

Senior Research and Evaluation Officer

Background and 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 England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and supported by Arts Council funding we reach over 3 million families a year through partners in schools, children's centres, health visitors and libraries. This incredible network helps us to get children excited about reading from an early age.

This is a brilliant time to join BookTrust. We are developing a new strategy and a new approach to engaging with and understanding our beneficiaries. We are ambitious about developing our programmes to reach more children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, and we want to understand the difference our work is making so we can learn and develop what we do.

About the role

Our research team is growing. We are looking for a skilled, curious and experienced senior research and evaluation officer. The successful candidate will work in our team of four to shape and deliver a varied research and evaluation programme. They will work collaboratively with partners from across the organisation to help put research at the heart of BookTrust's work; ensuring that we evaluate, learn and reassess our approach to make the greatest impact we can.

We offer the opportunity to manage a portfolio of research projects and to collaborate with the research team and colleagues from across BookTrust. This will include designing and conducting qualitative and quantitative research programmes, from early design stages through to analysis and communicating research lessons. Our research programme for the next 24 months is exciting and ambitious. It includes commissioning large scale national surveys, running focus groups with families and children, evaluations of BookTrust programmes for vulnerable groups, horizon scanning and stakeholder engagement activities.

We will provide excellent opportunities for the post holder to develop their research and impact skills in a supportive, flexible working environment. We will provide on-the-job learning and formal training. Please note that this role will include some travel for fieldwork and events.

About you

You will be a strong researcher who has excellent qualitative, quantitative and communication skills. You will be committed to and excited by the potential for research and insight to inform decision making within BookTrust, ultimately to strengthen our work with children and families. You will be thorough in your approach to delivering research on important social issues, curious by nature and an effective problem solver.

You will have at least 2-3 years' experience in a paid research position, ideally with at least 2 years in a setting outside academia. You may have worked in a research role in another charity, in a consultancy, government or public body.

You will have experience and skills in qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Job Purpose

The purpose of the research function is to:

- Help BookTrust to understand, articulate and improve the impact of its programmes
- Develop BookTrust's expertise about supporting children and families to develop a reading habit and the wider context in which we deliver our programmes.

The purpose of this role is to:

- Lead monitoring, evaluation and research projects and activities in support of BookTrust's strategic objectives
- Support the Head of Research and Impact and other colleagues to ensure that lessons from these are shared and used effectively to inform BookTrust's work

The postholder will report to the Head of Research and Impact. You will be happy to work flexibly in a changing environment, potentially changing focus and approaches in line with evolving organizational priorities.

Responsibilities and duties:

1. Manage and deliver high quality evaluation and research to support BookTrust's mission, values and strategic objectives

- Lead on research and evaluation projects to inform BookTrust's work, including design of methods, research tools, data collection, analysis and reporting
- Deliver research and evaluation activities including horizon scanning, review of secondary literature, surveys, focus groups (e.g. with beneficiaries and partners), interviews
- Scope and produce Invitations to Tender for commissioned research and manage the commissioning process, ensuring that proposed research meets required objectives
- Manage commissioned research contracts on behalf of BookTrust, including monitoring progress, reviewing and editing reports, and quality assurance
- Identify and recommend new research and evaluation projects which address gaps in our current evidence base

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

- To work with colleagues in the research team to embed an evidence based approach across the organisation
- Support colleagues to understand and make use of both BookTrust data and other data relevant to BookTrust programmes
- Support on the development of improved monitoring, reporting and learning processes within BookTrust
- Produce accessible and engaging research outputs for varied internal and external audiences

- Respond to internal information requests through providing written and verbal briefings on emerging themes and priorities
- Act as a champion for evidence based decision making within BookTrust and with external audiences
- Communicate BookTrust research to a range of external audiences, including at conferences and events

3. General Duties:

- To support on team and organisational development activities, as required
- To provide regular progress reports to the Head of Research and Impact
- To keep up to date with relevant policy areas and their implications for BookTrust research and evaluation
- To carry out duties in line with research best practice and ethical guidelines
- To carry out all duties in line with BookTrust policies and procedures and be prepared to undertake additional reasonable duties, as required
- 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

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Job title: Senior Research and Evaluation Officer		
CRITERIA	E or D*	S or I**
KNOWLEDGE		
Excellent understanding of both qualitative and quantitative methods and analysis	E	S/I
Knowledge of a broad range of research designs and methodologies	E	S/I
Knowledge of challenges facing disadvantaged families	D	S/I
Understanding of the UK charity sector	D	S/I
SKILLS		
Research and evaluation design skills	E	S/I
Strong analytical skills, including ability to scrutinise and interpret data sources	E	S/I
Strong quantitative and qualitative analysis skills	E	S/I
Excellent verbal communication skills with the ability to present confidently to diverse and high-level audiences	E	S/I
Ability to write clearly and succinctly for a variety of audiences	E	S/I
EXPERIENCE		
Experience working in an applied research role	E	S/I
Experience of conducting research including qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis	E	S/I
Experience of conducting monitoring and evaluation	E	S/I
Experience of designing effective research tools (questionnaires, discussion guides)	E	S/I
Experience of shaping research recommendations for	E	S/I
Experience of working with senior stakeholders	D	S/I
Experience of working with families and vulnerable audiences	E	S/I
Experience of planning and managing research/evaluation projects from inception to completion	E	S/I
Experience of consulting with colleagues and stakeholders on research needs and implications	E	S/I
Experience in working with children and / or families	D	S/I
Experience in helping to generate research objectives	D	S/I
Data visualisation skills	D	S/I
ATTRIBUTES		
Excellent interpersonal and communicative style	E	I
Curious	E	I
Creative and innovative	E	I
Flexible and able to work in a changing environment	E	I
Outcome orientation and task focus	E	I
Collaborative	E	I
Strong personal drive	E	I
Strong commitment to improving lives of children and families	E	I
Enthusiasm for books and reading	D	I
QUALIFICATIONS		
Educated to degree level (2.1 or above) in a relevant field (e.g. Child Development, Behavioural or Social Science)	E	S

CIRCUMSTANCES This post will be based in our offices in Battersea, London, and will require some travel for fieldwork, consultation and events,		
*E = essential criteria D = desirable criteria **S = short listing criteria I = interview criteria		

Terms and conditions

- £34,000 – £39,000 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
- Childcare Voucher Scheme