



# Position Specification

**Awe plc**  
Non-Executive Director

February 2023

## Awe plc

Together, delivering solutions for a safe and secure future.

For the past 70 years the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE plc) has played a crucial role in nuclear defence, providing the warheads for the UK's nuclear deterrent. The role of the UK's nuclear warheads and the Continuous at Sea Deterrent is to deter the most extreme threats our nation might face not just now, but that might emerge in the decades to come.

In 2020 the Government announced the replacement warhead programme in Parliament, reaffirming its commitment to maintaining the United Kingdom's minimum credible independent nuclear deterrent. Establishing this new programme will accelerate the transformation activity at AWE and requires an extensive and complex infrastructure build agenda, likely one of Europe's largest over the next decade. Our main site is on the former RAF Aldermaston with major facilities at Burghfield, Blacknest and RNAD Coulport. A team of world-renowned scientists, engineers and specialists undertake critical work, providing and maintaining warheads for Royal Navy submarines – everything from design and manufacture to in-service support and decommissioning. With unique nuclear skills and expertise, the business is also able to provide intelligence and support to the UK Government by developing innovative solutions to combat nuclear threat, terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

Today, AWE is recognised as a centre of scientific, engineering and technological excellence, equipped with some of the most advanced research, design and production facilities in the world. AWE plc was until 2021 owned by a private-sector consortium. From July 2021, AWE became an 'arms-length body' wholly owned by the MoD.

What we do is unique and so are the people who work here. We are a team of around 6,500 people and proud to be part of such an important mission and proud of our responsibilities to the [Ministry of Defence](#). We have some of the best in the business and the skills of AWE people are considered a national asset. We work tirelessly to ensure we attract, motivate, develop and retain the best talent and equip our people with the right skills for the future and we have once again been named as one of the top 25 [Best Big Companies](#) to work for in the Sunday Times Best Companies Awards, as well as gaining recognition [in a number of other categories](#) in 2022.

### The Board

The AWE plc Board, chaired by Sir John Manzoni, is a collaboration of industry experts that together support delivery of the AWE mission. [The Board](#) is responsible for setting the strategy of the business and providing oversight of, and constructive challenge to, the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Committee, to whom it delegates the day-to-day running of AWE's business and operations. The Board comprises of the Chair, six independent Non-Executive Directors (NEDs), one NED appointed by the MOD as a shareholder, and two executive directors. More information about the board and its relationship in the overall governance of AWE can be found in the [AWE Framework Document](#).

## The Role

The position has become open due to the incumbent stepping into an executive role within AWE to lead the nascent (and material) infrastructure programme as part of the replacement warhead programme. The replacement will chair the Infrastructure Committee and sit on one or more other Board committees. AWE is commencing one of the most complex and challenging infrastructure programmes in the UK and so leadership of the Infrastructure Committee will be vital in assuring AWE and its stakeholders of the effective delivery of that and AWE's other infrastructure programmes.

The AWE plc Board is responsible for the leadership of an organisation at the heart of the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent, carrying out essential research and advanced manufacturing on the nuclear warhead. As an Independent NED on a fiduciary Board, you would:

- Contribute to setting, monitoring and challenging the strategic direction of AWE plc, by assisting in developing key strategic objectives, overseeing their achievement and ensuring they remain appropriate;
- Contribute to open and honest debate at Board meetings and provide constructive challenge to the executive decisions, adding diversity of thought and industry experience to the Board;
- Promote the long-term success of AWE plc and ensure the accountability of AWE plc, scrutinising the performance of management in meeting agreed goals and objectives, and monitoring the reporting of performance;
- Uphold high standards of integrity and probity, supporting the Chair and executive directors by seeking to instil the appropriate culture, values and behaviours in the boardroom and beyond;
- Commit sufficient time and resource to fulfil all functional responsibilities and continually develop personal capabilities to do so.

## Candidate Profile

The Chair is looking for candidates with the following profile:

- UK national who is willing to undergo DV clearance (if successful);
- Focused on results and a willingness to look for solutions combined with an emphasis on targeted performance measurement;
- Pragmatic approach, including an ability to adapt quickly to fast moving situations; and
- Capacity to carry out this role effectively, with a commitment to AWE plc's mission, and desire to add real value to the Board and the business.

### Essential skills:

- Proven expertise in large scale programme /complex infrastructure/ project management and assurance with capital intensive industries comparable to AWE plc.
- Clear and effective influencing and communication skills, including an ability to operate effectively at Board level, challenging an executive constructively, and communicating with a wide range of audiences;
- Preparedness to work with top levels of government in progressing the AWE infrastructure agenda;
- An open mind, with the courage to think independently and strategically and an ability to analyse complex issues while driving tangible delivery/change;
- Team working and collaboration skills, including an ability to work together with other executives and non-executives in a low ego environment to solve collective problems;
- A good understanding of large and complex organisations operating in a changing environment; and
- Credibility and communication skills to operate confidently and effectively at Board level, with the ability to articulate complex issues clearly both internally and externally.

### Desirable skills:

- Familiarity with complex, high-hazard and regulated environment at an Executive or Non-Executive level;
- Expertise in managing capital projects;
- Expertise with transforming complex organisations;
- Working with the Public Sector, and knowledge and experience of major projects with government involvement.

Please note this position specification is not exhaustive. There will be other accountabilities not specified here that would be expected from the Non-Executive Director.

## Terms of Appointment

- The role of a Non-Executive Director is expected to take up to **2 days per month**.
- Remuneration will be **£29,995 per annum**.
- The successful candidate will be appointed for a fixed term, normally **up to three years**, following a process of open competition managed by the Chair.
- The non-executive may be reappointed for a further term, subject to mutual agreement and meeting required performance standards.
- These appointments are not pensionable.

## Location

- The Board will routinely meet in London or Aldermaston.

## Eligibility

- This post is reserved for **UK Nationals only**.
- The successful candidate must hold or be willing to obtain security clearance to **Developed Vetting** clearance level. Further information is available [here](#).
- Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that they have that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of AWE, including any relevant business interests, shareholdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for themselves and for their spouses/partners.

If you believe you have a conflict of interest, please contact Russell Reynolds Associates before submitting your application.

## Standards in public life

It is important that all public appointees uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life's Seven Principles of Public Life (Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership) and are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.

Further information is available:

- The 7 Principles of Public Life: [here](#)
- Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies: [here](#)

## Diversity and Inclusion

AWE's ambition is to create workplaces where we recognise and celebrate differences, encourage diverse contributions and our employees feel able to be themselves at work. We are striving to create a genuine culture of openness and inclusion at AWE and encourage diverse applicants. We believe that talent is talent – no matter what a person's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social background. The nature of what we do does mean that there are certain requirements for anyone who comes to work for us.

## Recruitment Process

AWE has appointed Russell Reynolds Associates to support this recruitment.

- The Selection Panel for this role will assess applications on merit in determining the candidates considered most suitable for this appointment.
- AWE reserves the right to make any offer of appointment conditional upon references and satisfactory conclusion of security enquiries.
- The provision of false or misleading information by a candidate who is appointed will be grounds for termination without notice.

The Selection Panel will include members of the Board's Nominations Committee.

**Indicative timetable** (subject to change)

<b>Closing date for applications</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>
<i>First update meeting (Appointment Panel only)</i>	<i>w/c 20<sup>th</sup> March</i>
<b>Preliminary interviews with RRA</b>	<b>w/c 20<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<i>Shortlist Meeting (Appointment Panel only)</i>	<i>w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> April</i>
<b>Informal stakeholder conversations</b>	<b>w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> April - w/c 10<sup>th</sup> April</b>
<b>Panel Interviews</b>	<b>w/c 17<sup>th</sup> April</b>
<b>Final meetings (with AWE Chairman)</b>	<b>w/c 24<sup>th</sup> April</b>

If you need further information about this role, please contact [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com).

## How to apply

Please submit materials by email to [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com). The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023**.

Your submission should include:

- The reference number in the subject line of your email: **P2212-058L**.
- Your **current CV** with educational and professional qualifications and full employment history, explaining any gaps in your employment history, giving details where applicable, of budgets and numbers of people managed, highlighting relevant achievements in recent posts.
- The names of two referees who may be contacted at short-list stage, i.e. before the final interview, describing in what capacity and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your consent.
- Notification of any dates you are unable to accommodate within the indicative timetable set out above.
- Conflicts of Interest. Applicants are asked to declare any potential conflicts. This data will be shared with the panel.

In addition, your application should include the following documentation:

- **Diversity Information Form.** We are committed to recruiting public appointees that reflect the diverse communities we serve. The diversity information you provide will help support monitoring our recruitment processes to ensure they are fair to all and allow us to attract diverse and talented candidates. The data in this section is collated anonymously and will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. The Form is available: [here](#).

Please note: due diligence will be carried out on all shortlisted candidates.