



## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Role:</b>	Head of Research
<b>Location:</b>	Flexible, although regular time in London required
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Founder
<b>Objective:</b>	To lead User Voice's peer research gathering insight from service users to both influence fundamental changes to the policy and public debate on criminal justice, addiction and homelessness, to innovate new services, and to reform systems.
<b>Salary:</b>	Up to £40,000 depending on experience plus London weighting if applicable
<b>Hours:</b>	40 hours per week
<b>Holiday:</b>	25 days per annum
<b>Probationary period:</b>	The post is subject to a six month probationary period

## USER VOICE

User Voice was created for and is run by people who have been in prison and on probation. Lived experience means we engage empathetically instead of sympathetically.

We exist to reduce offending and improve rehabilitation by working with the most marginalised people in and around the criminal justice system. We ensure that practitioners and policymakers hear their voices.

Since being founded in 2009, we have given a voice to over 150,000 people, including nearly 20,000 in over 80 peer research projects, influencing significant change to the system around [drugs in prison](#), [the response to the Covid pandemic](#), [neurodiversity](#) and [the experience of young black and mixed heritage boys](#).

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the national level there is a crucial need for insights from people with lived experience of crime, addiction and homelessness to inform system reform as this voice is currently almost wholly absent. At the same time User Voice has an unrivalled and significant footprint across the country engaging with the hardest to

reach people, through elected and trained service users who can provide the information to fill this void.

There is no one better placed to identify what works or what doesn't, and to be part of identifying the solution than people with current and recent experience of the system. More significantly, there has never been a time when it has been more important and timely that service users are given the platform to be heard, and to be part of transforming services and systems.

User Voice peer research projects, led by the Head of Research, will use this insight to both influence fundamental changes to the policy and public debate, to innovate new services, and to reform systems.

User Voice peer research and consultations projects have a positive impact on individual participants as a result of the peer-led approach, change institutions along the way by providing them with real time insight and give policy makers a massive reality check.

## **Responsibilities**

Business development and partnerships:

- To lead on the production of competitive proposals for external research and evaluation projects which generate income and to work with any partner organisations to manage and deliver those contracts secured.
- To manage existing and develop new partnerships with external research bodies who meet User Voice's values
- To manage any external contracted partnerships with research bodies and/or consultants

Commissioned research and consultation projects:

- To liaise with clients to ensure that research and consultation projects are clearly defined and the data collected meets their needs.
- To design research instruments and tools for research and consultation projects User Voice are commissioned to undertake.
- To oversee the data collection and analysis of this data.
- To take the lead on producing reports for clients and any other reporting requirements, such as presentations.
- To manage projects to budget and ensure that the deliverables are met.
- User Voice works primarily with children, young people and vulnerable adults. At times the role will demand unsupervised contact with this group. This role may involve interviewing vulnerable people alone in a series of interviews. The person will also be running groups with young people connected with prison and/or youth offending teams on multiple occasions e.g. youth forums.

Policy and communications:

- To stay up to date with policy developments around multiple needs, including crime, homelessness, addiction and mental health
- To be able to communicate the insight gathered through consultations with external audiences in order to influence system change

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential:**

- Masters in a relevant field
- Significant research experience in a research agency and/or within a public/social research role.
- Demonstrable project management experience.
- Excellent communications skills, proven both in writing and verbally.
- Excellent and proven research skills with competence in both qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Experience of developing appropriate methodologies for undertaking research.
- Experience of leading on the production of research proposals and generating income.
- Proven IT skills, with experience of developing, maintaining and manipulating large databases and using other analytical tools for research purposes.
- Good knowledge of safeguarding issues relating to research and practice.

### **Desirable:**

- Doctoral level or equivalent relevant experience in market/social research techniques.
- Good knowledge of the charity sector and/or criminal justice.
- Personal experience of the criminal justice system.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **Equality and diversity**

User Voice welcomes applications from ex-offenders and from all sections of the community regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or disability.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

This post is subject to an enhanced criminal record disclosure check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes, as the post holder will have regular unsupervised access to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The purpose of the check is to ensure that the nature of the applicant's criminal record, considered alongside evidence of the applicant's rehabilitation, does not indicate that his or her employment in this role would put current service users at risk.