

Job description: Evaluation & Learning Manager

Duration: 12 month fixed-term contract

Salary: (M2) £42,904

Location: Hybrid working. Hybrid – working at home with an expectation to travel to our office in Victoria, London at least twice a month, and regular additional travel across the UK.

Reporting to: Assistant Director of Research & Impact

Direct reports: Research & Data Officer

Department: Impact

Purpose of the job

The Evaluation & Learning Manager will work closely with the Assistant Director of Research & Impact and internal/external colleagues. You will help the organisation make good decisions and influence others – informed by the best available evidence, analysis of the charity's impact, learning from organisations, youth practitioners and young people.

You will be responsible for the day-to-day management and delivery of a portfolio of evaluation and learning projects. This will involve conducting research in-house, as well as managing external research partners. You can also expect to have line management responsibility for a direct report and should work closely with other members of the Impact Function to improve our ways of working and meet the organisation's system change ambitions.

The Impact Function will not evaluate programmes in isolation but rather help to build a cumulative knowledge base that proves and improves the impact of UK Youth's activities and youth work more generally. Learning and knowledge management is a major component of this role and you will ensure that insights are easily understood and applied to have real world impact.

Why work at UK Youth?

UK Youth wants all young people to be equipped to thrive and empowered to contribute at every stage of their lives. Youth work can be life changing (and even life saving). We have developed a strategy to unlock youth work so that every young person in the UK can benefit. We work with others to ensure that the youth sector is strengthened and that provision is youth-led, evidence-informed, and delivers high-quality outcomes.

UK Youth plays a unique role in addressing the lack of investment in the youth sector, the lack of cross-sector understanding in how youth work makes a difference, and the limited opportunities to embed effective solutions. These factors lead to mass inequality of access to youth services for young people. Come and be part of this change in a driven department that brings together evaluation, research, policy influencing and design.

Responsibilities

Managing people & projects

- Line Manager a Research and Data Officer (and other staff and volunteers, as required) – ensuring that they are working to clear objectives, their work is well organised, they have opportunities to develop, performance is pro-actively managed, and wellbeing is supported
- Work with the Assistant Director of Research & Impact to ensure that the team's work is inclusive and its activities promote EDI in the youth sector
- Collaborate with other Managers and Heads within the Impact Function to drive continuous improvement of policies and ways of working
- Manage the budgets for your projects and support the Assistant Director of Research & Impact to set, monitor, and re-forecast the team's budget
- Facilitate the meaningful involvement of young people in the scoping, design, delivery, analysis, and reporting of our research and evaluation projects

Evaluation & learning

- Lead the design, fieldwork, analysis, reporting, and dissemination of in-house evaluation projects that help to prove and improve the impact of UK Youth's programmes and youth work more generally
- Lead the procurement and contract management of external research, evaluation and learning partners
- Support the implementation of an organisational Impact Framework that proportionately captures the impact of our activities on young people, youth organisations, and the wider systems affecting youth work
- Support the production of internal quarterly impact reports and UK Youth's public Annual Report – analysing progress towards the charity's strategic ambitions and proactively identifying issues that are affecting performance
- Support youth organisations in our network to develop their own impact measurement practice – supporting their day-to-day operations and helping build a cumulative evidence base for youth work more generally
- Contribute to UK Youth's digital transformation programme – acting as subject matter expert on the use of data and informing the on-going development of our CRM platform, reporting dashboards, and other tools to support data-informed decision making.

Knowledge management, network development & upskilling others

- Contribute to the continuous development of UK Youth's Insights Library - ensuring that the best available evidence (produced by UK Youth and others) is used to inform the design of new provision, policy positions, and strategic development of the charity

- Work closely with colleagues (particularly in the Policy, Network Delivery and External Relations teams) to creatively communicate relevant evidence to youth organisations, partners, and policy audiences.
- Present insights to a range of non-technical audiences including: young people; internal staff; trustees; funders; delivery partners; cross-sector organisations; policy audiences; etc
- Represent UK Youth at meetings and events – helping to improve cross-sector understanding of youth work and its impact
- Support junior members of the Impact Function to develop their technical expertise
- Design and deliver training on research methods to help teams across the charity become more confident producers and consumers of evidence

Research & horizon scanning

- Conduct primary and secondary research to fill evidence gaps on strategically important topics (e.g. mental health; employability; outdoor learning and physical literacy)
- Undertake regular horizon scanning to ensure that we remain abreast of the latest evidence on allocated topics
- Maintain knowledge of good practice and latest innovations relating to relevant research and evaluation methods (e.g. participatory research methods; system change evaluations; grants evaluation; etc)

Manager behaviours and expectations

All staff at UK Youth will demonstrate their commitment to our mission to ensure all young people are equipped to thrive and empowered to contribute at every stage of their lives. They will also be able to fulfil the following expectations and behaviours:

- Be committed to safeguarding principles, and be willing to put the welfare of children and young people at the forefront of your work.
- Demonstrate an understanding and belief in the inclusion of all staff, partners and young people irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, ability, identity, and experience.
- Actively promote and embed an understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Role model and reinforce collaborative working, build productive relationships to find solutions and influence decisions.
- Take both personal responsibility for leading on work areas leads on creating a culture of accountability and engender this approach in others.
- Be able to set clear expectations, articulate what good performance looks like and set strategic direction to ensure high-quality work from colleagues you work with.
- Empower and energise teams to achieve goals and communicate a compelling vision and direction in their area of responsibility.
- Enable a culture of learning from mistakes and continuous learning.
- Create an environment and culture where wellbeing can be openly discussed.
- Role model and foster innovation and creativity.

- Undertake any other duties and reasonable requests that are in keeping with the nature of this post.

Person specification: Evaluation & Learning Manager

Experience

- Significant experience of using quantitative and/or qualitative and/or mixed research methods to conduct evaluations of interventions in community settings
- Significant experience of managing projects and coordinating effectively with internal and external stakeholders
- Experience of working with large datasets and conducting descriptive and inferential data analysis
- Experience of using qualitative research methods with young people
- Experience of working with external research and/or evaluation partners
- Experience of supporting others to use data and evidence to inform their decision making through creative and persuasive comms, engagement and dissemination

Knowledge, skills and understanding

- Excellent problem-solving skills; finding creative solutions to complex issues
- Excellent written communication skills – including the ability to write clearly and persuasively for technical and non-technical audiences
- Good verbal communication skills – including the ability to confidently chair meetings, deliver presentations, and network effectively with internal and external stakeholders at all levels
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team, using own initiative and being flexible and adaptable
- Ability to synthesise large amount of information from diverse sources to produce actionable insight
- Understanding of the needs of young people and the work of UK Youth
- Understanding of the risks and strategic challenges facing the youth sector
- Ability to use analysis in order to drive improvements in performance
- Ability to translate technical information into simple language, communicating analysis findings in a clear and concise way

Personal qualities

- Inclusive, collaborative and approachable; being able to respond well to the needs and working styles of others and develop productive relationships
- A pro-active approach, self-motivated and enthusiastic with very high levels of initiative and imaginative thinking
- A passion for young people and the youth sector
- Excited by systems change rather than systems improvement
- High-level organisation, attention to detail, and time management skills
- A 'can do' and flexible approach with the ability adapt to changing priorities and take a solution-focussed approach, including a willingness to travel and work irregular hours when necessary

- Able to take personal accountability for key work areas and understand individual accountabilities within work areas back to inform planning and decision making.
- Be committed to safeguarding principles and be willing to put the welfare of children and young people at the forefront of your work
- An understanding and belief in the inclusion of all staff, partners and young people irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, ability, identity, and experience

Desirable criteria

- Ability to use a variety of data visualisation tools (such as Power BI)
- Experience of data reporting using CRM systems (such as Microsoft Dynamics)
- Experience of accessing and/or delivering youth work
- Specific experience of conducting research and evaluation relating to one or more of these focus areas: Outdoor learning; physical literacy; grant-making; youth employability; mental health and wellbeing.

This post is subject to receipt of two satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, and right to work in the UK. Please note, this job description is subject to change. With any significant change, we will ensure this is discussed with you before any final approvals and/or commitments.