Photonics Leadership Group Manager

(0.5 FTE, remote UK based)

Seeking a photonics champion to lead the UK industry voice for the 21st century.

The Photonics Leadership Group (PLG) seeks a network/cluster manager to improve awareness of photonics and foster growth within the field. The PLG is a nudge-based organisation, achieving impact by bringing together industry, government, funding agencies and academia together to cultivate collaboration and mutual awareness generating opportunities for members to take forward independently.

This is a part-time (0.5 FTE), 50%, permanent remote position, at a pro-rata salary of £25,000 per annum. There is potential for the role to increase to full-time depending on the candidate's success in generating additional income to the PLG. Standard holiday and pension benefits apply.

The ideal candidate will be an enthusiastic, organised and self-motivated, capable of listening and interpreting what is important to all interested stakeholders. An empathetic affinity for engaging with business leaders, academics, civil servants and politicians of widely varying technology backgrounds and seniority will be key. The role balances accumulating input from members, economic and innovation trends, providing strategic evidence and providing rapid adaptable outputs when requested. The successful candidate will be committed to the long-term growth of the PLG and their own professional development, actively contributing to strengthening the organisation's impact and evolving their role over time.

The role will be focused on supporting UK's photonics sector. Specific functions will be phased in overtime according to the potential of the appointed candidate, expanding with support to cover:

- Organising, chairing and minuting quarterly PLG meetings, in person and online
- Collaborating closely with government departments including DSIT and DBT, politicians, funding agencies and national/regional clusters in photonics and other frontier technologies
- Responding to government consultations and summarising relevance of government initiatives to the photonics community
- Generating biennial statistics on the size and impact of UK photonics leveraging the PLG's established methodology
- Securing financial support for PLG operations through membership contributions, grants and contracts. Monitoring and managing PLG finances to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Managing and producing content for the PLG website, online and press content
- Generating reports and presentations that summarise photonics relevance
- Speaking on behalf of the photonics community and/or participating in panel discussions at trade events

- Capturing intelligence on industry, economic and technology trends. Securing speakers to communicate such trends to the PLG members
- Being an engaging champion for photonics and the UK photonics industry.

Past experience in all of the above is not expected on appointment, rather an interest and ability to learn, adapt and find efficient routes to deliver benefit on these axes. The position will receive support and mentorship from a welcoming, varied, and geographically dispersed volunteer team consisting of PLG directors and officers. As a member of a small team, in a vibrant and diverse sector, you will have the opportunity to work closely on a range of different projects at any one time, the ability to prioritise and balance multiple stakeholders is therefore desirable.

The PLG is a fully virtual lean organisation with no offices, the role will therefore be fully remote and predominantly home-based, with travel including overnight to events and meetings across the UK and potentially internationally. There will be opportunities to engage with other clusters and events in photonics and other enabling technologies, across the UK, Europe and worldwide. The PLG welcomes candidates simultaneously perusing other interests (personal or career) alongside the PLG manager role as long as they do not provide a conflict of interest and there is commitment to the support of photonics in the UK. Applicants must have the right to work in the UK.

About the PLG

The PLG has operating in its current form since 2013 and traces its origins back over 30 years. It is one of the most highly respected national clusters in photonics globally. Supported by a wide range of UK industry covering applications from healthcare to communications and manufacturing with enabling impact on AI, quantum, defence and life sciences. Quarterly meetings attract business, academic and policy leaders and PLG reports are widely quoted across industry, research and policy communities. www.photonicsuk.org

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The PLG is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and experiences, particularly those underrepresented in photonics or leadership roles.

We want to ensure our recruitment process is accessible to everyone. If you require any reasonable adjustments to support your application or to participate in the interview process, please let us know by contacting info@photonicsuk.org. We will do our best to accommodate your needs.

How to Apply

Please submit your CV and a short cover letter outlining what you will bring to the role and how you see the role developing in the future at https://forms.gle/C1Dovgs91a6gCQHb6

Closing date for applications is 31 January 2026. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and the advert may close early if a suitable candidate is identified. We encourage early applications. Interviews will be in two stages during February and March 2026, firstly remote, secondly in person for those passing the first stage.