

Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research

The Role

The Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) is internationally recognised as a centre of excellence that brings together academic researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to undertake high quality, independent and relevant research.

Following the decision of the current Director, Professor Liz Aston, to stand down after seven years in the role, we are looking to appoint a new Director (0.6FTE). This will be for three years in the first instance but depending on funding and performance may be extended for another fixed term period. Funding is available to backfill an appointment with a replacement at Lecturer level.

SIPR is seeking an outstanding individual to build on its existing achievements. The next phase of SIPR's development (see [Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027](#)) calls for academic and strategic leadership to further advance the Institute's activities of policy- and practice-relevant research, knowledge exchange, and engagement with researchers and practitioners in Scotland, the UK and internationally. The Director must have the vision, leadership experience, and enthusiasm to build on current strengths in maintaining and developing SIPR's profile.

The Director will work closely with academic colleagues across the SIPR consortium institutions, chair the SIPR Executive Committee and engage regularly with Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority who are co-funders of the Institute. The Director reports to the SIPR Governance Board, comprised of senior representatives of the consortium universities, SPA and Police Scotland. The Director also supports the SIPR Leadership Team consisting of Associate Directors (based at SIPR consortium universities) who coordinate work across themed networks.

The post is available as soon as the successful candidate is able to take up the position. The new Director should be in post by August 2025 to facilitate planning for 2025-2026. Professor Liz Aston has expressed a willingness to mentor the new Director if that is desired. Support for the Director is currently provided by the SIPR Knowledge Exchange and Business Manager (KEBM) and a part-time Administrator and Communications and Dissemination Officer, all based at Edinburgh Napier University.

Outline of indicative expectations regarding main duties and responsibilities:

- Provide leadership and support to the SIPR Leadership Team and Networks.
- Line manage the SIPR KEBM and appoint new Associate Directors as required.
- Chair the SIPR Executive Committee.
- Provide strategic direction and co-produce an Annual Plan with the Leadership Team and Executive Committee for the Board of Governance.
- Support the generation of external research funds directly or through members access to strategic SIPR seed corn funding.

- Responsibility for funding criteria and approval, including chairing award panels or delegating this where appropriate.
- Lead knowledge exchange and impact generation via various mechanisms, including directing the Scottish International Policing Conference.
- Support the development of the next generation of policing scholars and practitioners.
- Secure participation of SIPR members to work collaboratively to achieve SIPR's aims.
- Maintain and build partnerships with key collaborators locally and internationally to support evidence based approaches and to grow influence and connectivity internationally.
- Provide an Annual Report to the SIPR Board of Governance.
- Financial planning and oversight of the SIPR budget.
- Secure buy-in and funding for future SIPR collaboration agreements.

Person Specification

The following are the essential criteria for this post:

- A permanent academic position at one of the SIPR consortium universities;
- A vision for SIPR and what it can achieve over the next 3 years.
- A PhD in a relevant discipline and/or inter-disciplinary field.
- A personal track record of relevant research and knowledge exchange activity, as evidenced by publications and income generation.
- A record of academic and strategic leadership.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills.
- The ability to represent SIPR to a range of internal and external stakeholders.
- The ability to engage colleagues across the SIPR consortium to facilitate high quality research with impact.
- The ability to engage with colleagues across the SIPR consortium to develop successful external funding bids.

Application process

Applicants must submit a covering letter and CV no later than 17:00 on Monday 2nd of June 2025. In addition, they must also provide one academic reference and a second reference from a senior leader within their institution (Dean or above) endorsing the application and indicating the support and environment that would be provided for SIPR by the institution. These should be sent to the KEBM Moncia Craig (m.craig2@napier.ac.uk). Applicants are welcome to contact the current Director, Professor Liz Aston, for an informal discussion of any aspects of the role (l.aston@napier.ac.uk; 0131 455 3323).

Interviews will take place in Edinburgh on afternoon of the 12th of June. The interview panel will be chaired by Gill Imery, on behalf of the SIPR Board of Governance, who will be joined on the panel by two other board members.