

Product and Innovation Advisor



The Product and Innovation Advisor is responsible for developing and optimising the GNS' product pipeline in close collaboration with others. They will also take a lead on fostering innovation in the organisation by upskilling teams in innovation tools and techniques.

The role requires a strategic and hands-on approach, ensuring that innovative products align with market needs, and overseeing product lifecycle development from inception to optimisation.

Reports to:	Head of Commercial and Business Partnerships
Department:	Commercial and Business Partnerships
Group:	Science and Commercial
Employment Type:	Permanent
Location:	Avalon
Direct reports:	Nil
Budget:	Nil
Career Path:	Corporate
Job Family:	Business Performance
Career Step:	7
Date:	September 2024

Position priorities and responsibilities

Product Development

- Develop and manage a robust product innovation pipeline, in close collaboration with the Commercialisation Lead.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams, including scientists and technical teams to drive product development from concept to launch.
- Ensure that new products are grounded in human-centred design principles and meet customer needs.
- Manage the product lifecycle, ensuring alignment with the GNS Science Roadmap and organisation strategy.
- Serve as the product manager during the early stages of product development, leading the definition, design, and prototyping phases to ensure product-market fit.
- Evaluate existing products, large and small, for performance and market relevance. Identify opportunities for improvement and implement optimisations to enhance product value and customer experience.

Innovation

- Provide training and guidance on innovation tools and techniques, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and creative problem-solving.
- Lead the piloting of new ways of working across teams to embed innovation practices.
- Encourage the use of innovation tools and techniques to unlock new ideas.

Team Work

- Work in a way that supports a positive culture and morale.
- Support other team members and provide coverage of functions where required.
- Create and maintain a growth and learning environment for yourself and others.

Responsibilities of all staff

- Comply with all GNS Science policies and procedures.
- Contribute to making GNS Science a healthy and safe place to work by complying with the responsibilities and accountabilities outlined in the Health and Safety Management System Framework.

The responsibilities of this position will change over time to respond to changing needs. The incumbent will need the flexibility to adapt and develop as the company and its environment evolves.

Key working relationships

Internal:

- Commercial and Business Partnerships team, Theme Leaders, Science Department Managers, General Manager Science Futures, Research Funding Manager, Science Team Leaders and teams, Legal and Risk Department, Finance Department, Project Management Office, Service Delivery Team, Māori and Government Relations Group.

External:

- New Zealand and international companies, industry organisations, other Crown Research Institutes and universities, Māori organisations and companies, regional and local government authorities.

Person specification

Skills, knowledge and attributes

- Proven track record managing all aspects of a successful product through its lifecycle.
- Strong stakeholder management – the ability to sell a product vision to multiple levels of stakeholders and drive challenging discussions amicably.
- Strong knowledge of innovation tools, techniques, and methodologies, including human-centred design.
- Excellent collaboration skills, with experience working with multidisciplinary teams, including commercial and science teams.
- Analytical mindset with the ability to evaluate product performance and identify areas for improvement.

- Strong project management and prioritisation skills, with the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously.
- Flexible, and able to manage and drive activity through time of ambiguity.
- A sound understanding of science and technology.
- Develops builds and maintain effective relationships with Māori, respecting obligations under Te Tiriti of Waitangi and interacting appropriately with Māori taking into consideration tikanga (customs) and kawa (protocol).
- Knowledge of Vision Maturanga would be an advantage.

Experience

Essential:

- Proven track record of creating innovate products or services.
- Product management experience.

Desirable:

- Experience working in a research/science organisation would be an advantage.
- Comfortable with Agile project management principles.
- Experience in innovation advisory roles.

Qualifications

Essential:

- Tertiary qualification in business, commerce or marketing related degree or relevant experience.

Performance dimensions

At a high level, GNS Science recognises six **performance dimensions**: three relate to technical capability, one relates to leadership (if applicable) and two relate to the way we work. Below are the general expectations that are the minimum standards expected of all staff. There are also expectations that specifically relate to the career step associated with the role; you can find these on GNS Online.

Technical capabilities

Scope, complexity and innovation

- Enduring commitment to maintaining and developing skills and knowledge in area of expertise.
- Both the ability and desire to apply appropriate rigour, principles and practices to deliver quality work in a cost-effective manner.
- Acts in a manner that conveys high personal and professional standards.
- Open to coaching and feedback – incorporates suggestions to find better ways of doing things (to improve own and GNS Science performance).

Contribution to GNS Science / profession

- Establishes and maintains effective and collaborative working relationships – with colleagues and external individuals and groups.
- Both the ability and commitment to work in a culturally responsive and inclusive manner; respecting and valuing the diverse perspectives of individuals and groups.

- Takes an interest in early career colleagues, graduates and students – provides coaching and/or mentoring as appropriate. Supports initiatives to promote science careers.
- Prevents harm to self and others by carrying out duties safely and responsibly.

Delivery of work

- The ability and commitment to deliver pieces of work and projects on time to required quality, cost and benefit parameters.
- The application of appropriate project management rigour, principles and practices to delivering quality projects in a cost-effective manner

Leadership

- Leads from the front to foster a strong culture of collaboration and innovation and working effectively with other teams to achieve objectives.
- Develops and manages the performance and capability of the team through effective coaching and development initiatives.
- Sustains the capability and capacity of the team through effective planning and talent management.
- Creates an inclusive working environment that values diversity and wellbeing.

Behavioural expectations

Manaakitanga – we do the right thing

Champions a positive working culture. Works and interacts with colleagues, external partners, stakeholders and customers in a way that is consistent with our values:

- We are **CONNECTED** in our purpose; with each other, with partners and stakeholders and with our communities.
- We are **INSPIRED** by our work to explore, challenge, innovate and aim higher.
- We are **EMPOWERED** to be our best – valued for our differences, encouraged to contribute and enabled to grow and develop.

Bicultural commitment

- As a Crown Research Institute, GNS Science is committed to partnering with iwi/hapū and Māori communities and agencies to achieve their science aspirations.
- We do this in a way that is culturally appropriate (**tikanga**) and honours Māori and non-Māori worldviews (**te ao**).

These expectations are intended to support and guide the development of individual staff.