The ADAPT Centre, a world-leading SFI Centre, is Ireland’s global centre of excellence for digital content technology funded through Science Foundation Ireland’s Centres programme. ADAPT combines the expertise of over 300 researchers across seven Higher-Education Institutes (Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, Technological University Dublin, Cork Institute of Technology, Athlone Institute of Technology and Maynooth University) with that of its industry partners to produce ground-breaking digital content innovations. The ADAPT Centre executive function is co-hosted between Trinity College Dublin and Dublin City University.

ADAPT brings together more than 250 researchers who collectively have won more than €100m in funding and have a strong track record of transferring world-leading research and innovations to more than 140 companies. ADAPT partners are successfully advancing the frontiers of Artificial Intelligence (AI), content analysis, machine translation, personalisation, e-learning/education, media technologies, virtual and augmented reality, and spoken interaction, as well as driving global standards in content technologies.

Role
Based on substantial growth in the scale of the centre and its activities, ADAPT is seeking to appoint an Executive Director who will help drive the mission, vision, culture and strategic objectives of ADAPT and its FinTech Spoke initiative and the implementation of the strategies developed. This Executive Director position will be expected to foster an environment of research excellence and impact, where innovation can flourish, and to enhance the brand and identity of ADAPT internationally as a world-leading SFI Centre. As a member of the Executive Management team and Executive Steering Group, in close collaboration with the (Academic) CEO and Deputy Director, this Executive Director position, will provide leadership to Centre Operations functions across research programme management, non-exchequer funding, education & public engagement, and Centre administration. The Executive Director will have specific responsibility for leading and managing the effectiveness of transdisciplinary cross-institutional research collaboration, non-exchequer, exchequer and philanthropic funding (with an annual funding target of €4 million) and related operations appropriate for ADAPT’s scale (over €100M Centre funding) and complexity (over 250 researchers across seven diverse higher-education institutions).
Key deliverables expected in the first twelve months will include:

- Developing strategies for enabling the long-term sustainability of the Centre and delivering ADAPT’s national and international mandate.
- Working as necessary with internal and University management and administrative teams to ensure the efficient operation of ADAPT.
- Expanding and diversifying the ADAPT research funding base through non-exchequer, exchequer and philanthropic sources – with a target of over €4 million in non-exchequer funding per year.
- Managing the transition of ADAPT into ADAPT II.

This Executive Director position has key responsibilities for ensuring the sustainability and growth of research collaboration, non-exchequer, exchequer and philanthropic funding and managing risks regarding the attraction of research funding from multiple funding agencies over multiple years. This position is responsible for developing and delivering upon ADAPT’s expected economic and societal impact by overseeing the development of its diversified non-exchequer funding strategy, education and public engagement strategy, and impact-focused engaged research strategy. The post will be responsible for managing a large (20+ people) multi-functional and distributed operations team, including Education & Public Engagement team, Research Development team, Research Services team, and Centre Administration team. A key element of this management challenge is both the distribution of researchers across eight institutions as well as the line-management of operation staff hosted across a number of these institutions.

The successful candidate will be employed by Dublin City University and will be based primarily in the ADAPT Centre offices in DCU. This Executive Director position will be a key member of the ADAPT Centre Executive team and will report to the ADAPT Centre (Academic) CEO and ADAPT Centre Deputy Director (at DCU). As ADAPT is a collaborative research centre, the position will involve leadership across all collaborative ADAPT partners. Further to this, and to the development of a diverse portfolio of non-exchequer funding, the successful candidate is expected to devote 10% of their time to international travel on behalf of ADAPT.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Work with the ADAPT (Academic) CEO to develop and enhance the strategic vision, maximise the impact of the Centre and ensure delivery of its stated objectives.
- Work closely with ADAPT Principal Investigators and Funded Investigators to drive cross-institute, cross-discipline and cross-Theme collaboration across the ADAPT Research Programme.
- With the (Academic) CEO, develop ADAPT’s national mandate by continually expanding membership and enlarging the cohort of Principal Investigators, Funded Investigators and Academic Collaborators through appropriate funded research collaborations.
- Operate an effective governance system – including acting as the Secretariat to the ADAPT Governance Board, co-ordinating the activities of the External Scientific Advisory Board and the Education & Public Engagement Advisory Board, Chairing the Executive Committee, Managing the Executive Group and operational committees within the ADAPT Centre.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnership with major stakeholders, including funding agencies, government bodies and senior management across the University.
- Ensure regular communications and engagement with all levels of leadership at the lead institution and across all seven partner institutions, including with Deans and Vice Presidents of research and with University Presidents where appropriate.
• Develop ADAPT’s economic and societal impact by developing its funding strategy, expanding and diversifying the ADAPT research funding base through non-exchequer, exchequer and philanthropic sources.
• Work with ADAPT PIs to ensure their research agendas are managed well and are delivering for the ADAPT programme and ensure the continuance and growth of Academic research collaboration, non-commercial non-exchequer funding and research activities.
• Direct responsibility for all non-commercial non-exchequer engagement, both new and existing, with the position being a key member of the ADAPT executive management team, working across all the ADAPT Centre partner institutions.
• Ensure the smooth operation of the Centre, including reporting to SFI, financial oversight and the research, EPE and non-exchequer funding functions.
• With the (Academic) CEO, provide leadership for the Institute with specific personal responsibility for managing a large Operations team (20+ people), including the Finance Manager, Education & Public Engagement Manager and team, Funding Diversification Managers, Research Services team, Office Manager and Centre Administrator.
• Lead the overall strategy and plan for the Centre and ensure full engagement of the Operations team in providing professional services across seven partner institutions in fulfilling the duties of the Centre with respect to funding agencies and external stakeholders.
• Ensure that the Centre Operations team is effectively coordinated and effectively working with the relevant service functions provided through partner institutions, including functions related to space/facilities, technology transfer and IP management, Finance offices, HR offices, Communications offices, civic and public engagement, research support offices, etc.
• Line management of staff within the Centre – including administrative, financial, project management, facilities, technical, research development, and education & public engagement.
• Financial management of the Centre including budgeting, planning and reporting across all funding agencies.
• Support the (Academic) CEO in the identification and exploitation of new funding opportunities.
• Implement an effective communications and public outreach and engagement strategy for the Centre.
• Work closely with the ADAPT Commercialisation team in the development of industry relationships for ADAPT, ensuring increased industry engagement with committed industry partners, providing a platform for long-term growth and sustainability.
• Develop strategies for enabling the long-term sustainability of the Centre and delivering the ADAPT National and International mandate.
• Drive a culture for industry and public engagement and commercial and societal impact across the Centre.
• Drive the national digital technologies agenda and role of ADAPT within this agenda.
• Represent ADAPT nationally and internationally – advocating for the Centre and its PIs.

Qualifications and Experience
Candidates appointed to this post must have 12-15 years executive experience, including strategic planning, team leadership and operational management across both commercial and academic environments. A PhD in a relevant scientific discipline related to ADAPT’s research in Digital Content Technologies is required.
The successful candidate must have a proven track record (12-15 years) of strategic planning and team leadership, ideally in an international context. They must also have firm knowledge and experience of the research function in both industry and academic sectors.

- Focused strategic vision for the research and funding diversification activities of the centre. Must be able to work with the Centre Executive team in building a long-term vision for non-commercial non-exchequer funding in ADAPT.
- Proven experience in risk management regarding the attraction of research funding across multiple funding agencies over multiple years.
- Proven experience of strategic relationship management, negotiation and management of research collaboration and institutional partnerships.
- Proven track record in sales excellence and strategic and operational sales management.
- Proven track record of strategic financial management and investment decisions.
- An understanding and appreciation of the IP issues arising in the context of academic research and in particular computer software.
- A willingness to innovate and implement change

Skills and Competencies

- Strong senior leadership skills and ability to engage individuals at senior levels including investors, business partners, and governmental officials such as Vice-President for Research and Innovation, President, Dean of Research, SFI Director of research centres, Director of Research in ICT in Enterprise Ireland, IDA country partners etc.
- Strong analytical skills to assess non-commercial non-exchequer funding pipelines and drive future planning.
- Proven ability to successfully manage non-exchequer, exchequer and philanthropic funding pipeline.
- Ability to influence collaboration across academic and industry environments
- Proven ability to drive a culture for industry-engaged and public-engaged research and research impact.
- Ability to represent the Centre internationally in research forums, with industry and trade delegations and with government agencies.
- Ability to decide on appropriate actions, issue directives and monitor subsequent performance. Use dynamic and measured judgment where appropriate.
- Excellent written and oral proficiency in English (essential).
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills both written and verbal.
- Should possess excellent computer skills, innovative ideas and solutions, flexibility and the ability to anticipate and provide solutions as they arise.
- Excellent organiser, negotiator, with positive energy and accountability, strong customer focus, and high degree of resourcefulness.
- Adaptive thinker with broad perspective.
- Proven ability to prioritise workload and work to exacting deadlines.
- Flexible and adaptable in responding to stakeholder needs.
- Enthusiastic and structured approach to research and development.
- Excellent problem solving abilities.
**Mandatory Training:**
The post holder will be required to undertake the following mandatory compliance training: Orientation, Health & Safety and Data Protection (GDPR). Other training may need to be undertaken when appropriate.