

Job description

Job title:	Assistant Director Research
Contract type:	Permanent
Accountable to:	Director of Research and REAL Centre
Salary:	£80,093 per annum plus excellent benefits
Hours:	37.5 hours per week* (core hours will be between 10:00am-3.00pm Monday to Friday in line with our new hybrid framework; individual preferences to be discussed and agreed).

*Diversity and inclusion is important to us, and we are open to queries about flexible working prior to interview, and during the appointment process with the successful candidate.

The Health Foundation

The Health Foundation is an independent charitable foundation committed to improving health and care for people in the UK. We do this by giving grants to those working to improve care and tackle the causes of poor health and by carrying out and funding research, data and policy analysis.

We believe good health and health care are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people's skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

Every person in the UK should have access to the same standard of health and social care, irrespective of their background. Through our research, data analysis and policy insights, we are informing individuals and organisations across the health and social care to build the evidence needed to improve services and achieve better outcomes.

Background to Research at the Foundation

The Foundation achieves its objectives through a combination of traditional grant-making activity, commissioning of research, evaluations and fellowships, in-house research and data analytics and policy analysis. Our 2019-21 strategic plan sets out five priority areas where we want to see real change.

These are:

- Promote healthy lives for all
- Data Analytics for better health
- Supporting healthcare improvement
- Making health and care services more sustainable
- Improving national health and care policy

More information about the Health Foundation and its activities can be found on our website at www.health.org.uk

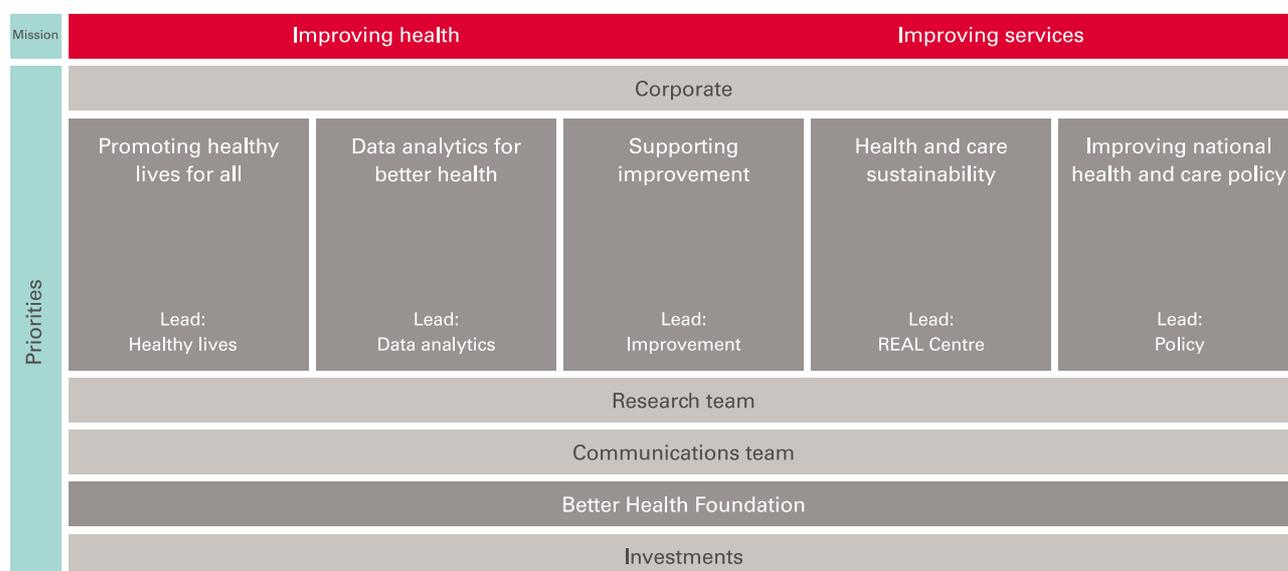
How we work

Research is central to the work of the Health Foundation and comprises a mix of in-house and externally awarded and commissioned programmes.

The Health Foundation has dedicated teams responsible for delivering the objectives of its five strategic priorities. The Research team works closely with each of the strategic priority teams to develop and deliver their research objectives as illustrated below:



Strategic framework



The team aims for the research and evaluation work they commission to have wide impact on both policy and practice, through the individual projects and programmes the Foundation supports, and in the way that it commissions and awards research. The portfolio encompasses independent evaluations, evidence reviews, original research awards, and knowledge mobilisation activities to explore what works to improve health, health care and social care. The team also plays a pivotal role in leading and supporting the development of more inclusive research practice across the Foundation and with other stakeholders and partner organisations, with the aim of reducing health inequalities in all our work.

Purpose of the Role

The Research team has a 14 full time equivalent staff who commission research and deliver research insights across the Health Foundation's 5 strategic priorities: healthy lives, improvement, data analytics, sustainability and health and care policy.

The post holder will be a credible senior figure who will apply their understanding of health inequalities, health and social care research, policy and delivery to ensure the Health Foundation designs, commissions, manages and disseminates programmes of research with academic teams and other research organisations which are of the highest quality and meet our strategic objectives.

They will lead and continue to develop the research team so that it provides expert support to the Health Foundation as a whole, working with colleagues on specific strategic priority areas to understand and develop key research questions and design research to support the delivery of our priorities.

This role is highly visible across the organisation and across external stakeholders. Therefore, we are looking for an individual who will be comfortable advising and guiding the team, connecting and collaborating with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, but who also won't shy away from being hands-on when required. As an experienced leader, you will embrace the role of managing a diverse team of research managers and officers, who are all experienced researchers in their own right, and know what it takes to get the best out of people.

The post holder will need to build a deep knowledge and understanding of our portfolio of commissioned research, its links with other work (in house research and grant giving activities) across the Health Foundation. They will be responsible for ensuring that:

- Our portfolio of research is of the highest academic standard.
- The research funded has strong and clear alignment with the Health Foundation strategic objectives
- The research organisations we fund are selected and administered transparently and in accordance with Health Foundation governance requirements and sector bestpractice.
- There is effective dissemination and knowledge mobilisation from the research.
- That our research programmes are inclusive in both their design and their delivery.
- The team is managed well with high levels of engagement and a positive, stretching and supportive culture.

Key tasks and responsibilities:

The Assistant Director is responsible for the day-to day management and leadership of the research portfolio (approximately £5m of newly commissioned research each year) and research team (approximately 14 FTE). These key tasks and responsibilities are:

- To lead the development of portfolios of research within the strategic plan and business plan which meet the organisational goals and objectives and provide a coherent and commissionable programme of work.
- To ensure that the team has systems and processes in place to scope, commission, select and manage the portfolio of research using best practice research management techniques.
- Provide strategic advice to DT and other senior colleagues on best practice in research design and development, research management and the research landscape of funders and the academic community in our strategic areas.
- To lead on the identification and development of new strategic opportunities and partnerships in research funding and management, such as working with NIHR on co-production and involvement, research impact.
- To provide expert advice and design input on research and evaluation

methods in the Health Foundation's areas of interest.

- To provide operational leadership and management of the research team, ensuring that the team has the appropriate staff with the right skills with objectives which clearly align to the research team goals.
- To lead the work of continuous improvement within the research team – including its research strategy and operating framework.
- Work with colleagues in each of the strategic priority areas on the Foundation's large-scale infrastructure investments such as [THIS Institute](#), the [IMPACT Centre](#) and the [REAL Centre](#) research units.
- Lead the team to ensure that projects are delivered on time and that budget management and forecasting is robust.
- To work with senior communications colleagues and strategy leads to develop and improve knowledge mobilisation and dissemination of Health Foundation funded research.
- To be an effective and well-respected representative of the Health Foundation in the academic and funding communities. Proactively, communicating the Health Foundation's goals and purpose to support our profile and reputation

Wider contribution

As with other staff at the Foundation, the postholder will be expected to contribute to corporate activities and initiatives, such as staff meetings, cross-Foundation leadership and development programmes and other corporate projects as necessary.

The postholder will also be expected to show active initiative in developing their professional expertise, and to demonstrate commitment to the Health Foundation's key behaviors: Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion; Working Together; Achieving Impact and Discovering and Learning.

Person specification

	Criteria
Behaviour	Commitment to diversity and inclusion - An understanding of, commitment to, diversity and equal opportunities in employment and service delivery.
Behaviour	Working together – Open, very communicative and approachable to all staff across the organisation irrespective of role or seniority.
Behaviour	Achieving impact – Collegiate with proven ability to work across teams successfully.
Behaviour	Discovering and Learning – A commitment to continuous improvement, striving to find new and improved ways to deliver effective team outcomes.
Education	A Masters or PhD in a relevant discipline.
Knowledge and experience	A personal track record of research / or research management and strong understanding of research theory and methods, with strong research and analysis skills.
Knowledge and experience	Knowledge of evaluation methods and practice, including evaluation of complex interventions.
Knowledge and experience	Experience of commissioning and/or managing research activities that are practice and policy-relevant. Deep knowledge of innovations and best practice in research funding and management.
Knowledge and experience	Experience of successful strategic leadership across a portfolio of complex projects with multiple stakeholders to further organisation objectives.
Knowledge and experience	Experience of leading and managing a team and budgetary management.
Knowledge and experience	Excellent project management and planning skills across multiple projects and a wide-ranging portfolio.
Knowledge and experience	An understanding, and preferably experience, of health and care policy analysis and development.
Knowledge and experience	Experience of working with national, regional and local leaders and policy makers, senior staff in health and care, including professional bodies and academia. Knowledge of the UK research landscape of funders and professional bodies.

Knowledge and experience	Evidence of success in empowering and motivating people and leading change and improvement.
Skills and abilities	Exceptional networking and influencing skills developed through experience of working in the health and care sector.
Skills and abilities	Strategically creative with an ability to analyse complex issues swiftly and critically, appraise available evidence, and to focus on key priorities in the face of competing demands for resources.
Skills and abilities	Able to build positive relationships with colleagues, Governors, external advisers and partners (including those from clinical professional backgrounds, economists, analysts and policy leads) to establish confidence and trust.
Skills and abilities	Highly developed writing skills for internal purposes and for external publication.
Skills and abilities	Highly developed oral presentational skills, with the ability to be an effective advocate for The Health Foundation and to convince through personal credibility.
Skills and abilities	Highly motivated and not easily discouraged, leading others by example.
Skills and abilities	Confident and resilient, able to engage in robust debate about policy and priorities internally and externally.

December 2021

