



Institute for Voluntary
Action Research

Senior Researcher (fixed term contract)

Job application pack

Role: Senior Researcher (fixed term contract)

Responsible to:	Head of Research & Development
Works closely with:	All other staff and research associates when required
Location:	Exton Street, London, SE1 8UE (Waterloo)
Salary:	£35,000-£41,000, dependent upon experience
Contract:	Fixed term (initial 12 month period)
Hours:	Full time
Leave:	30 days per annum
Pension:	Workplace Pension scheme operated by the Pensions Trust; employee contribution matched by employer up to 5%

Application process

Closing date:	12 noon, Tuesday 29 May 2018
Interviews:	Monday 11 June 2018, IVAR offices
Possible start date:	As soon as possible

Thank you for your interest in working with IVAR.

Please send your CV and a covering letter (max two sides A4) explaining why you are applying, how you meet the person specification, and what in particular you would bring to IVAR.

Please include full details of your current position and remuneration (if applicable) and the names, positions and contact details of at least two referees, including your current or most recent employer. No contact will be made with any referee without your approval.

Please also complete the Equal Opportunities Form.

Successful candidates will be invited to interview by email. We regret that we are not able to notify applicants who are not shortlisted for interview.

Please email your application to diana@ivar.org.uk

For queries please call 020 7921 2940

Data Protection Note

Any personal data you provide (e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, employment history) will be used for recruitment purposes only and only shared with individuals involved in the recruitment.

Data will be stored securely: electronically (on IVAR's cloud-based IT system) and in hard copy.

Data related to unsuccessful applicants will be deleted six months after the end of the recruitment period.

If you have any questions about the processing of your data, then please contact IVAR's Data Protection Lead diana@ivar.org.uk

Background

About IVAR

We are an independent research charity that works closely with people and organisations that are striving for social change. From very small, grassroots organisations that directly support the most vulnerable in their local communities, to those that work nationally – across the voluntary, public and funding sectors.

We use research to support and strengthen practice – developing practical responses to challenges and providing the evidence and insights needed to adapt to change and make informed and confident decisions.

Since 2000, we have carried out almost 250 research, evaluation and advisory projects at a national, regional and local level across the UK, making us one of the most established and respected research charities in the sector. Alongside, we have built an ever-growing network of relationships at a local, regional and national level.

Our research is firmly rooted in practice and never sits on the shelf. We make sure that everything we produce is useful and usable and we proactively create opportunities to share our learning far and wide through face-to-face events and online resources.

What does this look like in practice?

1. **Research:** We carry out a broad range of interesting research projects on topics that are relevant to the sector. View live projects [here](#). All of our work is underpinned by action research principles.
2. **Direct support:** We work in close collaboration with organisations to support and strengthen their own practice, e.g. strategic review, evaluation, complex problem solving, [online offer](#).
3. **Workshops and events:** We facilitate a range of events to share and build on our research findings, spark conversation and nudge practice forward.
4. **Resources:** We use our research to inform useful and usable resources that are housed on our website and shared via our ever growing network.

For a more detailed understanding of the kind of work that we do, visit ivar.org.uk

People

Our research approach is made possible by our flexible team of just nine core staff, seven trustees and a network of 15 highly experienced associates and advisors, all of whom have worked in and around the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector as volunteers, paid staff, leaders, trustees, teachers and researchers. Our team understands and cares about the distinctiveness and independence of VCSE sector organisations.

Job description: Senior Researcher

Main purpose of job

- To initiate, design, lead, manage and deliver a range of research projects in the voluntary, public and funding sectors
- To make a significant contribution to the development and expansion of all aspects of IVAR's activities and ways of working

Position in organisation

- Reports to the Head of Research & Development
- Liaises at all levels within the organisation, with other team members, research associates, Board members, clients, partners and funders
- Acts as project lead on a number of specific projects, which includes overseeing the work of other staff, managing budgets and client liaison

Main functions

The post-holder will be expected to concentrate their efforts on the main areas set out below. However, IVAR is also committed to a degree of flexibility for all salaried posts to allow both the organisation and the individuals concerned to develop a better understanding of their strengths and development needs, in order to make best and most appropriate use of their contribution.

- Lead and participate in research project teams on all aspects of research: client liaison; fieldwork design; organisation of associates and staff; analysis and report writing; quality assurance; budget management; communication and dissemination
- Initiating and developing new work (proactively and reactively), representing the organisation externally and forming networks
- Initiating and generating content for communication purposes
- Research and prepare literature reviews and scoping papers
- Design and manage the implementation of data collection methodologies, including, where appropriate, providing support and training to others
- Adopt an area of expertise (methodological or thematic) within the organisation and support the team through relevant training, advice and guidance
- Undertake fieldwork using both qualitative and quantitative methods
- Draft high quality reports and other outputs according to the IVAR house style
- Initiate and maintain good relationships with IVAR's clients and partners
- Contribute to the dissemination of learning within the voluntary sector, funding and public sector, including attending and presenting at events, and producing materials aimed at a practitioner audience
- Contribute to discussions about IVAR's own research practice and strategic development

General responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Work closely and liaise with members of IVAR (e.g. staff, research associates and Board members) and external bodies (e.g. clients and partners), at a senior level as required
- Participate in IVAR meetings, events and undertaking training as necessary
- Adhere to, and actively promote, IVAR's code of practice and Equal Opportunities policy
- Operate all procedures and practices agreed by the Board
- Be administratively self-servicing
- Attend and contribute to regular supervision and annual appraisal

- Be responsible for own health and safety and that of colleagues, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and relevant EU directives
- Undertake such other duties as may be reasonably expected

Person specification

Essential

- A commitment to IVAR's mission and ways of working
- A strong understanding of qualitative research methodology, ideally including action research and evaluation design
- An understanding of the context and challenges facing the UK voluntary sector – and specifically for small to medium voluntary organisations
- Experience of leading, managing and contributing to all stages of the research process (for example, bid writing; research design; fieldwork; data analysis; dissemination)
- Project management experience (including: managing teams and work performance; client liaison; budget management; forward planning)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to communicate research findings in an accessible and engaging manner to different audiences (including practitioners, policy makers, funders and non-research audiences) using a range of methods (reports, publications, events, technology)
- Previous experience of conducting research in the voluntary, funding and public sector or on issues affecting it
- An understanding of research ethics and data protection

Desirable

- Masters or post-graduate training in a relevant social sciences topic
- Experience of using participatory methods and facilitation to support learning
- An understanding of quantitative research methodology
- A track record of identifying new areas of work and obtaining funding to finance these through a range of sources
- Ability to undertake fieldwork in a sensitive, participative and ethical manner
- A good team player, but also able to work alone, take initiative and manage and prioritise a diverse workload
- Good networking skills with the ability to operate well with people at all levels of society and communicate the IVAR offer
- A commitment to continuous learning