bring remote teams together.
- Commercial awareness specifically related to digital innovation or transformation.
- Ability to develop and assess cross-sectoral business cases and investment appraisals and evaluate the impact of projects.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills with ability to report and present to a high standard at senior level.
- Ability to explain and illustrate complex issues clearly to a range of stakeholders in different settings, synthesising information from many sources.
- Analytical skills applied to a wide range of evidence and information.
- A range of digital skills enhancing and supporting the above.

DESIRABLE

- Educated to degree level in a relevant topic or subject
- Significant work experience in the digital infrastructure private sector.
- Knowledge and understanding of the digital infrastructure landscape and the digital business community in the West of England.
- Advanced digital skills, for example data visualisation, coding, data analytics
- Understanding of public sector organisational structures and decision making.
- Working in a political or in a highly visible environment.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

WECA staff receive:
- 25 days annual leave, rising to 30 after five years' continuous service, plus bank holidays, pro rata
- Auto-enrolment into the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Commuter Travel Club - WECA employees can sign up to receive discounted monthly bus tickets, unlimited bus travel for work or leisure within your chosen zone, automatic ticket renewal and price freeze for 12 months

Note: we are currently working from home, with an option (subject to Government advice and rules) occasionally to work in the office.