

Senior Evidence and Evaluation Officer (secondment opportunity)

Key information

- **Term:** Secondment opportunity /contract role 6-9 months
- **Salary:** We will pay reasonable equivalent salaries (up to £30,000 p.a.)
- **Location:** This role can be based in our London, Birmingham or Leeds hubs. We are currently working virtually, but when restrictions are lifted it is likely that you will be required to work up to 2 days per week at your chosen hub. Please let us know which hub you would like to be located at in your covering letter.
Annual leave: Annual leave entitlement will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. If you are applying as a secondment, Youth Futures commit to honouring all pre-existing annual leave commitments.
- **Team:** Impact and Evidence
- **Reporting to:** Evidence and Evaluation Manager
- **Deadline:** Monday 03 August 2021

About Youth Futures Foundation

Youth Futures Foundation was established in response to the government's commitment to allocate an initial £90m of dormant asset funding to youth employment, particularly for those further from the labour market and those facing ethnic disparities in employment opportunities. Youth Futures is working to remove the barriers preventing disadvantaged young people from entering the labour market.



By focusing on young people furthest from the labour market and championing well-crafted solutions that have employers at their heart, we believe we can create a triple-win for society:

- Meaningful employment for young people
- Engaged and motivated employees for businesses
- A clear view on “what works” for young people, programmes and places to help inform practitioners on good practice and help policy makers to make robust decisions

Youth Futures Foundation focuses on young people in England aged 14-24 (with a priority for those aged 16-24) who face significant barriers into sustained, good work. Our funding will provide grants to promising or established support services and projects that support young people to overcome multiple barriers into high quality employment.

Our approach to evaluation

As an affiliate What Works Centre, Youth Futures Foundation is committed to finding out what works to support young people into good work through research and high-quality evaluations of our funded programmes. Our approach builds on the Treasury’s Magenta Book, guided by realist insights and underpinned by programme theory so that at every opportunity, we can start to understand the causal drivers of change and outcomes.

Our What Works grant programme is phased to capture evidence of what works from delivery organisations at different stages on the evaluation journey, from ‘Development’ evaluations focussed on capacity building, to Impact Pilot and Impact Efficacy evaluations, which assess feasibility of rigorous impact evaluation approaches such as Randomised Control Trials or quasi-experimental designs.



Job Description

- The Senior Evidence and Evaluation Officer will work in a small, focused team responsible for commissioning and managing of high-quality, robust evaluations of Youth Futures Foundation-funded projects and collecting evidence of what works to support young people into good jobs.
- The Senior Evidence and Evaluation Officer will be a key part of the team, supporting all aspects of Youth Futures evaluations from design to dissemination. This will include:
 - working closely with our grants team to ensure grant-funded programmes are supported within the set-up phase
 - supporting grantees through their evaluation journey
 - managing external evaluation contracts
 - contributing to organisational outputs and policy recommendations
- We are looking for people who are passionate and committed to improving employment opportunities for disadvantaged young people. The role requires creativity, an open and outward-facing perspective, an interest in current youth employment policy, and some understanding of the sector bodies, charities and public agencies with whom our work needs to resonate.

Key responsibilities

Supporting the work of the evidence and evaluation team, which includes:

- project management, e.g. ongoing monitoring and support of evaluations of our What Works programmes
- providing feedback and quality assurance of evaluation outputs
- working with the Youth Futures' grants team and wider stakeholders to assess the potential of programmes to generate evidence of what works to support young people into meaningful employment (e.g. by reviewing applications for funding and attending site visits). This may also involve designing programmes with organisations supporting young people in a way that will produce robust evidence
- ensuring that project evaluation designs are high quality and set-up effectively by:
 - designing the invitation to tender (e.g. deciding evaluation aims and objectives and key research questions)
 - assessing the quality of submitted evaluation proposals
 - liaising with evaluators and grantees to develop their theory of change and ensure they are collecting the right data during the set-up phase
- assisting the effective publication and dissemination of research outputs



Support and contribute to Youth Futures' broader evidence requirements, which may include:

- carrying out ad hoc evidence and impact projects, including rapid research assessments, labour market analysis and reporting
- supporting the development of good practice toolkits and evidence gap maps
- supporting our 'systems thinking' work to map the actors, forces and linkages in the youth employment system

Person specification

Part One - Knowledge and experience

- Knowledge or experience of evaluation methodologies (such as programme theory, process, impact and/or RCT trial design) gained within a commissioning or research setting
- A good track record in supporting successful research and evaluation projects
- Good experience of qualitative and quantitative research, including critically appraising qualitative and quantitative data, evidence, and literature
- A strong interest in youth employment and the barriers faced by disadvantaged young people
- Relevant qualification in an economic, social science or related discipline - or on-the-job experience or training - ideally with strong quantitative and qualitative elements

Part Two- Skills and Competencies

- An analytical and critical thinker
- A collaborative team member who can be flexible, understands when to take the initiative, be proactive, and work independently
- Able to manage relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to communicate complex information in a clear and accessible format
- Good organisational skills including project and time management, with the ability to manage competing demands and deliver high-quality work in a fast-paced environment
- Sound experience and understanding of MS Office 365 applications, Teams and SharePoint and ability to use online/remote working tools



Mindset

- This is an exciting opportunity in a new organisation. As such, many of the systems and processes that are normal in an established organisation either do not exist or are newly forming. To be successful in this role, the candidate will need:
 - to thrive when operating in uncertainty
 - a proactive and flexible approach
 - to be able to identify and take forward opportunities and work effectively in partnership with others
 - a positive and can-do attitude, willing to roll their sleeves up to get into details where necessary
 - a willingness to collaborate internally and externally to achieve our mission
 - strong communication skills
 - commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

What we will offer the successful candidate

- Development and support to understand how to effectively commission for robust evidence
- Insight into the research and evaluation commissioning process within the 'What Works Centre' network
- Experience in the effective design, commissioning and delivery of robust evaluation methodologies
- Experience of youth labour market policy and practice when it is a key government priority

Things to know

- As part of Youth Futures Foundation's safeguarding policy, all employees are subject to a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

