Reports to: Head of Research

Direct Reports: Peer Researchers, Research Volunteers

Salary: From £32,000 up to £38,000 if you have extensive experience of delivering Participatory Action Research.

Working Hours: 35 hours/week

Contract duration: 12 months in the first instance (with potential of extending)

Location: 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS / 52 Old castle street, London E1 7AJ

**Job Purpose:**

* Are you passionate about using research to solve social problems?
* Are you enthusiastic about co-producing research with local communities?
* Are you interested in exploring innovative approaches?

If your answers are yes, we are inviting you to apply for a new Research Manager role at Toynbee Hall. Toynbee Hall is a charity in East London and we are looking for a passionate colleague to lead on Participatory Action Research and grow our research portfolio.

**Toynbee Hall**

Toynbee Hall is a charity where people come for excellent local services and where they can share ideas and experience, gather information and knowledge that we use together to take action to change lives and eradicate poverty. Our programmes include free advice services, financial inclusion services, wellbeing services, including work with older people and community learning services supporting young people and ethnic minorities.

**Role Description**

We have recently consolidated our evaluation, research and policy work within a single Directorate of Policy, Innovation and External Affairs. Working with the Head of Research and other colleagues, you will:

* Design and deliver our research addressing the barriers to, and solutions for, improving the lives of people in our communities;
* Help secure necessary resources, work with community peer researchers and manage volunteers to deliver high quality research;

* Develop and maintain strong relationships with a wide range of relevant stakeholders to create opportunities for research partnerships, promote our learning externally, and increase our impact.

Your role will be to build on the success and learning of our existing Participatory Action Research and continue growing our research portfolio. Wherever possible and appropriate, you will use Participatory Action Research in our work. Community members will be co-owners of the research projects, not just participants. You will co-design and co-produce research with peer researchers; provide them with sufficient training and support so they have the confidence and skills to collect and analyse data and disseminate findings.

You will start with two Participatory Action Research projects related to housing. You will recruit and work with 20 peer researchers to address issues of community safety and integration and explore how young private tenants (aged 18-30) would like to be supported in order to secure their tenancy.

**Key Responsibilities and Accountabilities:**

**Project and programme management**

1. To work with the Head of Research to design a social research programme which acts as a coherent whole, with each individual project building on previous learning and/or filling an identified knowledge gap, in pursuit of our agreed organisational aims, and generating needs-led evidence and recommendations.
2. To manage our social research portfolio, ensuring that each piece of research has an appropriate project plan and sufficient resource in place to deliver the agreed outputs and outcomes.
3. To manage the day-to-day running of research projects, recruiting, training and working with peer researchers to design and deliver research.
4. To explore effective ways of delivering Participatory Action Research projects, reflecting on our learning and strengthening our expertise.
5. To manage research volunteers where required.
6. To work with the Head of Research to build and manage our relationships with funders and other stakeholders, ensuring our work delivers to agreed timescales and within budget, and ensuring we have a willing and engaged audience for our work.
7. To write high quality research reports and documents, and support the wider Research team’s work through providing feedback and acting as a critical friend.
8. To ensure that all research outputs are made available and accessible to participants, other relevant stakeholders, and colleagues so that our research is relevant, well-used and ultimately makes a difference in our work to change lives and eradicate poverty.
9. To work with our Policy Officer to develop policy position statements, identify and describe good practice, and/or develop campaigns for change, all drawing on our research findings.
10. To contribute to our wider strategic thinking and analysis so that we make effective use internally of our own user, research and evaluation data, working with colleagues across the organisation to add value to service delivery and/or help identify unmet needs.
11. To work closely with the Head of Research and other colleagues to plan, help organise and run events which support our research strategy and share our learning widely.

**Quality Assurance and Standards**

1. To maintain up to date knowledge of research standards, methodologies and frameworks to ensure that the quality of our research programme is constantly improving and evolving in line with developments across the wider research community.
2. To keep informed of relevant external research so that our research is grounded in and contributes to increasing our knowledge as a sector.
3. To manage our research methodology and practice so that we adhere to the highest ethical research standards.
4. To adhere to our organisational research policies, including but not limited to:
   1. Engaging and supporting research participants
   2. Ethical considerations
   3. Data collection and management
   4. Creating opportunities for communities to develop and use their voice

**Key Knowledge and Skills:**

1. Experience of designing, running and managing research projects addressing social issues, with a strong focus on Participatory Action Research (PAR), community development or a similar approach.
2. Ability to identify and use appropriate research methods (such as focus groups, interviews, surveys, video, art and mapping).
3. Experience of recruiting, training and working with peer and/or community researchers.
4. Skills of working with people from different backgrounds including young people.
5. Experience of managing researchers and/or volunteers.
6. Knowledge of social issues and social policy, especially housing policy.
7. Ability to write research reports or articles which are clear, accessible to a wide non-specialist audience, and which engage people in further thought and action.
8. A track record in delivering multiple research projects simultaneously, on time and within budget.
9. A good track record in contributing to securing research funding through writing proposals and applications.
10. Strong relationship building and management skills.

**Personal qualities:**

1. Inquisitive and passionate about using research to solve social problems.
2. Have, or be willing to develop, an understanding of and commitment to the organisation’s values, including equal opportunities and diversity.
3. Be able to reflect on and improve your approach.
4. Capacity of working on your own initiative.

**Training**

Toynbee Hall provides all necessary induction and training, and encourages and, where possible, supports the upgrading of appropriate skills and qualifications. All employees will receive regular support and supervision.

**Volunteers**

Volunteers are at the heart of Toynbee Hall’s work. The organisation is committed to involving volunteers in its continuous development and to offering volunteers the best of experiences. All Toynbee Hall staff members will be expected to support the volunteering ethos and to work alongside the volunteer team to promote and facilitate the involvement of volunteers wherever appropriate.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Toynbee Hall takes an outcomes- and theory-based approach to its self-evaluation and monitoring. This means that the organisation is committed to gathering evidence of its effectiveness, and to using this information to learn, improve and communicate. All Toynbee Hall staff members will be expected to support this approach and to take part where appropriate in monitoring and evaluation planning and practice.