

Candidate Pack

Research Manager

2025



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

The role

Job Title: Research Manager

Organisation: SOS Children's Villages UK

Location: Remote*, UK-based - the post-holder is required to have the applicable right to live and work in the UK. Some travel to London and occasionally the Cambridge office/other UK locations will be required for meetings and events; the role could also involve occasional international travel.

Salary: £36,000-£39,000 dependent on experience

Contract: Permanent, full-time (0.8 FTE will be considered for the right candidate)

Reporting to: Senior Programme Manager

**Hybrid working (working regular days from our Cambridge office) is also an option.*

Overview

SOS Children's Villages UK is part of a global federation, founded in 1949. SOS Children's Villages exists to ensure that each child and young person grows up with the healthy relationships they need to become their strongest selves. Working in over 130 countries, we are the world's largest non-governmental organisation focused on supporting children and young people who don't have, or who are at risk of losing, parental care.

We are looking for a Research Manager who will play a major role in project managing our research. This will involve consolidating insights and best practice evidence from our work internationally and existing research pieces, as well as working with external organisations to commission new pieces of research. This important work will strengthen our fundraising, advocacy, communications and programmes.

Over the next two years, the role will involve a specific focus on consolidating and bringing together research data and evidence on progressive programmes from across the SOS Children's Villages' Federation and wider child protection sector for creation of a knowledge hub. The evidence and learning will be used to feed into SOS Children's Villages' programming, as well as being shared with the broader sector, and UK, national and international policy makers, to inform improvements to policies and practice. Within the programme, the role will also coordinate research projects based on collaborative partnership working with child protection-focused organisations.

Front cover image: A mother hugs her child, Ethiopia. © Jakob Fuhr



We are looking for an individual who brings a strong skillset in project management of research and relationship building with academic institutions, like-minded organisations and other partners. We need a confident communicator who is outward focused and can help us to shape our research agenda, whilst fostering collaborative and productive partnerships with likeminded organisations. The Research Manager will have experience in managing and communicating research and evidence, ideally within an international development, child protection or a closely related field.

Role description

This is an exciting and strategically important new role in our Programme Funding Team. Working alongside the new Advocacy and External Relations Manager, and reporting to the recently appointed Senior Programme Manager, the Research Manager is a key post helping us shape and drive forward our new knowledge hub whilst bringing together programmes, research and advocacy work. We want to ensure research into best practice programmes informs the work of SOS Children's Villages, and the sector more broadly, whilst strengthening our brand and fundraising position.

As part of the largest global organisation working specifically to support and protect children without, or at risk of losing, parental care, SOS Children's Villages UK is in the unique position of having access to a wealth of data, insight and experience from around the world, while being a small and agile UK team. We're keen to use these strengths to tap into well-developed UK international development and child protection sectors and connect these with our wider work.

This role is a permanent position, and it extends beyond the scope of the knowledge hub to work within SOS Children's Villages UK to improve our evidence base, strengthen our fundraising and impact reporting and inform our programmes, advocacy and communications within our strategic framework.

The post offers an exciting opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of vulnerable children and families through evidence-based research and insight management. If you are a dynamic and experienced research project manager who can channel your passion for social change and child rights into a research strategy that translates into impactful programmes, we would love to hear from you.

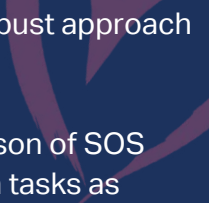


Responsibilities

1. Research and Insight Management

- Work with the Senior Programme Manager and Advocacy and External Relations Manager and others, to co-design a new research strategy and agenda, establishing a research protocol and approach for SOS Children's Villages UK.
- Understand and follow ethical approaches and compliance to ensure robust research and data protocol and management, centring participatory and locally based methodologies, in particular with children.
- Work with colleagues at SOS Children's Villages UK and internationally to map intervention-based research happening across the Federation.
- Consolidate insights and best practice evidence from existing programmes across the Federation and the wider sector.
- Work with colleagues to produce reports, data overviews and other outputs to be shared both within SOS Children's Villages and more broadly.
- Translate evidence from our programming countries and projects to support the fundraising, communications and advocacy functions to produce a range of resources, e.g. policy briefs, child friendly reports, infographics, donor proposals and reports.
- Collaborate with relevant colleagues to integrate research insights and evidence of impact into programme design, implementation and reporting.
- Work with the Senior Programme Manager and MEAL Manager to improve the quality of data, demonstrating the effectiveness of SOS Children's Villages UK's work and strengthening programme design and delivery.
- Support the development of new research programmes in partnership with colleagues from within the Federation and external organisations.
- Work with the Advocacy and External Relations Manager and other team members to identify relevant learnings and outcomes from the research programmes for policy makers and peers.



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- Work with the Safeguarding, Compliance and Governance Manager to ensure a robust approach to research protocols and the safe use of data.
 - Accompany research projects, from beginning to end, being the main contact person of SOS Children's Villages UK with the service provider/researcher. This shall involve such tasks as monitoring progress and providing and facilitating feedback, supported by relevant colleagues.
 - Develop terms of reference for research projects, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and in line with organisational requirements, policies and processes.
 - Keep abreast of new research and publications on key research themes within the wider child protection and child rights sector, ensuring this is disseminated to relevant staff within the UK team and the wider SOS Federation, as appropriate.

2. Relationship and Partnership Management

- Hold oversight of all research partnerships managed by SOS Children's Villages UK and keep the Advocacy and External Relations Manager informed of partnerships with any civil society peers.
- Build on existing relationships and partnerships with implementing organisations, international NGOs, research institutes and universities, using exceptional stewardship to identify opportunities for new research and collaboration.
- Work with relevant colleagues to identify and build new research partnerships, relevant to the research agenda, including peer organisations, academic institutions, research institutes and funders.
- Ensuring effective coordination between research relationships and partnership management within SOS Children's Villages, including within SOS Children's Villages UK and with Federation colleagues.
- Maintain excellent communication with existing partners, communicating through in person and virtual meetings, regular updates, formal and informal reports as required.
- Represent SOS Children's Villages at events, conferences and meetings, in line with agreed priorities.
- Support colleagues to foster a collaborative and innovative team culture across SOS Children's Villages UK that values evidence-based decision making.



3. Other

- Adopt a values-driven approach, ensuring SOS Children's Villages UK's values are continually embedded in ways of working, behaviour, interactions and decision-making.
- Keep abreast of key industry trends and issues and the relevant regulatory environment, ensuring that standards are set, procedures followed, and any challenges relating to regulation acted upon and communicated to relevant staff and others, as appropriate.
- Understand and follow SOS UK's safeguarding procedures and Code of Conduct.
- Understand and follow all SOS Children's Villages UK protocols and processes in line with the employee handbook.
- Develop professionally through training and guidance, in agreement with the Senior Programme Manager. Actively participate in team meetings, contributing valuable insights and feedback.
- Promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement, seeking feedback and recommending enhancements to processes and ways of working.
- Collaborate with the international SOS Children's Villages community and SOS Children's Villages UK colleagues, sharing best practices and learning from global counterparts.
- Implement the Equal Opportunities Policy into daily activities.
- Be responsible for your own health and safety and that of your colleagues, in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and relevant EC Directives, including reporting any health and safety hazard immediately when you become aware of it.
- Undertake any other duties as may reasonably be required in this post. This may include some international travel from time to time.



Image above: A mother embraces her two daughters, Mexico. © Lydia Mantler



Person specification

Essential criteria

- Proven experience in managing and coordinating research projects, preferably in the non-profit, international development, or child protection sector.
- Experience in translating complex research findings into actionable insights and recommendations, in a wide array of different products that are clear and engaging to stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds and sectors.
- Strong analytical skills with experience in qualitative and quantitative social research methods.
- Strong ethical standards and a commitment to maintaining the highest levels of integrity and confidentiality.
- Experience in identifying and building research partnerships.
- Flexible and 'can-do' attitude, with an optimistic outlook to problem solving.
- Fluent written and spoken English.
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills with a natural ability for building strong working relationships.
- Exceptional organisation and time-management skills with the ability to manage a complex workload.
- Excellent team working skills.
- Demonstrable experience of managing a diverse portfolio of complex projects or programmes.
- A strong understanding of a rights-based approach to development.
- Demonstrable relationship management experience including experience working with research institutions.
- Cultural sensitivity and a proven ability to work with colleagues internationally and adapt to different cultural contexts.
- The ability and willingness to travel, both in the UK and internationally.

Desirable skills and knowledge

- Knowledge of the child protection sector and issues around child rights, alternative care of children, child protection and/or safeguarding.
- Knowledge of international development and rights-based approaches to development.
- Technical knowledge of data protection standards and protocols.
- Knowledge of theory of change, logical frameworks, performance measurement frameworks and other MEAL approaches.
- Proficiency in using and understanding research software and tools.

Personal qualities

- **Values driven:** the ability to reflect SOS Children's Villages' values (detailed below) and safeguarding standards in how you conduct yourself at work and with others.
- **Willing to learn:** you will be joining a supportive team, where everyone is committed to fully supporting each other's development and learning.
- **Collaborative:** this role involves working closely with various teams, so you will need to be collaborative and able to work effectively with others.
- **Adaptable:** the political landscape is constantly evolving, so you should be adaptable and open to change. You will need to be able to pivot your approach as needed to respond to new trends or challenges.
- **Optimistic:** we are in an exciting phase of growth and the team, and wider organisation, is focused on a 'can do' approach which fosters positivity.
- **Proactive:** a proactive mindset will enable you to identify opportunities for improvement and take initiative in your role. With support from colleagues, this role will be responsible for driving forwards this new area of activity.
- **Organised:** excellent organisational skills are essential for managing your workload, meeting deadlines, and coordinating activities and those of others.



About SOS Children's Villages

As a child, you need someone who sees you – who stands by you no matter what. Someone who holds you close when you are small and believes in you when you are ready to step into the world.

However, 1 in 10 children and young people around the world are at risk of growing up alone — separated from their families, neglected or forced to live in an abusive environment.

The effects of this often last a lifetime, creating a harmful cycle that repeats from one generation to the next. Together, we are here to break this cycle and prevent it from happening in the first place.

We go beyond meeting the physical needs of each child, focusing on providing love and support. A positive and supportive childhood empowers children to develop the life skills and resilience they need to move confidently into adulthood.

Because when a child or young person is safe, loved and respected, they can thrive. When they have healthy relationships, they can become their strongest selves. This is why we're here. **We see each child, no matter what the circumstances.**

What we do

Our locally led operations support and empower children, young people and families:

- **Keeping families together:** we support and strengthen families who are under pressure, helping them to stay together.
- **Caring for children:** we provide quality, alternative care according to each child's unique needs.
- **Youth employability and education:** through training and developing skills, we help young people to prepare for their future and find employment or set up businesses.
- **Protecting children in emergencies:** we support children and families in crisis situations, helping with their physical and psychological needs.

SOS Children's Villages' values are at the heart of everything we do:

- **Courage:** We take action
- **Commitment:** We keep promises
- **Trust:** We believe in each other
- **Accountability:** We are reliable partners



Benefits of Working with SOS Children's Villages UK

We currently offer the following benefits:

Holidays

- Annual leave: 25 days entitlement, plus eight paid bank holidays (pro rata for part-time employees).
- Paid Christmas closure: three non-bank holiday working days during the office closure between Christmas Day and New Year's Day are treated as additional paid time off.
- Extra Days: Additional holidays are added after two full calendar years' service, one day for every two years' service, up to a maximum of five additional days after 10 years' service (pro rata for part-time employees).
- Sabbatical: four consecutive weeks paid sabbatical leave possible after a minimum of five complete years of service.

Pension Scheme Membership

- This is a contributory scheme, into which the Charity will match your contribution up to a maximum of 5% of your basic salary. Enrolment is automatic after three-months employment for eligible employees, and early opt-in is possible.

Health and wellness

- Contractual sick pay.
- Employee Assistance Programme access comprised of wellbeing resources, online advice chat features, a telephone helpline, and short-term counselling sessions, savings and discounts.
- Trained Mental Health First-Aider in the team.
- Life Assurance Cover after three-months employment, with beneficiary selection.
- Flu vaccination vouchers annually.
- Paid eye tests.



Flexible Working Policy

- Every member of staff, regardless of contract length or current working pattern, can complete a flexible working application.

Charity days

- Paid charity volunteer days (maximum of 2 days per annum pro rata) if you volunteer for another charity.

Maternity arrangements

- Employees employed for at least 26 weeks, ending with the Qualifying Week (QW), the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC), will be entitled to receive enhanced maternity pay of 3 months full pay (Weeks 1 – 12), followed by 3 months half pay (Weeks 13 – 24).

Travel help

- Travel loan for season travel tickets repayable through monthly salaries, subject to approval.
- Cycle to Work Scheme available.

Training and development

- Support may be offered towards professional or vocational qualifications/training that enhances capability within the Charity. Subject to approval.



Commitment to inclusion and safeguarding



SOS Children's Villages UK is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, and eliminating unlawful discrimination within all employment practices within our organisation. Discrimination and harassment of any kind based on any protected characteristic is prohibited, and recruitment decisions are based on relevant experience, qualifications, merit, and business needs at the time.

We are committed to promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults with whom SOS Children's Villages UK engages, by preventing any type of unwanted behaviour at work including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, lack of integrity and financial misconduct. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment through our Code of Conduct and undertake the appropriate level of training to ensure that they understand and work within the safeguarding policies of the organisation.

Pre-employment checks

Upon offers of employment, the following are required as part of our safer recruitment policy prior to confirming employment:

- Proof of the right to work in the UK, and on the contracted terms specified for this role.
- Receipt of satisfactory professional references and appropriate screening checks from previous employers.
- Self-declaration & Disclosure form completion regarding previous any relevant cautions, or convictions or investigations, or sanctions.
- A Standard level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Read and sign copies of our Code of Conduct Regulation, Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy, and Sexual Misconduct Regulation (PSHEA), and Anti-Corruption Regulation.

Please note: SOS Children's Villages UK is a proud participant in the Inter Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS). In line with this scheme, we will request information from job applicants' previous employers (covering the last five years) about any findings of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment during employment, or such incidents under investigation when the applicant left employment. By applying for a role with us, the job applicant confirms their understanding of these recruitment procedures.

How to apply



Ready to join our team?

Please email a copy of your CV, and covering letter of no more than 2 A4 pages that explains how you meet the criteria outlined in the person specification.

Title your documents "[your name] cover letter" and "[your name] CV" and send to **Sarah Jane Dowling, Senior Programme Manager** at careers@sosuk.org. Please note that CVs submitted without a cover letter and applications from candidates without the right to work in the UK permanently will not be considered.

The deadline for applications is Sunday 6th April 2025 at 17.00 UK time.

Interviews will be conducted by online video call (via Microsoft Teams) in the final two weeks of April.

We're excited to hear from you!

