

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION LEAD

Dated: November 2021

Contract: Full time, permanent

Salary: £40,000 – £45,000 per annum, dependent on experience

Start date: Immediate

Location: Home based with potential access to desk space in central London, if required; travel across the UK may be required from time to time as part of the role (subject to covid guidance)

Reporting to: Director of Programmes

### About the Centre for Youth Impact

The Centre for Youth Impact is a small charity with a UK-wide reach. We work across the informal and non-formal youth sector to progress thinking and practice in impact measurement in youth work and provision for young people. Our vision is for all young people to have access to high quality provision and services that improve their life chances. We believe that embedding more meaningful approaches to evaluation, quality improvement and impact measurement at the heart of resilient, learning organisations is key to achieving this vision.

The Centre for Youth Impact was established as a partnership initiative in 2014 and became an independent charity in 2018. We are funded by a range of supporters, including the National Lottery Community Fund, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The Centre's twelve-strong team works nationally, including supporting our Regional Network Leads across England. We have recently begun to expand our work into Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In November 2021, we announced our intention to merge with the YMCA George Williams College in Spring 2022, in order to strengthen our collective support for quality practice.

### About the role

The Research and Evaluation Lead is a critical role for the Centre for Youth Impact.

We believe in the power of research and evaluation to build a collective commitment to understanding and improving the impact of youth work and provision for young people. We also believe in the power of quality relational practice to change lives and communities. The Research and Evaluation Lead shapes and delivers the Centre's work to design, test and implement practice-aligned evaluation that both measures *and* cultivates quality practice.

Reporting to the Director of Programmes, the Research and Evaluation Lead works alongside two other Leads, focused on data and organisational development, and manages a portfolio of research and evaluation projects. This includes project scoping and design, direct delivery of research and evaluation activity, coordinating and supporting project teams (including staff and Fellows), collating and sharing learning from projects to influence the Centre's work and strategy, and working closely with the senior leadership team to secure funding for new activities. The Research

and Evaluation Lead line manages a Project Manager, and also works closely with a Research Assistant.

### What are we looking for?

We are seeking a thoughtful and experienced applied researcher and evaluator, with strong project management and people skills. You will need to be confident across a range of approaches, and have the ability to assess and determine proposed methods, dependent on context. You will be curious and keen to learn and influence this evolving field of practice, and comfortable representing the Centre externally to share our journey as we develop our thinking. An understanding of informal and non-formal provision for young people, and how this influences research and evaluation practice is desirable.

You will be an experienced project manager, with expertise in managing both grant-funded and contract projects. You will be confident in managing project budgets, plans and capacity allocations, across multiple strands of work. You will be able to connect your portfolio into the broader organisational strategy, by drawing out insights from our project activities and sharing them with colleagues.

You will need to be highly responsive to the needs of partners, funders and our networks, with excellent listening and negotiation skills. You will also need to be proactive and dynamic, sensing and acting on opportunities for the Centre to work alongside others to affect change. You will have some experience of income generation, and be confident to work alongside the senior leadership team in initiating and writing successful proposals.

You will also be an outstanding communicator: experienced in facilitation; willing to develop a coaching approach; an engaging presenter, and a compelling writer, able to frame and share ideas with a range of audiences.

Finally, you will be a team player. You will enjoy working with others, and be a valued partner, peer and colleague. You will see the bigger picture, at the same time as being on top of the detail. You will own and play a leadership role in your projects, but recognise and respect the leadership role of colleagues across the Centre's strategic objectives.

## Research and Evaluation Lead

### The post holder will:

#### 1. Lead the Centre's research and evaluation projects

- Manage a portfolio of research and evaluation projects
- Coordinate and support project teams, comprising colleagues and Fellows of the Centre for Youth Impact communicating regularly, assigning and delivering tasks, and maintain oversight of discrete strands of activity through project plans and timelines to achieve the projects' strategic objectives
- Maintain and be accountable for up to date project documentation, including project plans, budgets, contracts/agreements and capacity projections
- Deliver key elements of project activity, including research/evaluation design, development of tools and resources, data gathering and analysis, reporting, training and consultation
- Nurture and develop relationships with funders, researchers, and other youth sector partners
- Develop a range of material for external publication and internal learning relating to your projects and towards the Centre's collective learning and development
- Collaborate with other Leads at the Centre, inputting your expertise and insights into their projects and ensuring join up across the Centre's work

#### 2. Contribute to the Centre's strategic development

- Develop ideas for future work related to research and evaluation that can be formed into fundable proposals
- Contribute to regular reviews of the Centre's strategy and progress in achieving it, sharing reports with the Centre's board as required

#### 3. Represent and communicate the Centre's work externally

- Build strong relationships with key partners and supporters of the Centre's work
- Act as an ambassador for the Centre in leading and supporting quality practice across the sector
- Engage in external thought leadership through writing and presenting, both as part of project delivery and more widely
- Facilitate and lead training, coaching and workshops, both as part of project delivery and more widely

### Person specification

#### Essential skills and experience

- Significant experience in designing and implementing research and evaluation projects for complex social programmes
- Experience of managing multiple projects simultaneously, including monitoring budgets, reporting processes and time tracking

- Technical skills and experience in conducting evaluations including developing Theories of Change and designing evaluation methodologies
- Confident in a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection, analysis and data management, including experience of using qualitative and quantitative software packages
- Experience of using survey design software and CRM systems (experience of Typeform and Salesforce would be an advantage)
- Ability to communicate evidence of impact to a range of audiences, with strong writing skills and the ability to produce high quality reports as well as engaging copy
- Ability to build and manage strong working relationships with people across teams and of all levels
- Highly organised with the ability to plan, prioritise and manage deadlines across multiple workstreams
- Takes initiative, is proactive and can work autonomously when necessary
- Experience of consultation with and/or facilitation of communities of practice (online and face to face; synchronous and asynchronous).
- Experience of line management and working with consultants/freelancers
- Experience of leading/or contributing to funding bids and proposals, including initiating and proactively developing ideas
- Relevant experience in the charity/not-for-profit sector, in roles focused on research and evaluation, learning, and programme management

**Desirable skills and experience**

- Experience of supporting participatory research, ideally with young people
- Publication through a variety of media (reports, journals, podcasts etc)
- Experience of developing good practice, systems and processes to improve impact measurement and evaluation
- Knowledge of effective research, evaluation and impact assessments techniques in youth provision, including measures of social and emotional learning

**Personal qualities we are looking for include:**

- Identifying with and embodying the aims and ethos of the Centre for Youth Impact, including valuing collaborative approaches, challenging and supporting those we work with, and being curious and questioning
- Passion for keeping up to date with best practice in impact measurement, evaluations and programme quality
- Collaborator and team player
- Reflective and self aware
- Able to have challenging and courageous conversations
- Understanding of and empathy with our sector
- Meticulous attention to detail

## How to apply

If all the above sounds appealing, then please send a copy of the following to [jobs@youthimpact.uk](mailto:jobs@youthimpact.uk) with the subject line 'Research and Evaluation Lead application':

1. Your CV
2. A covering letter (up to 800 words) that states how you meet the requirements set out in the person specification (and stating that you have the right to work in the UK).
3. Equality and Diversity monitoring form

Please complete the anonymous equality and diversity survey form as part of the application. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone regardless of their background, and welcome applications regardless of sex, gender, race, age, sexuality, belief, or disability.

We acknowledge that people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented in our staff team, and we're committed to correcting this. We are particularly keen to receive applications from people of colour; people with disabilities; people who identify as being LGBTQIA+; and people who have a mental health condition. We'd also love to hear from people who have used and benefited from youth provision/services.

The Centre for Youth Impact takes a range of measures to protect the people who come into contact with the Centre from harm, abuse, neglect and mistreatment of any kind. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**The deadline for receipt of your application is 9am on Monday 13 December 2021. Applications received after this time will not be considered.**

**Interviews will take place on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 December 2021 and will be via Zoom.**

For more information about us please visit the Centre for Youth Impact's website: <http://www.youthimpact.uk/> If you would like to chat about the role, please email Sarah Rose, Resources Manager, on [sarah.rose@youthimpact.uk](mailto:sarah.rose@youthimpact.uk) to arrange an informal conversation.