

Candidate Brief

Post: Senior Research Officer

Salary: £37,000

This is a fixed-term post until 30th September 2023.

Introduction to TASO

The Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO) aims to improve lives through evidence-based practice in higher education (HE). Our vision is to eliminate equality gaps for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, allowing all students to have the same chance to enter HE, gain a good degree and progress into further study or employment. TASO is an affiliate What Works Centre and part of the UK Government's What Works Movement.

The role

TASO is seeking a Senior Research Officer to lead a project which aims to identify and evaluate existing evidence of what is working to support student mental health in the English higher education sector. [TASO is the lead partner in a consortium that has been commissioned by the Office for Students](#) to deliver a cross-cutting project to gather and mobilise evidence of effective mental health practices in higher education to improve student outcomes.

With the support of the Research Programmes Manager, the post holder will lead the project with responsibility for managing day-to-day project activities (e.g. delivering an evidence database, setting up research pilots, reporting to the project funder), coordinating project phases and workstreams, and managing relationships across the consortium partners. The postholder will also be responsible for budgetary oversight of project activity, ensuring deliverables and deadlines are met and reporting to all project stakeholders is timely.

Main duties and responsibilities

Project management

- Act as project lead for the project.
- Establish appropriate project management processes to plan, coordinate and implement the project.
- Shape the development of the project, including assisting with determining appropriate research methodologies and analytical strategies.
- Monitor project spending.
- Work with Consortium partners to ensure project milestones and deliverables are met.
- Work with a student panel to ensure student voices contribute to the project.

Research management and delivery

- Review and contribute to the design of project-related data collection methods and analysis.
- Review and contribute to the development of project-related theories of change.
- Support data collection which may be through a variety of methods (both qualitative and quantitative).
- Use creativity to assess and interpret the results of data analysis and research outcomes, draw inferences and conclusions including implications for policy development.

- Carry out desk research using a range of methods and sources of data.
- Collaborate actively within and outside the organisation to complete the research project and advance thinking.
- Undertake management/administration arising from research

Dissemination and networking

- Produce high quality and varied research outputs, including report writing, blogs and presentations, for a range of audiences.
- Communicate complex and conceptual ideas and research evaluation methods and tools to those with limited knowledge and understanding as well as to peers and those with deeper understanding and experience externally and internally, including TASO's Board, advisory groups, and project funder.

People management

- Manage a research assistant with support from the Research Programmes Manager.

Other

- Willingness to travel for project purposes.

This job description summarises the main duties and accountabilities of the post and is not comprehensive; the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties of similar level and responsibility.

Person specification

Essential

- Educated to degree level, or equivalent experience.
- Knowledge of the higher education sector in England.
- Proven track record in managing complex projects involving a number of partners, ideally in an education or charity setting.
- Research skills; including desk and field research (e.g. design, data collection and analysis).
- Experience of writing Theories of Change.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet often competing deadlines.
- Experience of working closely with a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience of managing junior colleagues.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Desirable

- Experience of working in a small team.

Informal Enquiries

Before submitting an application you may wish to discuss the post further by contacting Dr Helen Lawson, Research Programmes Manager, via email: Helen.Lawson@taso.org.uk

Initial Terms and Conditions of Appointment

- Remuneration: - £37,000
- Location: Central London. Following government guidelines for working during COVID-19. This post will be hybrid with the expectation that the post holder will be in the office one or two days a week in addition to attending office-based project meetings. Candidates must have the right to work in the UK.
- Hours: Full time
- Holiday: 27 days per year, plus public/bank holidays.
- Pension: Employer contribution 8%
- Term: Fixed term, to 30th September 2023.

TASO is a learning organisation which is committed to promoting and enabling our team in their training and development.

This role reports to the Research Programmes Manager.

How to apply

To apply, please send a CV and supporting statement (maximum 2 A4 pages) outlining clearly how you meet the above criteria to info@taso.org.uk, citing "Senior Research Officer" in the Subject of the email.

Deadline for applications: 9am on Monday 20th June

Interviews are expected to be held on: w/c 27th June