

Senior Research and Impact Officer

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity. We get millions of children reading, especially those from low-income or vulnerable family backgrounds. Children who choose to read and who read regularly are happier and healthier. They form stronger bonds and relationships. They do better at school and are more creative. They enjoy more success in life. This is why we work with families, supporting them to start sharing stories and books together from the earliest possible age. Our carefully selected books and well-researched programmes are delivered by thousands of local partners, bringing the magic of reading to children in every community in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This is a great time to join our growing team of 8 researchers and evaluators. As an organisation we have undergone a major transformation to deliver our new strategy's focus on supporting children from low income and vulnerable family backgrounds on their reading journeys. We have embedded a theory of change and strong MEL culture within the organisation. We have a learning plan for the year ahead, full of learning activities. This insight work is central to BookTrust's goals to strengthen our impact for children and families, and to build our profile, public affairs and income generation work in support of our overall mission.

Job Purpose

The need for the highest quality learning and evidence-led decision making is required across our work. Unlike many charities BookTrust conducts much of its co-creation, research, and evaluation work in-house. We have a skilled and ambitious team who work closely with colleagues across the organisation.

The Senior Research and Impact Officer (SRIO) role brings scope for creativity, dynamic collaboration and application of research and evaluation expertise to a range of opportunities. Our SRIOs shape, drive and deliver ambitious and challenging workstreams in support of our strategy. They are a voice for evidence-based decision making within BookTrust, ensuring that we put the needs of children, families and partners at the heart of our work.

Our learning plan sets out a series of learning activities and processes that we need to deliver including:

- Ongoing work to strengthen our MEL approach
- Major national studies with our partners and families from low-income backgrounds
- Development and evaluation of interventions for children in their early years, and those from vulnerable family backgrounds. This involves qualitative, quantitative, and creative learning approaches delivered in collaboration with families and partners (partners include: early years and vulnerable families specialists, schools, local authorities, other charities)
- Building understanding of our external landscape and ongoing review of external evidence
- Bringing in external research perspectives and learning partnerships to raise the profile of our research and further build our external credibility

Our team comprises researchers from a range of backgrounds with expertise across research approaches. In this new role, we are looking for a mixed methods researcher with experience of working on evaluations using a range of approaches.

We will provide excellent opportunities for the postholder to further develop their research, communications and partnership skills in support of a fast changing, purpose driven national charity. We offer a flexible and supportive working environment and provide on-the-job learning and formal training.

Location: Hybrid with a minimum of 8 office days per month in either our London office or our Leeds office

Contract: Full Time, Permanent

This post holder will report to: Research and Impact Lead

This post holder will manage: No direct reportees

Key responsibilities

1. Scope, manage, and conduct high quality evaluation and research activities in support of BookTrust's mission and strategic objectives

- Manage and deliver all stages of research, evaluation and data analysis projects, working in collaboration with colleagues from other teams
- Work alongside members of the Research and Impact team to ensure learning supports our strategic priorities and holds to our Learning Principles. Including planning work, monitoring achievement of deadlines, identifying risks and opportunities and supporting more junior members of staff

2. Support the communication and application of research across BookTrust and with external audiences

- Support on the development and embedding of our MEL processes, activities and theory of change led approach
- Work with colleagues to ensure our evaluation and research supports organisational profile raising and income generation priorities, for example applying findings from our evaluations to report to our funders
- Work with colleagues to embed an evidence-based approach across the organisation, acting as a champion for evidence-based decision making within BookTrust and with external audiences. This includes collaboration on many streams of work as a proactive and responsive source of insight and evaluative thinking
- Produce accessible, visual and engaging learning outputs for varied internal and external audiences
- Develop strong working relationships with all teams, in particular with Design & Innovation (who lead on developing our portfolio of propositions and programs to get children reading), Partnerships (who lead on delivery of our scaled programs) and Content (who help share our expertise and impact with key stakeholders)
- Act as a BookTrust representative externally, communicating our learning and building relationships with other professionals and researchers in the sector

3. General Duties:

- To undertake coaching and development of other team members as needed.
- To carry out duties in line with research best practice, GDPR, and ethical guidelines
- To promote BookTrust and its vision and values in all activities; both internally, while carrying out duties, and externally, with stakeholders and the general public
- To carry out all duties in line with BookTrust policies and procedures and be prepared to undertake additional reasonable duties, as required

Person specification

This role will suit someone who is comfortable working flexibly and collaboratively in a dynamic environment.

CRITERIA	E or D*
Knowledge	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the challenges facing families from vulnerable or disadvantaged backgrounds • Understanding of the UK charity sector • Knowledge of the early years/schools/vulnerable children's sectors • Understanding of behaviour change 	<p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p>
Experience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with theory-based evaluation approaches (for example, theory of change and logic models) • Experience of planning, leading and delivering qualitative and quantitative evaluation projects from inception to completion • Experience working with colleagues and stakeholders to determine learning needs and scoping new learning activities and approaches • Experience of communicating evaluation and research effectively with a wide range of audiences (e.g. internal teams, the public, practitioners, policy makers, funders) • Experience conducting research or evaluation with children and families and/or experience in working with practitioners (e.g. teachers, health professionals, early years specialists) • Experience of working across multiple projects simultaneously in cross functional teams • Experience of working on design / innovation projects • Experience in using research and evaluation to inform fundraising bids / in grant reporting processes 	<p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p>
Skills and attributes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent collaboration, partnership and stakeholder skills • Excellent qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation skills • Ability to work at pace, across multiple priorities • Excellent analysis, interpretation and storytelling skills • Eye for detail in all work • Outstanding communication, writing and editing skills • Creative thinker with the ability to identify the right approaches to deliver our learning needs • Solutions focussed and able to respond effectively to challenges • Strong project management skills • Flexible and able to embrace change 	<p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p>
This post will require some UK travel for project work, organisational activities and other events	
*E = essential criteria D = desirable criteria	

Terms and conditions

- Salary: £35,000 – £40,000 per annum depending on experience
- 28 days holiday, plus public holidays
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Flexible working scheme
- Pension scheme (7% employer contribution)
- 3 x salary life assurance
- Season ticket loan scheme

Want to join us? Find out more about who we are at: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/about-us/work-at-booktrust>

To apply, you must submit your CV and attach a covering letter of no more than two pages outlining your suitability in relation to the person specification.

Our Commitment to Diversity and Inclusivity

We aim to provide an inclusive recruitment process and actively welcome applications from diverse talent pools: people of global majority, those with disabilities and long-term conditions and those from underrepresented communities.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and want to ensure we have an accessible application process for all candidates. If you need any reasonable adjustments or would like us to do anything differently during the application process, please contact our HR team on HR@booktrust.org.uk or 020 7801 8855/8856 to discuss your requirements further.

BookTrust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The recruitment and selection process reflect our commitment to safeguarding therefore, the suitability of all prospective employees will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with this commitment, and pre-employment checks.