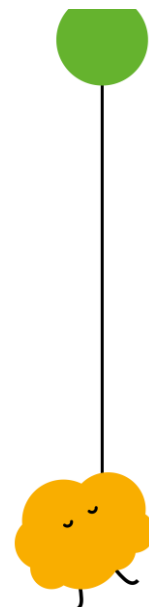


## Job Description & Person Specification

Job Title: Research & Participation Officer  
Contract: Permanent  
Hours: 37.5 hours per week  
Location: Flexible, with time in the London (Hammersmith) Office  
Salary: £28,000 – £32,000



### About Starlight

Starlight is the national charity for children's play in healthcare.

We support children to experience the power of play during treatment, care and recovery from illness in more than 600 healthcare settings across the UK. Play is integral to the wellbeing of children and can make hospitals and hospices feel more welcoming, safe and a good place to thrive, ensuring children live every day even when they are sick. We know that the highest attainable standard of health can only be realised if children are supported to engage in play in hospital.

Play is often overlooked or trivialised in the healthcare system, and play professionals are often undervalued and under resourced despite the contribution they make to children's wellbeing and the efficiencies they deliver in the NHS. Play is a vital way children gain agency in their treatment, a sense of autonomy and control; and is an important way to express thoughts and feelings in a healthcare setting.

We believe that children's healthcare services should fully reflect the importance of play to their health, wellbeing, resilience and recovery, and that every child who is an inpatient should have daily play opportunities, appropriate to their condition, supported by dedicated play staff. We aim to enable all children in the UK to have their right to play protected and provided for when they are receiving healthcare – in or out of hospital.

### Our Culture

We believe that our success depends upon focusing on our purpose and business results and taking individual responsibility for a culture where everyone can belong, feel safe and thrive. Our values are the agreed standards that govern our behaviour and are central to our decision-making and the choices that we make. Our development programme focuses on individual awareness of our own values, strengths, and preferences – what makes us who we are – to help all colleagues think for themselves, manage their environment, and make appropriate, balanced decisions for themselves, others and Starlight. We believe that our strength is in our differences and constantly strive towards an authentic workplace culture with equity, diversity, and inclusion as central principles.

## OUR VALUES

**"Our standards and the environment we create through our behaviours"**

**Responding to the world around us**



We are inspired by the changes in the world around us. We have the freedom and courage to try something new, always learning and adapting to people's needs. It means trying stuff out, seeing what happens and pushing our boundaries.

**Working together for our purpose**



We aim high, think big, are imaginative and curious in everything we do. We celebrate our achievements, and we help and support each other when challenges come. We all play our part in our purpose and have fun along the way.

**Taking the time to understand**



We take the time to understand ourselves and our impact. We actively listen, seeking to learn and understand from everyone's experiences in life. We are open to the opportunities and possibilities this awareness brings to ourselves, others, and Starlight.

**Trusted to be our best**



The trust we have in each other, and our purpose guides our decisions, choices, and actions. When we are trusted our confidence grows, we ask for help, and we feel safe to be who we are. In any situation we say 'we' rather than 'they'. Most of all we trust in the Power of Play for children and adults alike.

## Our Strategy and the Research & Participation Officer role

Evidence-based decision making across Starlight is central to achieving our aims. We gather insight from the services we provide and use that and other research (our own and other people's) to discover where support is most needed and which services are most effective. We use it to continually improve our services and their impact. And that same insight gives us a powerful voice in advocating for systemic change in policy and practice for play within the healthcare system.

Our Insight and Impact team are our leaders in gathering data and developing insight about our services and the world in which we deliver them. We've built what we believe to be the first coherent picture of the state of play in hospitals in the UK and have begun to demonstrate the economic value of play in hospital, with data to indicate, for example, that one of our core services, used across every hospital in the UK, could save 6,500 staff hours, or around £2.2m. If you're skilled at understanding the questions we need to ask, gathering data and developing insight from it, as well as being passionate about protecting the right to play of children within the healthcare system across the UK, you could be the person to join our team as we continue this essential work.

As well as some desk-based research and insight development, you'll be generating further insight by working directly with children and families and with our network of Health Play Specialists, to understand their experiences and bring that insight into our work.

Children are at the heart of our work and listening to their voices is a critical part of building insight and understanding the impact of the services we deliver. We want children and young people who use our services to have a say in how those services are developed and delivered and for the

young people to be able to advocate for themselves when receiving healthcare. As such, we launched the Starlight Youth Panel in summer 2024 which brings together a small group of young people who are passionate about our mission, and some of whom may have experience of long term hospital care. You'll have a talent for engaging with children and young people and will support with organising and facilitating online and in person meetings of the Starlight Youth Panel.

## **Main purpose of the job**

As our Research and Participation Officer, you'll enjoy working on a diverse range of projects, collecting and analysing data, coordinating participation activities, administrating evaluation activities, and contributing to reports and other outputs. Reporting to the Insight and Impact Manager, you'll work closely with colleagues across the organisation, conducting research and generating insights to support with Starlight's overall priorities. You'll need to be highly organised to coordinate different tasks and activities so the team can achieve maximum impact. You'll have strong analytical skills, with a good grasp of different methodologies, and you'll be able to listen to, understand and work with children, young people, families and health professionals to embed their voices into Starlight's work.

You will be naturally curious and enjoy a varied role, from engaging with children, families and health professionals in different environments, to desk-based research and working with data. You will be willing to seek clarification before you start something new and have the ability to flex and respond to a fast-changing environment. You will be eager to listen, sensitively seeking to understand, whilst balancing the needs and impact on self, others and Starlight. With a desire for and commitment to self-development, you'll reap the benefits of our development programme, where you'll have the opportunity to increase your self-awareness and understanding of your impact on others and to see how our shared values and individual strengths and preferences are key to achieving our objectives.

## **Key Areas of Responsibility**

In the research and evaluation side of the role, you will:

- Collate and clean quantitative and qualitative data collected directly from children, young people, families and health professionals
- Analyse quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the impact of existing and pilot Starlight services and generate insights for future service development
- Produce outputs (e.g., data visualisations, reports) to present quantitative and qualitative data used internally to surface insights on our services, and where required support with adapting these outputs for external use
- Develop evaluation tools such as feedback surveys, postcards, observation tools and focus group/interview schedules, as well as track and maintain these tools on our survey platform Qualtrics
- Support with developing and conducting research, literature reviews and policy analysis within the health play sector, to identify gaps in provision and support Starlight's advocacy for systemic change
- Conduct or support with site visits and focus groups or interviews with children, young people, families and health professionals as part of our research and evaluation activities

- General administration for the Insights and Impact team relating to research activities where required, such as minute-taking and raising purchase orders

In the participation side of the role, you will:

- Coordinate Starlight’s Youth Panel – a group of 14-17 year olds from across the UK who help us to protect children’s right to play in healthcare. This will involve:
  - Developing session plans which will generate youth-led insights to inform Starlight’s mission
  - Being responsible for delivering in-person and online sessions with the Youth Panel and being the main point of contact for the young people and their families
  - Collaborating across the organisation to understand how different teams can interact with the Youth Panel and incorporate these ideas into the session plans
  - Recruiting young people into the Youth Panel as well coordinating our work with the Youth Panel alumni
  - Administrative tasks including organising the logistics of Youth Panel sessions and supporting with budget management
  - Write-up of sessions and analysis of information gathered
- Support with implementing Starlight’s participation strategy by embedding and amplifying young people’s voices in all aspects of our work
- Coordinate and support other participatory activities with children, young people, parents and health professionals
- Understand and work in line with Starlight’s Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct to keep young people safe and their data and information secure
- General administration for the Insights and Impact team relating to participation activities where required, such as raising purchase orders

## Person specification

Criteria	E (essential) or D (desirable)	Assessed via I (interview) or T (task)
<b>Research and Evaluation</b>		
Experience of using different methods to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data	E	I & T
Ability to summarise findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses in a clear and engaging way (e.g., data visualisations)	E	I & T
Experience of working with large datasets	E	I & T
Good organisational skills and an eye for detail	E	I & T

Experience of using software packages such as R, Python, PowerBI, NVivo etc	D	I
Experience of designing surveys on online platforms such as Qualtrics or Survey Monkey	D	I
<b>Participation</b>		
Passion for championing young people and advocating for their views	D	I
Experience of building positive relationships with children and young people	E	I
Experience in administration, planning and support with running events/activities	E	I
Comfortable working with children with serious illnesses and vulnerable groups	D	I
Experience of working with children with serious illnesses and vulnerable groups	D	I
Experience of working in healthcare and engaging with health professionals in a professional capacity	D	I
<b>General</b>		
Willingness to travel for research, evaluation and participation activities	E	I
Willingness on rare occasions to work evening and weekends, including overnight stays, where required	E	I
Commitment to keeping children and young people safe in line with safeguarding policies	E	I
Conducting yourself and your work in line with Starlight values	E	I
Good communication skills	E	I

## What we offer

The opportunity and environment to be yourself and be your best. To work within a team with play at its heart. To have flexibility in where you work and the hours that you work. Personal development through our strengths and self-awareness Development Programme. A competitive salary and benefits package including ability to work flexibly between home and office, holiday entitlement of 25 days plus bank holidays increasing up to 30 days with service, office closed at Christmas in addition to holiday entitlement, matched pension contributions to 5%, life assurance, Vitality health cover, income protection, cycle to work scheme, season ticket loans.

## To apply

Please apply for this role through Charity Job with your CV accompanied by a supporting statement which demonstrates how your experience matches the person specification and highlights your most relevant, recent experience for this role.

Role will close on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2025, and we are actively recruiting for this post on a rolling basis, allocation for interviews may happen as candidates apply, which may be before the interview dates stated above. As we may interview before these dates, we reserve the right to close the role earlier if we receive a number of high-quality applications.

## **Additional Information**

### **Diversity Policy Statement**

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with consideration and respect. Starlight is committed to achieving a truly inclusive environment for all, by developing better working relationships that release the full potential, creativity, and productivity of each individual. We aim to ensure that all staff, volunteers, donors, partners, contractors, and the public are treated fairly. This will be regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender, marital or civil partnership status, ethnicity, disability, medical status, age, religion or belief, political opinion, social or economic status, or ex-offender status. Starlight actively welcomes candidates from diverse backgrounds. If you are invited to an interview and need any adjustments made or have particular access needs, please let us know at that stage.

### **Shortlisting**

Starlight is an equal opportunities employer, and we are committed to ensuring all applications are treated fairly. All applications are subject to our shortlisting process; if you are shortlisted, we will contact you and invite you to attend an interview on or before the dates in this document, please let us know on application if you have any difficulty with the dates. You will also be advised at this point if there will be any skills test, presentations etc. We may appoint to the role before the stated closing date if a suitable candidate is identified.

### **Employment Checks**

All offers of employment are made subject to the following criteria: proof of eligibility to work in the UK, proof of residency and satisfactory employment screening, enhanced DBS and two most recent references.