Nuffield Foundation

**Programme Head – Education**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contract: Fixed Term Maternity Cover – 12- months

Location: Bedford Square, Central London

Reports to: Director of Education

Salary: circa £50,000 per annum

The Nuffield Foundation is seeking a maternity cover for a Programme Head to shape and manage a portfolio of research grants in education. This is an exciting opportunity to help improve the understanding of how policy and practice can improve the life chances of children and young people.

The Nuffield Foundation is a charitable trust committed to improving social well-being by funding research and innovation projects in education and social policy. It also builds research capacity in science and social science.

There are two Programme Heads in the Directorate, working closely with the Director of Education to manage and articulate the funding priorities for the Foundation’s work in Education and Opportunity in line with the wider strategic purpose of the organisation. This will include the management of a portfolio of live grants, advising Trustees on consideration of applications and award of new grants, and ultimately improving the impact of the Foundation’s work.

The ideal candidate will be an excellent people and project manager with strong analytic skills. They should have knowledge of education and other developmental aspects of the lives of children, starting from provision and interventions for infancy and the early years period, through primary schooling, and in the transition into secondary education.

To apply, please send your CV together with a covering letter addressing the criteria in the Person Specification to [recruitment@nuffieldfoundation.org](mailto:recruitment@nuffieldfoundation.org) to reach us by Monday 17 April 2017.

# ORGANISATION

The Nuffield Foundation is a charitable trust established in 1943 by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors Ltd. Its aim is to improve social well-being, by funding research and innovation projects in education and social policy; and building research capacity in science and social science.

More specifically the Foundation achieves its aims by:

* ensuring that policy and practice in its priority areas of interest are informed by robust evidence about and analysis of causes and consequences of educational and social change, and the effectiveness of interventions to improve outcomes;
* providing a space for reflection and discussion about key social policy questions and how they may be resolved - in particular by bringing together different disciplinary perspectives that may be working in isolation; bridging policy, research and practitioner communities; and being politically neutral;
* identifying and setting medium and longer term agendas including identifying gaps in evidence in its areas of interest, and considering how they might be filled with robust research to inform policy or practice;
* promoting, and where appropriate supporting, capacity building in the production, synthesis and use of high quality evidence including the development of appropriate data infrastructure and promotion of career choices in science and social science research.

The Nuffield Foundation has an annual expenditure of about £11 million. Its income comes from the interest on investments. It does not fundraise or receive funding from government but is financially and politically independent. It is governed by a board of Trustees who meet four times a year but are involved in the work of the Foundation in significant ways in between these meetings.

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| **JOB DESCRIPTION – Programme Head - Education** | | | | | |
| Job title | | **Programme Head - Education** | Department | **Education and Life Chances** | |
| Job holder | |  | Reports to | **Director of Education** | |
| Job type | | **Fixed term, maternity cover** | Date created/amended |  | |
| Job aim | | To develop and manage a portfolio of research grants and other initiatives that will improve the understanding of the education and life chances of children and young people (age 0-25), disparities in outcomes between them, causes and consequences of these disparities, and initiatives that might address them. To achieve this, funding and activity in this area will:   * ensure that the Foundation’s interests, both in terms of scope and types of work, are clearly articulated; * attract and develop existing and emerging talent so that the quality of evidence generated and the sustainability of the field is improved * identify gaps in the evidence base and explore possible ways of addressing them, including through work with external experts * attract partnership investment from other funders * deliver measurable outcomes | | | |
| Resources | | Will be responsible for advising Trustees on the award of new grants of an annual value of c£2.5m (tbc) and for managing a portfolio of live grants of a value of c£5m (tbc). They will be responsible for managing the grant-related work of the Director’s PA and will be able to draw on other staff support and budgets (for example in relation to events, and communications resources) as necessary and agreed with the Director of Education. | | | |
| **Responsibilities**  **Including but not limited to:** | | | | | |
| **1. Shaping the development of the Education funding portfolio** | | | | | |
|  | Work with the Director of Education to develop and articulate updated funding priorities for this Directorate in support of the Foundation’s refreshed strategic purpose. The overall aim is to improve understanding of how policy and practice can improve the life chances of children and young people.  In particular the work of the Directorate will explore: the distribution of social and economic outcomes and how these change over the life course; the causes and consequences of different trajectories; and the development and evaluation of interventions to address disparities in outcomes. A major focus for the Directorate will be education and other developmental aspects of the lives of children and young people, starting from provision and interventions for the early years period, through schooling, and into key transitions into further and higher education and the world of work. It will also extend to other aspects of their lives, including family-related issues such as parenting, the interfaces between home and school, and adverse circumstances and vulnerabilities faced by children and young people such as developmental disadvantages, mental health issues, and poor access to educational choices and guidance. Activities will include:   * Scanning for research and policy developments relevant to these areas of work and advise relevant Director(s) and other Programme Heads on implications for the Foundation’s activity. * Undertaking occasional research reviews to help identify gaps or scope new strands of work within our areas of priority interest * Where necessary or appropriate drafting or shaping tender or commissioning briefs for specific pieces of work. | | | | |
| **2. Manage agreed applications and live grants in the Education and Life Chances grant portfolio** | | | | | |
|  | * Plan, lead and coordinate grant making processes for each round – consistent with Foundation-wide policy and practice in grantmaking - ensuring clear timetable, and effective triage and progress tracking of live applications in the system. * Assess, and provide formative comments on outline and full applications – seeking input from colleagues and Trustees as appropriate – and decide how they should be handled. Ensure clear and timely outcomes are communicated to applicants, with constructive feedback where appropriate. * Arrange for peer reviews of applications, synthesise comments and request responses from applicants. * Lead management of key grants and strategic projects [e.g. early years interventions, post-16 mathematics, and computing education) ensure appropriate advisory arrangements, including participation in advisory groups for high priority projects. * Manage the work of the grants administrator to actively monitor and manage grants and other projects to ensure effective progress, responding to change requests and providing timely advice to grant-holders where needed. * Review the communication plans, substantive reports and other outputs from funded projects, taking advice from the Communications Manager on production of Nuffield-branded reports and briefing papers where appropriate. * Plan and curate seminars and other events to disseminate and build on learning from grant-funded projects and related work (including past projects where appropriate). * Produce updates for Trustees and stakeholders on our key areas of work (e.g. newsletters, specific notes). * Identify, monitor and manage portfolio risks, and make adjustments to delivery where required. | | | | |
| **3. Improving the impact of the Foundation’s work in Education and Life Chances** | | | | | |
|  | * Ensure emerging knowledge and learning across the Directorate is captured and shared internally across ‘editorial’ staff in the Foundation. * Work with the Communication and Engagement team to maintain and manage segmented stakeholder lists in each priority area of interest for the Directorate. * Work with the Director in the development and implementation of improved systems for monitoring the impact of individual projects and programmes of work. * Monitor policy and research developments and identify opportunities for current and past grants/grant-holders to contribute. * Support the Director in active engagement with the relevant policy, practitioner and research communities to scope and forge relevant partnerships and projects and promote Nuffield as a stakeholder in this area. * Take the lead for, or represent Nuffield in, policy development or consultation activity and events in our priority areas of interest. | | | | |
| **4. Plan and manage resources** | | | | | |
|  | * Manage the grants administration process and ensure clear processes and communication are in place. * With the other directorate Programme Head, set clear objectives, manage, support and develop the grants administrator in their work on grants management, ensuring they are able to achieve high levels of performance. * Manage and monitor the allocated part of the grants budget for the Directorate, ensuring that grant holders work in accordance with our terms and conditions. | | | | |
| **5. Other** | | | | | |
|  | Wider support to the Foundation’s grant programmes for example by:   * Assisting in development and codification of grant-making policy and procedures, including development and ongoing review of guides for applicants, grant-holders and internal staff. * Developing and analysing management information about our grant programmes to monitor and improve our grant making performance * Playing a central role in developing evaluation frameworks for Nuffield-funded activity, working collaboratively with colleagues to put these in place. * Providing strategic and operational input to other activity across the Foundation with a research, policy or practice dimension, as required.   The above list of key responsibilities (and associated activities) is not exhaustive. It may be necessary to carry out other work within the scope of the role, as reasonably requested. | | | | |
| **Person specification** | | | | | Essential (E), Highly Desirable (HD) or Desirable (D) |
| **Experience** | | | | | |
| Experience of using a range of research methods in the design and development of research projects, with strong understanding of research design.  Experience of evaluating interventions, and multivariate analysis of administrative or survey data. | | | | | E  E |
| Experience of managing research or analysis projects. | | | | | E |
| Experience of critically appraising research reports, including formal methods of research synthesis | | | | | E |
| Experience of drawing policy and practice implications from research findings | | | | | E |
| Experience of managing a budget. | | | | | E |
| Experience of writing or editing and publishing research-based outputs | | | | | E |
| Experience of managing people. | | | | | D |
| **Knowledge and Skills** | | | | | |
| A good degree in a social science subject with strong formal quantitative training. | | | | | E |
| Post-graduate qualification in a social science subject with strong research methods component | | | | | HD |
| Strong analytic skills, including not only understanding research design strengths and weaknesses but also analytic use of evidence in framing a debate, and developing or assessing policy options. | | | | | E |
| Knowledge of one or more of the following substantive research and policy areas, coupled with a breadth of interest across the programme area:   * Education and training policy and practice * Early years education and care * Child development * Adolescence * Family policy | | | | | E |
| Excellent oral and writing skills, and ability to write clearly and accurately for different audiences. | | | | | E |
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| **Personal Qualities** | | | | | |
| Ability to forge partnerships and develop collaborative relationships. | | | | | E |
| Ability to work both independently and flexibly, and as part of a team. | | | | | E |
| The ability to solve problems, and to investigate, initiate and evaluate solutions | | | | | E |
| Imagination and creativity. | | | | | E |
| The confidence to innovate. | | | | | D |