



## JOB DESCRIPTION

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<b>Job Title:</b>	Associate Research Director – Qualitative Research
<b>Directorate:</b>	Public Policy
<b>Location:</b>	London (2 Dean Trench Street, SW1P 3HE)
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Deputy Director for Social and Political Economy

## PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Drives several concurrent research projects using qualitative methodologies. Leads a team of four qualitative researchers (3.8 FTE) who work in areas such as education and skills, inclusion in employment, and migration. Mentors and supervises less experienced researchers. Supports in cultivating external networks and future sources of funding. Leads and collaborates in developing research proposals so that funding targets are achieved for own role, other team members and NIESR. Takes the lead with the support of the Deputy Director in ensuring that the team is properly resourced and capacity is suitably utilised.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Oversees the design of research programmes and projects, the setting up and conduct of research using qualitative methodology, with input from colleagues and guidance from the Deputy Director for Social and Political Economy.
- Drives the submission of research bids and proposals with support from other team members regularly and consistently.
- Carries out research projects personally with support from team. Responsible for timely project delivery in research area.
- Conducts expert analysis of research data and develops policy proposals.

### 2. FUNDING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Identifies opportunities and, once identified, drives delivery of commercial development generating income aligned to the Institute's strategic plans;
- Builds and maintains excellent relationships with clients and prospects.

### 3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- Drives qualitative research activities and sets appropriate standards, including reviewing outputs of team members for quality assurance.
- Provides advice and guidance on qualitative methodologies and project delivery across the team.

- Manages project grant conditions and ensures progress reports of a suitable standard are submitted, as required, to funders.
- Oversees the successful delivery of projects, ensuring project milestones are met and project outputs are delivered in the qualitative research team.

#### **4. DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- Drafts and submits high-quality and/or policy research output for academic publications, reports or articles, conferences and events, including content for media.
- Presents and promotes research findings to external audiences/funders at conferences and seminars and for peer review.
- Represents NIESR in areas of expertise.
- Promotes research more widely to achieve maximum impact, cultivating relationships with the press and creating suitable media profile.
- Actively maintains and grows networks/leads for potential sources of funding and engages with senior contacts at a strategic level.

#### **5. TO LEAD AND MANAGE A TEAM**

- Work in partnership with HR to recruit high-quality staff.
- Setting clear objectives and standards of performance for staff, and monitoring these.
- Hold individual supervisions regularly.
- Ensuring good communication between staff by holding team meetings regularly.
- Inducting new staff and supporting the development of existing staff through the process of annual appraisal.
- Managing the workload of the team to ensure that adequate cover is provided.
- With support and guidance from HR, addressing any concerns with performance, conduct or attendance.

#### **6. FUNDING AND BUDGETS**

- Ensures team is appropriately funded, pursuing target income as agreed, and ensuring appropriate utilisation of resources.
- Supports Researchers/Directors in developing alternative sources of funding and on directorate initiatives.
- Develops and manages financially efficient team.

#### **GENERAL**

- To be responsible for undertaking continued professional development ensuring skill levels relating to research best practice are kept up to date.
- Adhere to policies and procedures at all times.
- Cover for other members of the qualitative research team and directorate as necessary.
- Being proactive in acting upon areas for improvement and development.
- Undertaking, as required, any other duties compatible with the level and nature of the post and/or reasonably required by more senior members of staff.
- Attend and participate in divisional and team meetings and other meetings as required.

This job description covers the current range of duties and will be reviewed from time to time. It is the organisation's aim to reach agreement on changes, but if agreement is not possible, the organisation reserves the right to change this job description.

#### **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

##### **Associate Research Director – Qualitative Research**

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**Although we are keeping direct experience/knowledge requirements to a minimum, we do need you to use**

**the application form or covering letter to demonstrate your capabilities, in relation to each point listed under essential requirements in the person specification. Where relevant use your answers to illustrate how your competences have helped you achieve positive results.**

## **ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Experience**

1. Designing and delivering multiple research projects and achieving high-quality results in own projects while meeting tight deadlines and managing multiple competing priorities.
2. Leading and managing projects and teams.
3. Analysing and interpreting complex information to generate evidence-based conclusions.
4. Communicating findings in a clear and coherent way to a range of audiences and able to demonstrate impact through the dissemination of findings.
5. Writing proposals and bringing in funding for self and others, and able to demonstrate a high success rate.
6. Collaborating with a range of stakeholders and working across teams/organisations to achieve specific outcomes.
7. Constructively challenging the accepted ways of thinking/doing things, and thinking critically to develop new ideas, approaches, and ways of working.

### **Skills, Knowledge and Abilities**

1. PhD in in qualitative social science, or equivalent experience. We welcome applicants from any relevant discipline (e.g. sociology, political science, anthropology, psychology, economics, etc), with expertise in any public and social policy areas (e.g. employment, welfare, education, skills, migration, health, inequality, ageing, etc.). We want to hear from a wide variety of candidates. We are open to appointing someone with expertise in areas we are already working in and who can complement our existing interests, or someone with expertise in a new important area for us and who can build that area of research within NIESR.
2. High-level research capability with extensive knowledge of a range of research techniques and qualitative methodologies, for instance interviews, focus groups, observation, ethnography, participatory methods, content analysis, case studies, evaluation, and surveys.
3. High-level written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to present complex information in an audience appropriate way, adapting your communication style to engage with a variety of audiences (including academic peers, funders, the media etc).
4. High-level of attention to detail, with the ability to ensure the accuracy of complex reports and data sets without the need for oversight or checking.
5. Ability to develop senior external contacts to promote NIESR and influence/engage with potential funders.
6. Demonstrable reputation for research expertise within a subject area with evidence of recognition of achievement for high quality research output.

**The following are required of all roles with the organisation. However, you do not need to address these in your application.**

- An understanding of and commitment to Diversity & Equality
- Willingness and ability to work hours outside of normal office hours on occasion (time off in lieu will be granted).
- Willingness to work flexibly in response to changing organisational requirements.

### **More about the qualitative team at NIESR:**

Currently, we have four qualitative researchers (3.8 FTE) (1 x Principal Social Researcher, 2 x Senior Social Researchers and 1 x Associate Social Researcher). They are leading and working on a range of projects,

involving qualitative research and evidence reviews. They have a wide range of research interests across different policy areas. In the last five years, our work has included research on: experiences of workers over 50, wellbeing of refugee and asylum-seeking young people, employer pay-setting in relation to the National Living Wage, the use of agency workers in the public sector, integration of migrant pupils in schools, the impact of welfare reforms, public attitudes to immigration, public understanding of the economy, recruitment and retention of senior school leaders, and a range of evaluations of interventions within education settings. Our funders have included: Low Pay Commission, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Office for National Statistics, Centre for Ageing Better, Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence, Nuffield Foundation, Leverhulme, Fair Work Convention, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Office for Manpower Economics, Education Endowment Foundation, and What Works for Children Social Care.