

## Director of Research, Data & Insights

### Job description

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Salary</b>            | £76,000 per annum                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Location</b>          | Birmingham, London, Manchester                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Working pattern</b>   | Full-time, 37.5 hours per week; we are also very open to considering part-time working                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Contract</b>          | Permanent                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Reporting to</b>      | Executive Director, Strategy and Impact                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Direct reports</b>    | Head of Data and Data Science<br>Research Lead                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Main contacts</b>     | Internal – research team, education faculty, strategy team, development team, insights and data teams, executive committee<br>External – funders, trust and system leaders, Department for Education, academic partners |
| <b>Role requirements</b> | May include some limited evening and weekend work, for which time off in lieu will be given. Occasional travel across the regions required.                                                                             |

### Main objectives

A great teacher changes the future every day. At Ambition Institute, we support teachers and school leaders serving children from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping them keep getting better.

Our Research, Data & Insights team plays a critical role in advancing this mission: generating new knowledge about teacher and school leader development, understanding and demonstrating our impact, and ensuring that evidence and data inform decisions across Ambition.

As Director of Research, Data & Insights, you will be Ambition's senior research leader, responsible for setting our research agenda, strengthening the quality and distinctiveness of our research, and building Ambition's reputation as an authoritative voice in education research. You will develop strategic research partnerships, secure external funding and ensure our research reaches and influences practitioners, policymakers, funders and the wider research community. You will also be an active contributor to Ambition's external voice, communicating our evidence, ideas and impact through speaking, writing, commentary and relationship-building, in partnership with communications and public affairs colleagues.

You will also oversee Ambition's Data & Insights function, ensuring we have high quality data, evaluation and insight to understand our reach, quality and impact and to support effective organisational decision-making. You will contribute to the development of our data capability and

provide senior sponsorship of significant data projects that improve our infrastructure, systems and use of data.

As a Director, you will lead and develop a multidisciplinary team and contribute beyond your functional remit to Ambition's organisational strategy, priorities and leadership.

## **Main responsibilities**

### **Research leadership and strategy**

- > Set and own Ambition's research strategy and agenda, identifying the questions where Ambition can make a distinctive contribution to knowledge, policy and practice and ensuring alignment with our organisational strategy.
- > Provide intellectual and methodological leadership across our research portfolio, setting high standards for research quality, ethics and transparency and overseeing the delivery of ambitious and rigorous research.
- > Act as Ambition's senior authority on research, providing expert advice and challenge to senior leaders and ensuring that external research, evidence and emerging developments inform our strategy and work.
- > Develop a sustainable pipeline of externally funded research, building strategic partnerships and leading significant funding proposals with trusts, foundations, government, academic institutions and other partners.

### **Research influence and external reputation**

- > Build Ambition's reputation as an authoritative and trusted voice on teacher development, school leadership and educational disadvantage, representing Ambition with researchers, policymakers, practitioners, funders and other influential audiences.
- > Develop and maintain senior relationships and partnerships with leading academics, research organisations, funders and sector bodies, using these networks to strengthen the quality, reach and influence of Ambition's research.
- > Ensure our research and insights are translated into accessible and influential outputs, working with colleagues across Ambition so that evidence informs practice, policy and wider sector debate.
- > Play an active role in Ambition's external communications and influencing work, including speaking and writing publicly, identifying opportunities to contribute to debate, and working with colleagues and partners to establish our educational positions.

### **Data, insights and evaluation**

- > Set the strategic direction for Ambition's Data & Insights function, ensuring high quality data, analysis, evaluation and reporting enable us to understand and improve our reach, programme quality, outcomes and impact.
- > Champion the effective use of data, evaluation and evidence across Ambition, ensuring leaders have accessible and meaningful insight to support strategic and operational decision-making.
- > Provide senior sponsorship for significant data projects, ensuring improvements to our data infrastructure, systems, governance and ways of working deliver clear organisational benefits.
- > Ensure Ambition continues to strengthen its data and analytical capability, supporting colleagues across the organisation to use data effectively and responsibly.

### **Organisational, people and resource leadership**

- > Lead, develop and inspire a high-performing multidisciplinary Research, Data & Insights team, creating clarity of purpose, building capability and fostering an inclusive, collaborative and learning-focused culture.
- > As a member of Ambition's senior leadership team, contribute to organisational strategy and decision-making beyond your functional remit, providing evidence-informed advice and constructive challenge to senior colleagues and Trustees.
- > Lead significant organisational priorities and change where required, working collaboratively across functions and creating alignment between our research, data and insight capabilities and Ambition's wider strategic objectives.
- > Manage the department's budgets and resources effectively, making strategic choices about priorities and investment and ensuring value for money.

The above list of duties is not exclusive or exhaustive, and the post holder will be required to undertake such tasks as may reasonably be expected.

### **Key Skills and Experience**

#### **Essential**

Our successful candidate will demonstrate a strong commitment to Ambition's mission to improve the education and outcomes of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. They will also be able to demonstrate:

- > Significant experience of leading a varied portfolio of high quality research, with the intellectual credibility and methodological breadth to guide research across different topics, methods and types of project.
- > An established external profile, communication skills and appetite to develop an authoritative voice on teacher development, school leadership and wider education workforce issues.
- > Deep expertise in research design and methodology, supported by a PhD in a relevant field or an equivalent record of high quality research and publication.
- > A strong track record of building successful research partnerships, contributing to wider collaborative research and securing external funding.
- > Significant experience of providing strategic leadership to data, insights and/or evaluation, including using data and evidence to strengthen organisational decision-making and impact.
- > Experience of leading and developing multidisciplinary teams, managing significant resources and contributing to organisation-wide strategy and change.
- > Strong knowledge of the English education system and educational disadvantage, with excellent judgement and communication skills and the ability to influence senior internal and external stakeholders.

#### **Desirable**

- > Experience of senior leadership within a charity, research organisation, university or other mission-led organisation.
- > Experience of working in or closely with schools and/or organisations supporting teachers and school leaders.
- > Experience of leading significant data improvement or transformation projects.

- > Knowledge of the evidence base relating to teacher professional development and/or school leadership development.

This post is subject to receipt of two satisfactory references covering at least the previous 3 years and right to work in the UK.

Please note, this job description is subject to change. With any significant change, we will ensure this is discussed with you before any final approvals and or commitments.

This job description does not form part of your contract of employment. You may be required by the company to undertake any duties within your skills and capabilities which the company reasonably considers necessary to meet business needs.