

## **Job description**

### **Senior Programme Developer**

#### **Context**

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity. We know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic, and more creative. They also do better at school. Working with every local authority and across every region in the country, and supported by Arts Council funding, we reach over 3 million families a year via partners in schools, children's centres, health visitors and libraries. This incredible network helps us to get children reading across the country.

BookTrust wants all children to have the chance to enjoy reading from an early age. Our national reading schemes and initiatives are there to achieve this ambition. Our current portfolio of programmes includes:

- Bookstart, our flagship scheme which provides families a carefully designed gift in their child's first year to support starting to read early with their baby, and develop the reading habit using books, stories and rhymes. Since it was established over 25 years ago, the Bookstart model has been replicated and adapted across the world.
- Bookstart Corner – which was designed for children's centres to use with young children and families who need more support to enjoy reading.
- The Letterbox Club, an award-winning initiative for children in care which provides personalised gift parcels to vulnerable or looked-after children aged 3 - 13 in order to develop their love of reading, engage with numeracy activities, and provide supplementary support to meet both educational and emotional needs.
- Bookbuzz, a scheme to engage children aged 11-13 with the fun and social benefits that come from choosing books. Last year, over 150,000 children in secondary schools across England and Northern Ireland discussed our specially curated collection of books, debated which was the most appealing to them, and chose their own book to take home and keep.

While our programmes support children and young people from birth to age 14, our focus is on families with children aged 0-5, as fun experiences of reading, stories and rhymes early on can make the biggest difference. But we know there is more we can do to ensure the children who need the most help get the right support – this is an important focus of the next phase of our work.

#### **Job purpose**

The Senior Programme Developer role is a new post at BookTrust.

You'll lead the design and development of initiatives to encourage children and families to start reading early, read more, read more often and – most importantly - enjoy reading. You'll engage with other organisations and partners, with research and data, to understand the context for our programmes and spot new opportunities and potential innovations. You'll work on a mix of projects at different stages of development. Some projects will be pilots to test out new ideas for creating a new initiative for an identified group of children. Others will be trialling improvements on existing programmes and interventions to ensure everything from the books we give as gifts, to the resources we provide parents, provide a fun reading experience and leads to positive impact.

You don't need to be an expert in a particular sector. We're looking for people who are curious and look to evidence, insights and the experiences of others. BookTrust works through 152 local authorities, each with a coordinator, and tens of thousands of professionals delivering our work in the wider system – so we are looking for someone who can engage with the expertise and commitment of that network to build new innovations, embedded in the realities of local services. You might have a commercial or a public sector background; you might have experience of designing something with behaviour change in mind.

We're looking for someone who enjoys thinking things through with others and putting ideas into action. You'll enjoy the challenge of thinking hard to come up with options that solve a problem but are also implementable on the ground and listening to feedback and reviewing data to understand where your initial ideas need to change.

You won't be working alone – you'll be working with colleagues across the organization to design programmes that are deliverable. You will have the benefit of specialist expertise within the organization in digital, marketing, children's books and logistics. You will enjoy project-based working with different teams and will be able to make sure that the organization is aligned around new initiatives and ideas. You will be able to lead change and problem solve.

You'll have the opportunity to put your ideas into practice – working with our research team to set up and manage pilots and prototypes and see the work through to the point where it is rolled out at scale. Our aim is that everything we do should be done at scale when successful – whether this is targeted programmes reaching 75,000 families a year, or universal programmes reaching millions of children. This means you'll be able to take learning from a trial and translate it into national roll-out, planning and implementing that process.

**Reporting to:** Head of Programme Design and Innovation

### **Key responsibilities of this post**

- 1) Programme design and development**
- 2) Programme management**

### **Programme design and development**

Lead the design and development of reading initiatives for families, including:

- Horizon-scanning to identify potential development and innovation opportunities using a range of research evidence, market insight and internal data

- Engaging with external partners, organisations, experts and service users to ensure our work is supported with deep understanding of families, and the core issues that affect sharing books and stories at home
- Analysing and articulating potential development opportunities for new and existing programmes
- Triangulating demand, funding, external market and internal priorities to make recommendations
- Taking the lead on co-design and co-production activity to generate, prototype and test a range of ideas – from new resources to support the workforce that deliver Bookstart Baby, to potential new tailored programmes to engage families who are not yet engaged with reading-related activities with their children
- Managing multiple projects, including continuous improvements to existing programmes and pilot projects to test new ideas for reading initiatives
- Convening and leading external and internal project teams to design and develop ideas at pace
- Supporting the Head of Programme Design and Innovation to manage and prioritise the team’s pipeline of programme improvement and new development projects
- Capturing and communicating learning and insights from development projects to build BookTrust’s insight into what works to support families and improve our ability to deliver initiatives that are implementable, and result in fun reading experiences

### **Programme management**

Leading the management of development projects from setup through to lessons-learned, including:

- Supporting the Head of Programme Design and Innovation to set, forecast and manage development budgets
- Managing, monitoring and reporting on the development budget expenditure
- Project planning, including developing and managing cross-organisational project plans for development projects, setting milestones with internal teams that reflect different phases of the design process, and connecting to relevant production and procurement timelines
- Preparing options papers, analysis and recommendations at key points in development projects to keep key decision-makers informed about project progress, and enable swift decision-making at critical points in projects
- Working closely with the BookTrust research team to ensure activities are underpinned by robust and proportionate monitoring and evaluation planning to ensure we continually learn as well as improve

### **General duties**

- Be an active and effective member of the wider BookTrust team who is accountable, supportive and can be relied on to follow-up and take responsibility
- Be committed to continuous personal development and maintaining current professional and specialist
- Carry out all duties in line with BookTrust policies and procedures
- Undertake additional reasonable duties as required
- Promote BookTrust and its vision and values in activities, both internally while carrying out duties and externally, with stakeholders and the general public

| <b><u>Person specification</u></b>   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Criteria</b>  | <b>Essential or desirable (E or D)</b> | <b>Shortlist or interview (S or I)</b> |
| <b>Experience</b>  |  |  |
| Working with multi-disciplinary and specialist teams to develop and implement improvements                                     | E                                      | S                                      |
| Collaborating with others to identify and test solutions to a defined issue  | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Convening and chairing meetings and steering groups  | E                                      | S                                      |
| Managing multiple projects with competing priorities   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Monitoring and evaluation  | E                                      | S                                      |
| Running design and innovation projects and activity (e.g. design sprints, service blueprinting, service design, user journeys) | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Running design and innovation activity to address a social issue or challenge  | D                                      | S                                      |
| <b>Knowledge</b>   |  |  |
| Knowledge and understanding of design and innovation processes, frameworks, tools and methodologies                            | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Knowledge of current government initiatives and frameworks relating to children and families                                   | D                                      | S, I                                   |
| Understanding of the impact of reading and literacy as drivers of social change  | D                                      | S, I                                   |
| <b>Skills</b>  |  |  |
| Analysis   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Problem definition and solving   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Negotiation  | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Verbal and written communication   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| IT skills, including: Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint  | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| <b>Attributes</b>  |  |  |
| Highly proactive and independent   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Able to challenge the status quo   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Self-motivated   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Resilient  | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Positive   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Flexible and adaptable   | E                                      | S, I                                   |
| Ability to work at pace  | E                                      | S, I                                   |

| <b><u>Person specification</u></b>                     |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Qualifications</b>                                  |   |   |
| Good general education to at least A level             | E | S |
| Degree level or equivalent professional qualification  | E | S |
| Masters level or equivalent professional qualification | D | S |

### **Terms and Conditions**

This role is based at our London office

The post-holder must be willing to travel within the UK and occasionally work out of office hours

### **Terms and conditions**

Salary c.£38-46k commensurate with experience

Holidays: 28 days plus public holidays

Pension scheme – 7% employer contribution

3 x salary life assurance

Employee Assistance Programme

Flexible working arrangements