

We are looking for our new Director of Inclusive Research

(Participatory Research)



RiDC

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RiDC

Research Institute
for Disabled Consumers

We are looking for a new Director of Inclusive Research (Participatory Research)

The Research Institute for Disabled Consumers (RiDC) is the leading expert in inclusive research involving disabled people in the UK. We are an independent, national charity with over 60 years of experience in consumer research and insights in this specialist area. We have developed a strong track record of providing unique insights and solutions to businesses, government and charities.

We are run by and for people with a personal experience of disability.

The role

The Director of Inclusive Research (Participatory Research) will provide strategic leadership for RiDC's participatory, qualitative and deliberative research portfolio. The postholder will ensure disabled people's lived experiences are at the heart of research, policy development, service design and innovation.

Working closely with disabled people, policymakers, businesses and community organisations, the postholder will ensure RiDC's research delivers meaningful change.

This role works in partnership with the Director of Inclusive Research (Data & Insights). Together, the two Directors provide complementary leadership across RiDC's research function: one leading lived-experience, participatory and qualitative research, and the other leading quantitative research, panel strategy, analytics and evidence generation.

Our approach

We always start from the perspective of disabled people. By working in a participatory way with disabled people, listening to their needs and reflecting on real lives in our research, we ensure nobody is excluded.

We work with large multinational companies, government departments, regulators and charities to create accessible and inclusive services. It is a fast-paced environment, and we work with a wide range of clients and subject matters at any one time.

Our panel

RiDC was one of the first organisations to establish a UK panel of disabled and older consumers. Our panel now includes over 4,300 people and is the largest pan-disability panel in the UK. The panel participates in surveys, user testing, mystery shopping, focus groups, workshops, and co-production / co-design sessions.

National leadership and innovation

The Director of Inclusive Research will provide strategic leadership for two of RiDC's most significant and high-profile programmes. As a key partner in the National Centre for Accessible Transport (NCAT), a pioneering seven-year, £20 million initiative funded by the Motability Foundation, the postholder will help shape and deliver a nationally significant programme of research that is transforming how accessibility is understood and embedded across the UK transport system. Working closely with consortium partners, policymakers, industry leaders and disabled people, they will ensure that lived experience drives innovation, evidence generation and real-world change.

The role will also provide leadership for RiDC's flagship National Lottery Community Fund eco-ableism programme exploring the barriers disabled people face in participating in climate action and sustainability. This ground-breaking four-year project is generating new evidence, influencing policy and practice, and creating practical solutions to ensure that environmental action is both inclusive and accessible.

The Director will play a leading role in translating research into impact, strengthening partnerships, securing future investment, and positioning RiDC as a national thought leader on disability inclusion across both transport and sustainability agendas.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic leadership

- Develop and deliver RiDC's strategy for participatory, deliberative and inclusive research.
- Lead the organisation's work on co-design, co-production and lived experience-led research.
- Shape RiDC's research agenda in accessible transport, sustainability and consumers insights.
- Act as a thought leader on inclusive research methods, citizen participation and disability-led research.
- Ensure disabled people are embedded in the design, delivery and dissemination of research.

Research leadership

- Provide methodological leadership in participatory, deliberative and qualitative research.
- Lead major programmes of research and act as Technical Director on high-profile projects.
- Oversee the quality of qualitative and participatory research outputs.
- Support researchers to develop innovative and accessible engagement approaches.
- Ensure all research meets high standards of accessibility, ethics and inclusion.

People leadership

- Provide line management and professional development support (coaching and mentoring) to research team.
- Build capability in participatory and deliberative methodologies across the organisation.
- Foster a culture of learning, inclusion, collaboration and continuous improvement.

Business Development

- Develop relationships with commissioners, funders and strategic partners.
- Lead the development of funding bids and commercial proposals in areas aligned with the role.
- Represent RiDC in partnerships, networks, conferences and policy forums.

Thought Leadership

- Champion the value of participatory and inclusive research.
- Influence transport, disability and sustainability agendas through evidence and stakeholder engagement.
- Translate research findings into actionable recommendations for policymakers, regulators and service providers.
- Represent RiDC externally and deputise for the CEO as required.

Personal Specification

Qualifications

Essential

- Qualification in social research, disability studies, public policy, sociology, psychology, anthropology, service design or a related discipline.

Desirable

- Specialist training in co-production, service design, facilitation or deliberative engagement.

Experience

Essential

- Significant experience leading participatory, deliberative and qualitative research programmes.
- Extensive experience working with disabled people and other under-represented groups.
- Experience of co-design, co-production and lived-experience-led research.
- Experience facilitating workshops, focus groups, deliberative events and participatory engagement activities.
- Experience influencing policy, services or organisational practice through research evidence.
- Experience leading and developing research teams.
- Experience securing grants, contracts and research funding.

Desirable

- Experience in transport, mobility, accessibility or sustainability research.
- Experience working with government, regulators, transport providers or local authorities.
- Experience facilitating citizen assemblies, citizens' juries or deliberative policy processes.

Skills

Essential

- Expert facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Advanced qualitative analysis skills.
- Ability to design accessible and inclusive research approaches.
- Strong report writing, presentation and communication skills.
- Ability to build consensus across diverse stakeholder groups.
- Strong leadership and people development skills.

Knowledge

Essential

- Advanced knowledge of participatory, deliberative and inclusive research methodologies.
- Understanding of disability rights, the social model of disability and accessibility.
- Knowledge of ethical issues associated with participatory research.
- Understanding of barriers faced by disabled people in accessing transport, services and public life.

Desirable

- Knowledge of transport policy and accessibility standards.
- Understanding of sustainability, climate transition and their implications for disabled people.

Terms and conditions

- **Annual salary:** £65,000 (5% employer pension contribution)
- **Leave:** 29 days leave per year
- **Hours of work:** Full-time, 35 hours per week
- **Wellbeing allowance:** £300 per annum.
- **Location:** Home working and with occasional travel across the UK
- **Term:** Permanent

RiDC recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

We welcome and strongly encourage applications from disabled people.

We also welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage, and civil partnerships.

How to apply

To apply, please send your current CV and cover letter (no more than 2 sides of A4) detailing your experience and skills in relation to the personal specification.

Please ensure you complete the **equal opportunities monitoring** form and email it, along with your CV and cover letter, to joinus@ridc.org.uk.

We will not accept applications if we do not receive a CV, cover letter and equal opportunities form.

If you would like to arrange an informal conversation, you can contact Gordon McCullough (CEO) at gordonmccullough@ridc.org.uk.

If you are not a UK resident, please confirm you are eligible to work in the UK.

Timelines

The closing date for applications is 1pm on Friday, 16th October 2026.

Interviews are scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, 28th October 2026**.

On the 28th October, you will also be invited to a session with some of the research team members (this will be via Zoom). If shortlisted, we will also ask you to complete a task prior to the interview.

We will endeavour to inform all shortlisted candidates no later than the 22nd October 2026. Please let us know if you have any requirements to make the interview process more accessible for you.