



# Candidate Brief

**Head of IT Solutions  
Wallingford**

**January 2014**

## CABI BACKGROUND

CABI ([www.cabi.org](http://www.cabi.org)) is a not-for-profit development-led organization supported by a solid scientific research base and a world class publishing service. Our mission is to improve people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment. Our work increases food security and protects biodiversity.

We have over 400 staff based in 16 countries. We have offices in Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, the UK and the USA.

CABI is an intergovernmental organization that can trace its origins back to 1910. Our mission and direction are influenced by government representatives from our 46 member countries who help guide the activities we undertake. These include scientific publishing, development projects and research, and microbial services. We are also leading a major new initiative, Plantwise, which aims to improve food security and the lives of the rural poor by reducing crop losses.

### Publishing

We produce key scientific publications, including CAB Abstracts – the world-leading database covering agriculture and environment and Global Health - the definitive bibliographic database for public health information. We also publish multimedia compendia, books, ebooks and full text electronic resources aiming to further science and its application to real life. Behind each of our products is a team of subject specialists committed to delivering the most relevant and authoritative information to researchers worldwide.

### Development projects and research

Our staff research and find solutions to agricultural and environmental problems. We use science, information and communication tools to help solve issues of global concern. Our work is arranged around four core themes:

- **Commodities** – we work to enable smallholder commodity farmers to compete in global markets. We diagnose and control plant pests and diseases, and help farmers get a better price for their crops. We work on crops such as coffee, cocoa, wheat, rice and cotton.
- **Invasive species** – we are helping to reduce the spread and impact of invasive weeds such as Japanese Knotweed, water hyacinth and insects such as coffee berry borer and cocoa pod borer. We also advise countries at a policy level about agriculture, trade and the environment.
- **Knowledge for development** – we work with farmers, extension workers, researchers and governments to deliver agricultural knowledge and develop communication strategies and systems.
- **Knowledge management** - we use information and communication technologies to provide farmers, researchers and policy makers with the information they need to make informed decisions and to lift people out of poverty.

### Microbial services

We manage one of the world's largest genetic resource collections, the UK's National Collection of Fungus Cultures. We conduct microbiological identifications, provide cultures for sale, and offer preservation and consultancy services. We are also screening our collection, looking for natural products such as antibiotics, vitamins and enzymes.

### Plantwise

Plantwise aims to increase food security by providing knowledge. It helps poor farmers in developing countries improve their livelihoods by losing less of what they grow to plant health problems. This will be achieved through expansion of the plant clinic network which CABI has already begun to establish, supported by the creation of a global knowledge bank of information on plant health, pests and diseases. Plantwise will be a global programme, comprising an integrated set of projects and activities.

[www.plantwise.org](http://www.plantwise.org)

## THE ROLE

<b>Job title:</b>	Head of IT Solutions
<b>Grade:</b>	Senior Management (SMG)
<b>Salary:</b>	We offer a competitive package in the development sector
<b>Reporting to:</b>	IT Director
<b>Direct reports:</b>	IT Project Managers / Business Analysts / Technical Leads
<b>Key peer group:</b>	Head of Business Solutions, International Development (ID), Publishing Commercial and Corporate senior management
<b>Location:</b>	Wallingford, UK

### Purpose of the role

The Head of IT Solutions will deliver CABI's technology driven solutions to the business to satisfy our customers' high expectations of technically innovative products in the digital/mobile landscape. By utilising a broad set of people and technical project management skills you will work closely with colleagues across the UK & international regional centres to deliver CABI's Digital and Mobile products and services. This new role will lead our team of dedicated IT professionals committed to the full project life-cycle delivery of larger scale technical solutions to the business. The team's purpose and goals are to:-

- To investigate, design and Implement robust technical solutions for the relevant Business Unit.
- To allocate and deliver project management, business analysis & IT product development technical services and select appropriate technical solutions in line with our IT strategy.
- To be the single point of contact for product owners throughout the lifetime of a project, providing support & advice on projects from design to implementation and final delivery.

The role is based within CABI's IT function, but you will be working across functional teams and departments and with Publishing, International Development and Bioservices staff.

### Key Accountabilities

- Manage IT solution delivery with AGILE and Prince II methodologies – working across multiple teams and overseeing the technical design & implementation best practices.
- Work with product owners across CABI to translate business requirements derived from customer-centric needs into technical stories for investigation and delivery by the relevant technical team.
- Accountable for maintaining a “revenue-generating / Business critical-first” approach to solutions prioritisation and delivery.
- Focus on delivery of cost effective and appropriate technical solutions at all times taking into account long term architectural implications in support of all CABI's business and IT strategies.
- Ensure that CABI products have the most cost effective architecture to deliver technical solutions that match or exceed the expectations for both internal & external customers.
- To manage appropriate resources and teams to provide end to end delivery of the technical solution where required and into operational phase.
- Lead team-wide understanding of the scope of technical projects, and produce clear definitions of technical deliverables with accurate estimates.
- To work with the appropriate IT services/development teams (UK, regional and external suppliers) to provide consistent support service to our product owners.
- Help lead large-scale digital platform development projects from prototype to production, carried out by multi-function teams sometimes across multiple locations.

- To work with colleagues across UK and regional centres to identify opportunities for the application of technology & to frame opportunities for enhancement of CABI products.
- To investigate new digital platforms & content delivery methods, in line with the IT Strategy and help contribute towards budgetary planning.
- To ensure that each new technical solution is clearly scoped, business & user requirements defined & impact assessments appropriately documented.
- To build in-depth understanding of relevant areas of systems architecture and capabilities & provide the business with easy to understand explanations.
- To drive improvement in existing architectures & capabilities of the company and contribute to the future IT strategy refreshes.

## Candidate profile

You will have at least 5 years' demonstrable experience in a senior IT or technical management environment with relevant experience of Internet/mobile platforms and resources in a scientific, technical or publishing environment considered a benefit. You will work alongside team members within IT to coordinate resources to maximize the effectiveness of CABI's information delivery via its current and future Digital platforms. A keen, current and relevant interest in technical innovation and digital architecture including mobile platforms is a must and being able to manage multiple initiatives and communicate complex concepts whilst maintaining and planning around conflicting priorities is essential. Experience of managing staff directly and indirectly to get the job done is essential.

## Previous experience

### Essential:

- Relevant first degree, senior level technical background or demonstrable interest in applied Technology.
- 5+ years' experience within a senior IT or technical management environment to include the efficient and effective management of staff and budgets
- Proven experience in scoping and delivering lean, Agile and SOA based solutions at senior level to stated business needs.
- AGILE development and Prince II project management experience essential.
- Proven experience of designing and deploying digital publishing technologies and content-driven platforms.
- Good verbal and written communication skills/report writing skills.

### Desirable:

- Broad understanding of scientific fields.
- Solutions Architecture, Information Architecture and large scale software design and implementation experience.
- Familiarity with general software development or AGILE development methods

## Skills

- At the forefront of applied technology.
- Excellent collaboration, negotiation and communication skills (written & stand-up presentations)
- Established technical background in at least one significant area. E.g. Web, Mobile, Service Orientated Architecture, Database Design and architecture, and/or noSQL
- Good organisational skills backed up with demonstrable technical project delivery experience.

## Personal characteristics

- A team player, with excellent interpersonal, presentation and communication skills
- Good judgement and decision making skills
- Highly self-motivated and driven to achieve results
- Ability to work to tight deadlines under pressure
- Positive, flexible and adaptable attitude
- Creative / innovative ability
- Strong personal organisational and business skills

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

CABI is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of age, gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation or marital status. No applicant will be disadvantaged by conditions which cannot be shown to be justified and selection will be based on merit.

By taking the [CABI Equal Opportunities Survey](#) you will be helping us to follow best practice recommendations that employers should monitor selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Please follow the link to take the survey.

(If the link does not work please cut and paste the following URL into your web browser [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CABI\\_Equal\\_Opportunities\\_Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CABI_Equal_Opportunities_Survey))

The information in the survey will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only, forming no part of the selection process. This information will be received separately from your application.

## HOW TO APPLY

To apply please send a covering letter detailing how you meet the candidate profile and a full CV quoting Job Reference 05/2014 to [recruitment@cabi.org](mailto:recruitment@cabi.org) Please state where you saw this advertisement.

**Please note closing date for receipt of applications is 24 January 2014**