Appointment of

Director

June 2023

Perrett Laver

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About ELIXIR

ELIXIR is a distributed research infrastructure bringing together experts and resources across Europe to enable life science researchers across the world to access and analyse life science data.

Life science resources include databases, software tools, training materials, cloud storage and supercomputers, and the goal of ELIXIR is to coordinate these resources so that they form a single connected European infrastructure. This infrastructure makes it easier for scientists to find and share data, exchange expertise, and agree on best practices, ultimately helping to gain new insights into how living organisms work and to accelerate the understanding of life.

ELIXIR is a mature infrastructure with a long track record of addressing the challenges of data-driven life science and has the resources, both in terms of its Hub team and community of Node-based experts and its proven technological solutions, to be well positioned to rise to challenges of the future.

Founded in 2013, ELIXIR began implementing its first scientific programme in 2014 and is currently finalising its second five-year scientific programme. Further information can be found **here**.

ELIXIR is comprised of 22 Members: Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, EMBL-EBI, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; and two Observers: Austria and Cyprus. It brings together over 250 research organisations, and over 850 researchers and domain experts.

ELIXIR values

- **We work to benefit everyone** - we enhance the quality, efficiency and novelty of life science research, leading to improvements in health and wellbeing.

- **We are trusted** - our services and resources are trusted and we are trusted to deliver on our commitments.

- **We work with a spirit of openness** - we are committed to Open Science, promoting sharing of knowledge and information throughout the discovery process.

- **We strive for excellence** - we provide a world-class service to support world-class science.

- **We work in an environment of respect** - we create an environment where everyone can be their best and enjoy their work.

Further information about ELIXIR can be found **here**.
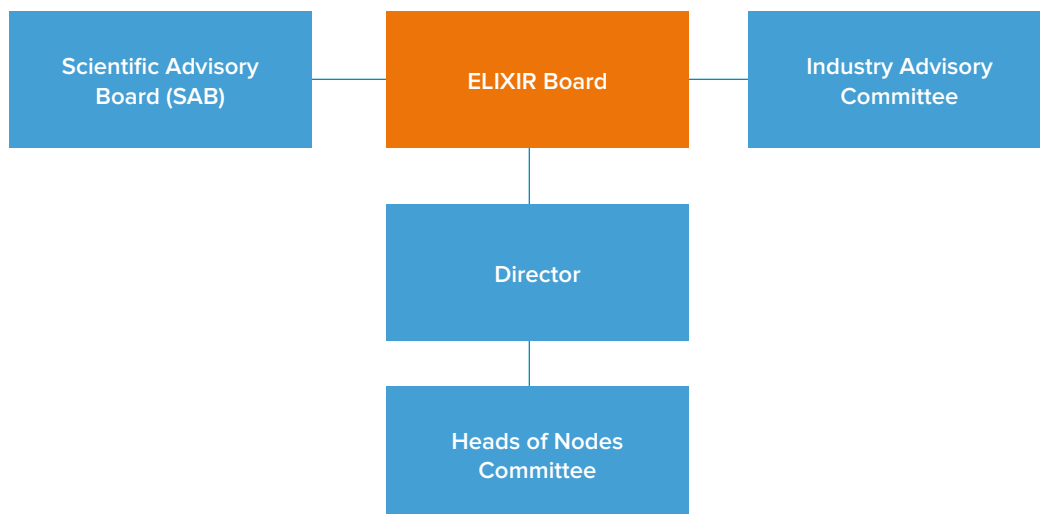
About Us

Structure

ELIXIR Members work together using a 'Hub and Nodes' model:

- **ELIXIR Hub:** The ELIXIR Hub is the infrastructure's headquarters and coordinates the work across ELIXIR. The Hub is based at the Wellcome Genome Campus, near Cambridge, UK.

- **ELIXIR Nodes:** At the heart of ELIXIR's expert network lie the 24 Nodes who provide services and resources, a strong set of expertise and skills, and national level coordination. This structure of national Nodes connected to a central Hub and collaborating via transnational working groups, forms a sustainable grass roots network which understands national needs, builds links with local users and data providers, and looks outwards to enhance synergies and collaborations with other nations. Each Node is a network of organisations that work within a Member state and each Node has a lead organisation that coordinates the local ELIXIR activities.

Governance

The **ELIXIR Governance structure** is defined in the ELIXIR Consortium Agreement.

- **ELIXIR Board:** the highest decision-making body in ELIXIR.

- **Scientific Advisory Board (SAB):** advises the Board on ELIXIR's scientific strategy and reviews ELIXIR Node applications.

- **Industry Advisory Committee:** gives advice and guidance on industry needs.

- **Director:** responsible to the ELIXIR Board for implementing ELIXIR's scientific programme.

- **Heads of Nodes Committee:** consists of the heads of the ELIXIR national infrastructures and of EMBL-EBI (Nodes). The Committee advises the ELIXIR Director to develop ELIXIR's scientific and technical strategy, including its programme.
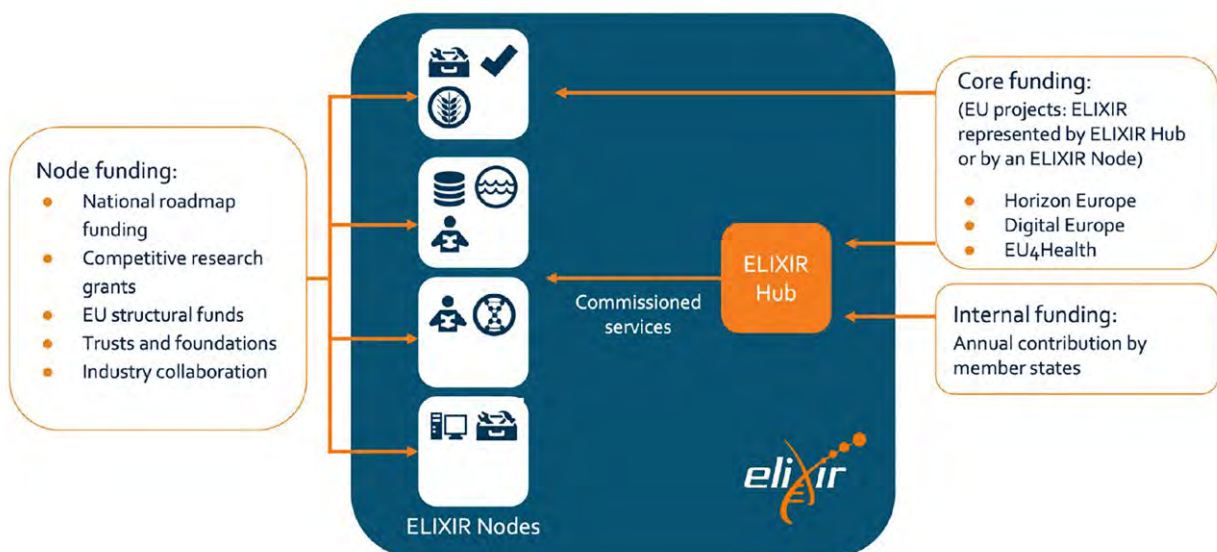
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│ Scientific      │   │ ELIXIR Board │   │ Industry        │
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Funding

ELIXIR has a mixed funding model and its activities, as described in the current Scientific Programme, are funded by a variety of sources including the ELIXIR Member States membership fees, joint European research infrastructure projects and national contributions to Nodes for service operation and coordination.

The Scientific Programme drives the implementation of ELIXIR's scientific strategy and guides future EU grant applications by ELIXIR by setting out the priority areas. ELIXIR has a current portfolio of 20 EU projects, including the €40 million European Genomic Data Infrastructure (GDI project) coordinated by the ELIXIR Hub.

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Operational structure

Groups of experts form the foundational backbone of ELIXIR. These expert groups are organised by scientific discipline, by technical focus and by special interest, and each of these groups overlap and interconnect to provide an immense depth of experience to guide ELIXIR's operations.

The scientific and technical activities in ELIXIR are run by Platforms and Communities. Platforms bring together experts to define the strategy and provide services in a particular area while Communities bring together scientists who work in a specific domain.

- **Platforms**
  ELIXIR has five operational Platforms: Data, Tools, Compute, Interoperability and Training. Each Platform is led by a leadership team agreed by the Heads of Nodes Committee. The Platform membership consists of task leads, technical staff and a Platform Coordinator. Each Platform Coordinator provides support to the Platform leaders and ensures that the Platform's activities are aligned to its goals.

- **Communities**
  ELIXIR has a number of Communities whose aim is to drive the development of the ELIXIR infrastructure from different user perspectives. These include a group of Human Data Communities.

- **Focus Groups**
  ELIXIR has several Focus Groups that are agile structures that address emerging areas of interest and seek to identify strategies that ELIXIR can follow. Some Focus Groups have evolved to become new Communities

- **Coordinator Groups**

  - The Technical Coordinators Group (TeCG) is comprised of technical representatives from each ELIXIR Node. The group identifies gaps and promotes connections among Nodes and Platforms. It is the responsibility of the TeCG to explore technical opportunities and issues aiming to provide advice and recommendations. The TeCG is connected with Platforms through Node technical representatives actively involved in the implementation of Platforms.

  - The Training Coordinators Group (TrCG) is composed of training representatives of each of the ELIXIR Nodes. The TrCG meets regularly to share information, expertise and to coordinate and lead the implementation of the ELIXIR training strategy across Europe.

  - The Node Coordinators Group is composed of representatives from ELIXIR Nodes. The purpose of the group is to share information and best practice in the operations of the ELIXIR Node. In many ELIXIR Nodes, the Node Coordinator is a key operational position funded by national funding.

Wellcome Genome Campus

ELIXIR is located on the Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton, UK alongside other prominent research and biotech organisations. This is a highly collaborative, innovative and inclusive community of world leading organisations. Further information can be found **here**.

Appointment of Director

The ELIXIR Director, reporting to the Board of Member State representatives, leads and manages ELIXIR. The Director is accountable for establishing the overall strategy for the organisation, captured in the Scientific Programme and Financial Plan, to deliver benefit and impact of ELIXIR.

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The ELIXIR Director must be able to articulate a clear and convincing direction for ELIXIR and to motivate staff and stakeholders, including national Nodes, researchers, service providers, funders and users across Europe, in the common endeavour to deliver the strategic vision.

The ELIXIR Director is accountable to the ELIXIR Board for overseeing the ELIXIR operations in accordance with the ELIXIR Consortium Agreement.

Key accountabilities of the role

ELIXIR operations and organisational development

- Develop and direct ELIXIR strategy and operations, captured in the Scientific Programme, Financial Plan, Annual Work Plan and Budget.

- Build supportive links to the ELIXIR Nodes, onboard new Nodes and monitor existing Nodes in conjunction with the ELIXIR Board and the Scientific Advisory Board.

- Lead the technical implementation of ELIXIR, overseeing the seamless integration of Hub, and Nodes and establish their scope and service levels.

- Work with personnel at national level to engender mutual trust and to support the integration of Nodes into ELIXIR at both political and technical level.

- Support the Scientific Advisory Board with their scientific evaluation.

Role Description

Lead, manage and develop people

- Line manage the ELIXIR Hub organisation (currently 42 members of staff), develop staff, attract talent and oversee people processes in full adherence with EMBL Staff Rules and Regulations.

- Ensure the development of the equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and related action plans.

- Ensure the development of ELIXIR-wide people development strategies and actions.

Monitoring, measuring and reporting

- Establish and maintain appropriate systems to measure and monitor the impact and effectiveness of ELIXIR in meeting the demands of its service level agreements and provide regular management reporting of the same.

- Oversee effective monitoring of budget, incomes and expenditures.

Contribute to the development of the European and international environment for life science data and data-driven research

- Maintain an up-to-date awareness of scientific developments, policy actions and user needs and translate this into compelling strategic planning for ELIXIR.

- Be an ambassador for, and the authoritative voice of, ELIXIR at European and international level, upholding its reputation, culture and values.

- Develop links with Industry, helping the Nodes to establish a range of innovative, collaborative projects to ensure greater Industry engagement, satisfying industry needs and encouraging financial investment in ELIXIR.

- Actively contribute to shaping the European landscape for life science data.

Role Description

Relationship building and stakeholder management

- Engage and build strong linkages with ELIXIR Member States including their Ministries, funding bodies, policy makers, several EC directorates, ELIXIR stakeholders and other key opinion formers Europe-wide to support embedding of ELIXIR in the European infrastructure landscape and the delivery and operation of ELIXIR in collaboration with national Nodes.

- Build effective relations with Members of the ELIXIR Board and Scientific Advisory Board and the senior scientific community to support the delivery of ELIXIR.

- Develop effective relationships with Node Directors, including EMBL and the Director General of EMBL.

- Lead the interactions with other ESFRI research infrastructures across the life sciences, with European e-infrastructures.

Fundraising and project development

- Lead the discussions with ELIXIR Member States on long-term budget, captured in the ELIXIR Financial Plan.

- Lead the pan-European fundraising efforts for ELIXIR by coordinating and contributing to European projects.

- Support the long-term sustainability of Nodes and Node services.

Other requirements of the role

- The role will necessitate considerable European and occasional international travel.

- The working language of ELIXIR is English and, as such, it is expected that the incumbent will be a fluent English speaker and writer, preferably with knowledge of at least one other European language.

- The appointee will be an employee of EMBL and their place of employment will be the ELIXIR Hub, located at the Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton, Cambridge, UK.

- The appointee will ensure that ELIXIR operations comply with EMBL policies and regulations, and that ELIXIR services comply with appropriate ELSI criteria.

Person Specification, ELIXIR Director

The successful candidate must demonstrate capability in the following areas:

a) Scientific and technical knowledge

- A life sciences specialist with proven record and experience in the practical applications of bioinformatics.

- Awareness of the needs of bioscience data users in academic research and industry.

- Good working experience with data providers; experience of the provision of life sciences data and services with technical competence in at least one aspect of this field will be desirable.

- Awareness of European Research Infrastructure and digital e-Infrastructure providers and an understanding of the various ways by which ELIXIR data and services could be deployed across them.

b) Leadership

- Ability to set out a long term vision and the means for its achievement.

- Ability to build communities and engender a common sense of purpose within them.

- Capability to build and maintain consensus and to work with others to make difficult decisions and achieve robust and sustainable outcomes.

c) Organisation and management skills

- Experience of the delivery of large and complex projects in international settings.

- Experience of operating at a multinational level and of dealing with international institutions and with funding agencies.

- Experienced staff and team manager.

- Experience of managing organisation, budget and personnel at senior level.

- Awareness of the functioning of the European Commission and understanding of its funding and decision-taking mechanisms, and/or experience of implementing distributed infrastructure for research would also be desirable.

d) Communication and negotiation skills

- Excellent oral and written communication skills.

- Ability to convincingly convey the excitement and impact of a complex scientific project to a wide range of stakeholders.

- The ability to successfully lead negotiations.

- Good awareness of the sensitivities of operating across countries and disciplines.

Employment terms

This is a full-time position and it is not expected that the appointee will retain a research laboratory or other significant responsibilities in addition to the role of Director of ELIXIR. Consideration will be given to applicants wishing to take the role on leave of absence or secondment from their current employer, provided that this is for a period of no less than three years.

Appointment Process and How to Apply

Applications should be addressed to the ELIXIR Director Search Committee, and submitted to Perrett Laver who are supporting the Director Search Committee in this appointment.

Please submit a CV, evidence of meeting the required and desirable competences, and a cover letter via **https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies/** quoting reference **6695**.

The deadline for applications is **9am BST on Monday 7th August 2023**.

The applications will be considered by the Director Search Committee in mid-August. Longlisted candidates will be invited to interview with Perrett Laver in late August. Director Search Committee will subsequently meet to decide upon a shortlist in early September and will proceed with first round interviews during w/c 11th September. Final Interviews will take place in early October at ELIXIR Hub, Hinxton, UK.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Tadhg Waddington on +44 (0)20 7340 7369 or by sending an email to **tadhg.waddington@perrettlaver.com**.

![Perrett Laver logo]