

Job description

Job title:	Research Manager
Reporting to:	Assistant Director of Research
Salary:	£63,248 per annum plus excellent benefits
Contract type:	Permanent
Hours per week:	Full time team employees are required to work 37.5 hours per week and, with hybrid working, those hours can be worked any time between 7am – 7pm. Core working hours are 10am – 3pm. For this role, 2 days per week in the office will be required in line with our hybrid working framework.

The Health Foundation

We are an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK. The Foundation's strategic plan for 2023-25 sets out an ambitious and compelling vision with three strategic priorities that guide our work to build a healthier UK. By valuing our health as an asset, investing in health and care services and focusing on the wider factors that shape our health and drive inequalities, we can build a healthier nation. We are ambitious about the impact we can have over the next 3 years.

Background

The Foundation achieves its objective through a combination of traditional grant-making activity, commissioning of research and fellowships, in-house research and data analytics, and a range of related activities to support individuals stay well, support staff in the service to improve care and support policy-makers to make better policy decisions.

Research Team

Research is central to the work of the Health Foundation and comprises a mix of in-house and externally awarded and commissioned programmes. The research team is responsible for running a varied and ambitious portfolio of externally commissioned research and evaluation work, which places a strong emphasis on building the evidence base for improving people's health, understanding the quality of health and care, making health and care more sustainable, and improving health care delivery.

The research team provide expert support across the Foundation, working with the lead staff responsible for developing programmes of work, to understand and develop key research questions and support the delivery of our strategic priorities.

We aim for the research and evaluation work we commission to have wide impact on policy and practice and influence the future direction and planning of the Health Foundation's work. The portfolio encompasses independent evaluations, evidence reviews, original research awards, and knowledge mobilisation activities to explore what works to improve health, health care and social care.

Job Purpose

The role of the Research Manager is to contribute to the delivery of the Foundation's strategy, working with staff from across the Foundation, to scope research calls and commission research studies. The portfolio of externally commissioned research projects includes original research, evidence reviews, evaluation studies and research, and evaluation methods development.

The Research Manager is responsible for the scoping of work, the drafting of Directors Team and Board papers for authorisation, managing calls for proposals or invitation to tender documents, establishing good governance arrangements, and the management of the selection, grant commitment and contracting processes.

The Research Manager is the key point of contact for a range of internal and external stakeholders, including colleagues from other teams within the Foundation, people in other funding and charitable organisations as well as national thought leaders and policymakers. The Research Manager provides strategic leadership to a range of research partnerships, and acts as the contract manager for commissioned studies.

The Research Manager works closely with the relevant teams to:

- enable effective knowledge mobilisation from the Foundation's work
- draw out the key messages gathered from research and evaluation projects, and
- ensure key learning and research findings feed into the development of future work programmes.

The Research Manager will also actively contribute to shaping and directing our knowledge mobilisation work, leading on and developing dissemination plans for the research findings in collaboration with the Communications team. The role also involves working in close liaison with colleagues in the Operations and Finance teams, as well as an taking an active leadership role in supporting the team to deliver its Research Strategy and business plan objectives.

Key tasks and responsibilities:

1. To lead on the effective delivery of assigned projects and programmes of work across the Foundation's research portfolio, establishing good programme management approaches and governance arrangements.
2. Work closely with internal colleagues and with external partners, to lead on the scoping, design, commissioning and management of research and evaluation projects that help further the Foundation's strategic priorities.
3. Work in partnership with relevant project teams across the Foundation, including those for cross-cutting themes, contributing to the design and planning of work that involves research and evaluation components.
4. Take responsibility for designated research awards, commissioned research and evaluation studies, ensuring the highest quality possible, relevance and value for money; demonstrating an awareness of current research in the specific field, independent expert review and due diligence.
5. Proactively manage stakeholder relationships with internal and external colleagues, including managing formal meetings (such as advisory groups), informal communication (such as telephone catch-ups with external researchers), and ensuring appropriate record keeping and completion of the actions arising.
6. Work in accordance with documented processes for the commissioning and management of research and evaluation projects, such as tendering, robust, and transparent selection processes and payment records.

7. Collaborate with the wider research team to review and improve internal processes and practices relating to the commissioning, management, and evaluation of research projects.
8. Manage the Foundation's peer review processes in relation to all assigned research projects, both at the assessment stage (including value for money) and the review of final research reports and articles.
9. Support colleagues in other teams to scope and develop commissioned research and evaluation projects, working with colleagues in the communications team to agree the dissemination plan for the outputs from projects; contributing to the drafting of any publication, web text or articles that summarise the key messages of the research as necessary.
10. Manage delegated budgets and monitor spending against them.
11. Partner with colleagues across the Foundation to maximise the utilisation and mobilisation of the research knowledge and key insights generated internally and externally.
12. Work in conjunction with other colleagues to synthesise the learning from different sources of our commissioned work, such as evidence reviews, research reports, evaluation studies and award programmes to enable key findings to support the organisation's decision-making and planning.
13. Identify opportunities for improving the effectiveness and value of research and evaluation within the Foundation.
14. Explore potential opportunities to disseminate the Foundation's work and learning externally through conferences, papers, blogs, and contributing to the wider policy debate through our externally commissioned research.
15. Keep abreast of the external research environment and develop content knowledge to support the delivery of the Foundation's strategic priorities, such as supporting health care improvement.
16. Maintain an updated awareness and understanding of wider academic research, evaluation studies, health care improvement reports and applicable practice developments and the wider determinants of health, to inform the scoping, design and implementation of the Foundation's work.
17. Keep up to date with best practice in research funding and the wider UK research base across all four UK regions, including changes in regulation, funding, and strategic research calls to help inform and shape the Foundation's ongoing investment in health services research.
18. Develop the Foundation's partnership links with external organisations involved in carrying out, or funding research regarding health care improvement and the wider determinants of health, including academic centres and government departments.

The post holder will at all times aim to embed our key behaviours – Working together, Achieving impact, Discovering and learning – in all aspects of their day to day delivery in the role.

We value equality, diversity and inclusion, and welcome applications from different backgrounds. We are also committed to making reasonable adjustments for candidates who have accessibility requirements.

Candidates should have the right to work in the UK at the time of appointment.

Person specification

Criteria	Assessment (CV/SS-Shortlist, T-Test, I-Interview)	Essential / Desirable
Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion - A commitment to diversity and equal opportunities in employment and service delivery.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Working together - A person who works collaboratively and is able to work successfully work across teams (both internally and externally) in a consultative manner.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Achieving impact – Ability to work as part of a team towards a common mission.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Discovering and Learning – A person with an active interest in the work of their colleagues and a commitment to developing their domain knowledge. An ability to learn from successes, challenges and mistakes.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Knowledge and understanding of research theory and methods, with strong research analysis skills.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Knowledge of evaluation methods and practice, including evaluation of complex interventions.	CV/SS, I	E
Experience in commissioning and/or managing research activities that are practice and policy relevant.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Excellent project management and planning skills across multiple programmes of work.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Experience of working in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method health services research.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Knowledge of current issues in health and social care.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Experience of deploying research tools and approaches, such as literature searching and synthesis and using software for data analysis.	CV/SS, I	E
The ability to communicate effectively through formal and informal means, including excellent skills in networking, oral and written communication and making presentations.	CV/SS, T, I	E
The ability to build and manage complex relationships with colleagues and external parties, to achieve results without reliance on formal line-management authority.	CV/SS, T, I	E
The ability to work on initiative and be confident in making sound, independent judgments.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Flexibility in approach to work to enable a fast response to changes in the external environment and/or changes in internal priorities.	CV/SS, I	E
An interest in, and a desire to contribute to, the improvement of health and social care.	CV/SS, T, I	E
Ability to think strategically about the role of evaluation in health care policy and practice.	CV/SS, I	D