

Justice Lab UK- An initiative of The Legal Education Foundation

Research and Evaluation Principal

Job Description

Title: Research and Evaluation Principal

Accountable to: Director of Justice Lab UK

Salary: £50-60k per year for 35 hours per week, plus pension and health insurance.

This is envisaged as a full-time role but we will consider applications for part-time (minimum: 3 days/week), job-share and/or flexible working.

Location: Central London, currently The Evidence Quarter, Petty France, Westminster, London, SW1H 9EA

It is envisaged that the role will be delivered through a combination of remote and in-person working. The post-holder would need to be based in London at The Evidence Quarter for at least 2 days per week as well as be able to travel to meetings and events in the four nations of the United Kingdom.

The Legal Education Foundation

We are an independent grant-making foundation distributing around £6 million a year across the UK. We focus on the essential role of legal education in helping people and organisations to understand and use the law as a tool for change. In this work, we know that there are significant numbers of people who cannot obtain justice in relation to everyday problems, and that these unmet needs trigger or exacerbate clusters of issues that impact on individuals, communities and wider public policy goals. We believe the law should be readily available at the times and in the places where people need it.

The Foundation operates a combination of open and proactive grant programmes. Our current strategy which runs from 2020 to 2025 has three programmes:

1. Stronger Sector, which supports education, training and development aimed at addressing systemic gaps in skills in the social justice legal sector and to strengthen the capacity of individuals and organisations in the social justice field to deliver their important work effectively and sustainably.
2. Fairer Systems, which supports work to increase people's capacity to understand the way laws are made and implemented.
3. Smarter Justice, which seeks to strengthen a commitment to collecting and learning from robust evidence in the design and operation of the UK justice system. The Justice Lab UK is the primary vehicle through which the Smarter Justice programme is delivered.

The Justice Lab UK

The Justice Lab UK is a bold new initiative funded by The Legal Education Foundation which aims to bring about a cultural shift in the way in which research and evidence about the justice system is used by policymakers, judges and legal professionals. The Justice Lab UK conducts and commissions pioneering research to improve the evidence base of what works in helping people to access the justice system and secure positive outcomes. Our research strengthens organisations working in the field by helping them to use evidence to design interventions and invest in approaches that deliver maximum benefit for their clients.

The Justice Lab UK will focus on four areas of work, which aim to deliver the following four outcomes over the next ten years:

1. Improve the quality and availability of justice system data
2. Increase the volume of robust research into the justice system and pioneer the use of advanced quantitative methods in the study of justice system processes.
3. Increase capacity in the research community to design and deliver innovative quantitative research
4. Improve the uptake of robust evidence in the design and operation of the justice system

Examples of work we have undertaken to date include:

- Working with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service to develop a [data strategy](#) to underpin their ongoing programme of digital court reform
- Leading on two major consultations for the Civil Justice Council and Senior Judiciary into the impact COVID-19 measures on the civil courts and administrative tribunals
- Partnering with ADR-UK to support the development of the infrastructure to enable the [Data First Programme](#)
- Supporting the development of a retrospective match control study exploring the impact of early legal advice in debt and welfare benefits on housing outcomes
- Commissioning a [rapid evidence review](#) exploring the impact of mediated processes on outcomes for individuals from minority groups

Our Values

- **Dynamic**- Our research responds to the key issues that affect people's access to rights, entitlements and outcomes set out under law.
- **Rigorous**- We use established and cutting edge data, research and evaluation techniques and base our insights on the highest possible standards of evidence
- **Approachable**- We are a friendly team and use our skills to support organisations and practitioners working in the access to justice field.
- **Inclusive**- We encourage and celebrate diversity in all its forms and are proactive in championing a range of voices in our work.

Research and Evaluation Principal

This is a crucial role for the Justice Lab UK. We are looking for a dynamic individual who is passionate about the role of robust evidence in improving people's experience of the justice system. The Justice Lab UK is a pioneering new initiative, and the Research and Evaluation Principal will join the organisation at time where they will have the ability to shape the initiative's strategy, programmes and agenda.

The Research and Evaluation Principal will lead on the design, commissioning and delivery of process, outcome and economic evaluations. They will have knowledge of a range of analytical and evaluation techniques and experience of applying this knowledge to complex social programmes and systems. The Research and Evaluation Principal will have a strong methods background and be an informed and experienced consumer of high quality and novel quantitative research. They will be an experienced research manager, and will have overall responsibility for ensuring that all research and evaluation outputs are of high quality. An excellent communicator, the Research and Evaluation Principal will be adept at producing high quality written outputs and building networks across the research community. They will also lead on the development of resources and guides to support others in applying advanced and novel research techniques to the study of justice system questions.

Research within the access to justice sector has largely relied on qualitative research designs. The Justice Lab UK aims to redress the balance by championing the deployment of quantitative research designs and evaluation. You will be confident to lead this work stream as part of a small, but supportive team that seeks to bring the best out of each other.

Key Skills

We are interested in candidates with experience of Randomised Controlled Trials or Quasi-Experimental Designs (for example propensity score matching, panel data methods or regression discontinuity designs) to evaluate interventions.

Duties & Responsibilities

Planning and strategy

- Work with the Director and Community Data Principal to review the purpose and work of the Justice Lab UK and develop and adapt where appropriate.
- Prepare reports on the delivery of the Justice Lab UK's work for the TLEF Grants, Programmes and Learning Committee and attend relevant meetings of TLEF Governors.

Commissioning and production of research and evaluations

- Develop and commission robust research and evaluation to include RCTs and quasi-experimental designs to advance the goals and values of the Justice Lab UK
- Create research and evaluation commissioning briefs and ITT's
- Critically review evaluation proposals to ensure designs are high quality and cost effective and that the most suitable evaluators are commissioned
- Oversee the planning, co-ordination and delivery of all research projects including monitoring programme timelines and operational plans.

- Lead the design and delivery of evaluation capacity building for a range of organisations; including the design of toolkits, training and tailored advice and guidance on the design and delivery of robust and proportionate evaluation.

Learning

- Keep informed of new developments in research and evaluation methods and trends
- Prepare plain language explainers and guides to support the application of novel research techniques to justice system questions

Communication

- Write clear and accessible research and evaluation lessons and findings
- Disseminate research and evaluation findings through a variety of media, including written reports, media articles, blogs and presentations.

Collaboration

- Develop and maintain internal communication and learning between the Justice Lab and TLEF
- Develop and maintain effective external relationships and networks including with academia, policy makers, What Works Centres and legal professionals

Teamwork and Motivation

- Demonstrate a commitment to the Justice Lab's values
- Work as part of a team to action the Lab's goal of delivering research to improve the justice system
- Proactively provide advice, support and guidance to colleagues
- Support income generation, by developing project ideas and leading the development of funding proposals and collaborations.

Flexibility

This is an exciting opportunity in a newly-formed organisation. As such, many of the systems and processes that are normal in an established organisation are still being developed, with the support of The Legal Education Foundation.

This job description is not intended to be an exhaustive list of duties and responsibilities. It will be reviewed and updated as Justice Lab UK evolves, in discussion with the role holder.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Justice Lab is committed to building a diverse, equitable and truly inclusive team. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or social and economic background. We encourage all applications from people who can be categorised as being in the minority within the above protected characteristics.

Environmental Sustainability

The post holder is required to minimise environmental impact in the performance of the role.

Person specification

(E)- Essential

(D)- Desirable

1. Values

- Commitment to the aims and values of Justice Lab UK (E)
- A passion for the creation and use of research and evaluation within the legal system (E)

2. Experience

We are looking for a candidate with experience as below. Experience of conducting and/or commissioning Randomised Controlled Trials or Quasi-Experimental Designs is a core requisite.

If you don't have all the experience listed, still consider applying. We don't expect a candidate to have 100% of the attributes and experience listed, but we do want to know that you have relevant experience and an appetite to learn.

Experience of:

- Designing and leading experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation projects. (E)
- Using a range of analytical and evaluation techniques within a project or programme of work using statistical software packages such as R or STATA. (E)
- Delivering high quality research and evaluations to time and budget. (E)
- Participating in, and actively contributing to a team. (E)
- Experience of communicating appropriately with a diverse range of stakeholders (E)
- Experience of working in a busy environment and managing multiple demands (E)

3. Knowledge and skills

- Advanced degree (in statistics, economics, research or other relevant social science); equivalent qualifications; or evidence of equivalent experience. (E)
- Advanced quantitative or mixed methods research skills (E)
- High level of competence in use of a statistical package (E)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, with proven ability to communicate complex ideas in a clear and compelling way to a variety of audiences. (E)
- Excellent networking skills with experience of building strong relationships with a wide range of stakeholders. (D)
- Knowledge of the access to justice field (D)

How to apply

If all of the above sounds appealing, then please send the following documents to tim@whitonmaynard.com with the subject line “Research and Evaluation Principal”:

1. Your CV
2. A covering letter 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 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, disability or socio-economic background. If you would like to have an informal conversation about the role, please contact tim@whitonmaynard.com

The deadline for receipt of your application is 12pm, Friday 4th March 2022.

Applications received after this time will not be considered.