

Adolescent Health Study

Chief Information Technology Officer
Information Pack

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WittKieffer

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WELCOME FROM DIRECTOR, PROFESSOR CATHIE SUDLOW

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Adolescent Health Study (AHS). AHS is a major new research initiative focused on understanding how young people grow and develop during adolescence – a period of significant physical, emotional and social change.

Our aim is bold: to recruit at least 100,000 young people across the UK and follow them for a minimum of 10 years – hopefully much longer. Through questions and measures, bio-sampling and linkage to health, education and other administrative records, we will create an unparalleled data resource for researchers across the world. This will drive our understanding of this vitally important transition phase and how young people's adolescent experiences impact their health and wellbeing in later life. It will make a significant contribution to informing health, education and wider policies for this age group for years to come.

We are looking for a Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) to join AHS at a formative stage. Our CITO will play a vital role in shaping the digital and data infrastructure needed to deliver one of the UK's most ambitious health research programmes. We're looking for someone to provide strategic leadership on technology and information security, ensuring systems are robust, secure, trustworthy, scalable and fit for purpose. This is an opportunity to influence how the study operates and to work alongside leading experts to deliver a resource that will have long-term impact.

You will combine technical expertise with strategic vision and the ability to lead through complexity. We're looking for someone who is pragmatic, collaborative and confident in engaging with a wide range of stakeholders – from researchers and data scientists to external partners and regulators. Strong communication skills are essential, as is the ability to balance innovation with compliance and risk management. Above all, you'll bring sound judgment and a commitment to building systems that enable world-class research.

This information pack outlines the opportunity to join us at an exciting time at the beginning of our journey as an independent organisation. If you share our ambition and commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of young people, we look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

Professor Cathie Sudlow

Executive Director, Adolescent Health Study





ADOLESCENT HEALTH STUDY

The Adolescent Health Study (AHS) is a £62 million initiative, funded by UK Research and Innovation. Its aim is to generate a world-leading open science data platform and research resource, through a new longitudinal population study.

Compared with young children or older adults, adolescents and young adults have received much less attention in observational health research. AHS is therefore being established to enable a once-in-a-generation transformation of our understanding, through the development of an unprecedented health and wellbeing data resource.

The study aims to recruit at least 100,000 participants aged 8-18 years from across the UK, and to follow their health and wellbeing for at least 10 years. It plans to collect data through questions and measures; obtain bio-samples for genomic and other analyses; and link data from participants' health, education and other administrative records.

The study is in the early stages of development, and the team is consulting widely with young people, the academic community and other interest holders on a number of topics. These include recruitment, retention, bio-sampling, laboratory strategy, ethics and governance, data linkages, and questionnaires and measures. Feasibility and piloting work is due to start in early 2026.

For more information please visit <https://www.adolescenthealthstudy.ac.uk/>.

THE ROLE

Purpose of the Post

The Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) will play a critical role in establishing and maintaining the vision, strategy and roadmap for the organisation's data and technology needs. The CITO will ensure the security, confidentiality, integrity and availability of AHS's business, research and information assets. They will procure infrastructure solutions for receiving and managing complex participant data and will lead a robust information security programme. The postholder will report to the Executive Director and act as a key advisor to senior leadership on matters of data management, information security and compliance.

Main Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Develop and implement a comprehensive data and information strategy aligned with AHS's research goals.
- Lead the creation of a secure, trustworthy digital ecosystem to support research workflows, from data capture, storage and linkage to advanced analysis platforms.
- Advise senior leadership on emerging technologies and their potential impact on the study.

Technology and Innovation

- Lead procurement for secure, scalable data systems for managing sensitive and complex participant data, including to enable efficient, effective and secure access for the research community.
- Manage IT operations including hardware, software, cloud services and research databases.
- Lead on commissioning, development and integration of mobile health (mHealth) tools, wearable devices and digital survey platforms.
- Ensure optimum availability and high performance of systems used by researchers, analysts and collaborators.



Risk Management and Compliance

- Identify, assess, and mitigate cybersecurity risks to the organisation.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant regulations, standards and best practice, including GDPR.
- Establish and maintain a business continuity plan.

Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement

- Work closely with researchers, data scientists, academic institutions and funding agencies to support study objectives.
- Serve as the primary liaison with external auditors, regulators and partners on security-related matters.
- Chair information and technology advisory group(s) to gain expert guidance and new perspectives on technology developments that enable new approaches to data acquisition, storage, linkage or use or the identification of creative and/or innovative solutions to further support the organisation.
- Communicate complex security issues to non-technical stakeholders, both within AHS and externally.

Working Environment

- Full time role with flexible working arrangements.
- AHS is a national organisation, and our activities take place across the UK.
- Flexible working will be required across several geographical locations in the UK. Travel may be required to AHS locations, fieldwork sites and partner organisations.





THE PERSON

Essential Criteria

- Proven experience in a senior information technology role, within a research, academic or healthcare setting.
- Advanced degree in Information Technology, Computer Science, Health Informatics or a related field, or equivalent professional experience.
- Strong understanding of research data management, linkage, curation and analysis requirements, privacy regulations and digital health technologies.
- Demonstrated success in leading complex IT projects and managing sensitive data environments.
- Strong understanding of cybersecurity and information security requirements for a growing company.
- Knowledge of trusted research environments/secure data environments capable of enabling secure, privacy-preserving access to and analysis of multimodal data and their technical and accreditation requirements for large-scale international use.
- Familiarity with a range of data collection platforms.
- Knowledge of data management and statistical software integration and of secure cloud-based research environments.
- Experience of developing and running tenders for information and technology platform.
- Ability to develop and execute strategic plans and policies.
- Exceptional communication skills, with the ability to engage technical and non-technical audiences.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience with longitudinal studies or large-scale public health/epidemiological research programmes.

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

AHS is an equal opportunities employer, and as such aims to treat all employees, consultants and applicants fairly. It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of age, disability, gender identity or expression, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Beyond these protected characteristics, we acknowledge the importance of socio-economic background, childcare and caring responsibilities, educational background, neurodiversity and any other factors that shape an individual's identity and opportunities. We strive to create an environment where all colleagues feel valued, supported and able to contribute fully.

Values

It is an exciting time for the Adolescent Health Study (AHS) as we establish our senior leadership and delivery teams. As the senior executive team evolves, the AHS values will be grounded in inclusivity, integrity, accountability and collaboration.

ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS

Search and Selection Process

Applications or enquiries should be made to WittKieffer, the executive search firm assisting with the appointments.

Applicants should submit a CV accompanied by a cover letter (maximum 2 pages) outlining their suitability for the position and addressing how they satisfy the person specification criteria.

Applications should be submitted by **5pm 6th February 2026**.

Enquiries or applications can be made, in confidence, to **Natalie Derry** or **Evan Yeckley** at WittKieffer.

Natalie Derry

T: +44 7408 851596

E: nderry@wittkieffer.com

Evan Yeckley

T: +44 7408 834744

E: eyeckley@wittkieffer.com