

Head of Research and Evaluation - Job description

Role information

Department: Partnerships, Public Affairs and Family Outcomes

Job Title: Head of Research and Evaluation

Grade: G

Responsible to: Director of Partnerships, Public Affairs and Family Outcomes

Responsible for: Direct reports in the Research and Evaluation Team

Date: May 2025

Purpose of the job:

To lead and provide strategic direction for Family Fund's Research and Evaluation Team. This role is responsible for shaping and delivering our research and evaluation strategies to deepen understanding of the experiences of families raising disabled or seriously ill children, assess the quality and impact of our services, and support evidence-led decision-making and opportunities across the organisation. The postholder will also ensure rigorous ethical standards and data governance, represent the charity in key external research forums, and maintain oversight of government/ other funder reporting to ensure high-quality, timely submissions.

Duties and responsibilities

Strategic Research and Evaluation Leadership

- Lead the development and implementation of Family Fund's research and evaluation strategies.
- Develop and oversee the organisation's evaluation and service quality frameworks.
- Ensure all research and evaluation activity supports organisational learning, and strategic objectives.
- Promote a culture of continuous learning, insight and evidence-informed decision making across the organisation.
- Champion the 'voice of families', embedding their lived experience at the heart of our research and evidence.
- Ensure ethical standards, data protection (e.g., GDPR), and safeguarding policies are fully adhered to in all research activities.
- Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion in the design, delivery and dissemination of research and evaluation.

Research Delivery and Dissemination

- Manage and deliver a portfolio of high-quality research and evaluation projects/initiatives, including in-house work and externally commissioned studies.

- Produce accessible, engaging, and impactful research outputs for a variety of audiences, including policy makers, funders, donors and families.
- Promote the use of innovative and participatory research methodologies that reflect the organisation size.
- Present and disseminate research findings internally and externally, including at events, conferences, and through publications.
- Work closely with colleagues across the charity to ensure insights are used to shape services and inform strategic planning.

Stakeholder Engagement and External Representation

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders in the research, policy, sector and academic communities.
- Represent Family Fund in strategic research partnerships, networks, and advisory forums.
- Commission external research and evaluation where appropriate, ensuring quality, value for money, and alignment with organisational priorities.

Policy, Public Affairs and Government/funder Reporting

- Work with the Directors and colleagues to develop research and evaluation materials that inform and support our public affairs strategy, policy and funding aspirations.
- Maintain oversight of government/ funder reporting, ensuring timely and accurate submissions aligned to contractual and organisational requirements.
- Ensure internal coordination of reporting data and analysis for funders.

Leadership and Management

- Provide visible, hands-on leadership and line management to the Research and Evaluation Team.
- Manage team performance and development, supporting a culture of high performance and professional growth.
- Oversee planning and resource allocation across projects to meet deadlines and organisational needs.
- Contribute to the department's budget planning and management.
- Develop the team to ensure effective succession planning and cross-organisational collaboration.

General

- Contribute positively to directorate and team meetings and deliver organisational priorities.
- Ensure that research and evaluation activities are integrated with the wider work of the organisation.
- Carry out other duties as reasonably required to support the strategic aims of Family Fund Group.

Person specification

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Experience

- Experience in developing and managing research and evaluation strategies, frameworks, activities and production of subsequent products.
- Working in partnership with other organisations.
- Resource and budget management.

Desirable

- Voluntary or statutory sector experience
- Staff management experience

Skills, knowledge, and abilities

- Excellent analytical skills: able to conduct in-house analysis; interpret and synthesise large data sets; and pull insight from external data sources.
- Sound knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methodology and best practice through the research cycle.
- Good writing skills and ability to communicate effectively with different audiences.
- Able to interpret and present research in an accessible and engaging way.
- People skills: ability to develop and sustain positive relationships with a range of internal and external contacts.
- Interviewing skills
- Computer literate with excellent digital skills and understanding of trends in online research presentation and dissemination.
- Excellent administrative and organisation skills.
- Excellent ability to manage workload and prioritise effectively.
- Ability to work at the same time independently and collegially.

Desirable

- Experience of conducting research relating to disabled children and their families.
- Knowledge of best practice in service user involvement.
- Knowledge of models of impact measurement.

Education/training

- Degree or equivalent preferably in a relevant subject

Desirable

- Membership of a professional body, for example, Social Research Association

Personal attributes

- Self and team motivator

- Clear, open communicator
- Willing to advise and support colleagues
- Helpful and courteous, tolerant and calm
- Flexible, adaptable and resilient to work demands and change
- Willingness to travel when required
- Commitment to Family Fund's values
- Commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and fairness for all
- Commitment to safeguarding