

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Research Assistant: Community Participation		
Directorate	Public Health - Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC)		
Reporting to	Public Health Specialist / Public Health Consultant		
Grade	11		
Evaluation ref:	SCT1427	Job ref:	Family
Role purpose			
Support establishment of the Community Participation Workstream of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) funded Somerset Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) to improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities with Somerset communities as equal partners. Build community participation research capacity and mechanisms across Council functions and the Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector to inform evidence-based decision making for service improvement and transformation to support and strengthen the wider determinants (building blocks) of health.			
Responsibilities			
- Internal: build effective working relationships with and support the Public Health Consultant: HDRC Deputy Director, Public Health Specialist: Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR), the other Research Assistant, the broader HDRC team, collaborating colleagues across Council functions, and with the Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP). - External: build effective working relationships with and support the VCFSE: CBPR Lead, UWE Bristol: CBPR Researcher, other partnering universities, Community Research Connectors, grassroots community researchers and with the Lived Experience Advisory Research Networks (LEARNs). - Develop knowledge and understanding of community participation in research across Council functions to identify opportunities for strengthening or new community-driven research and decision-making to support the building blocks of health. - Undertake a research training assets and needs assessment across Council functions and other services to inform and align training and support offers progressively to strengthen community-driven research and decision-making. - Work with colleagues across the Council to identify and progress research action plans to support the building blocks of health through service improvement and transformation. - Contribute to the writing and monitoring of community participatory research governance, policy guidelines, and standard operating procedures. - Establish, co-ordinate, and where appropriate lead the monitoring and evaluation of the design and implementation of the Community Participation Workstream. - Attend and participate actively in research team and external meetings including conferences.			

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- Undertake all duties in accordance with the policies, procedures, and practices of the HDRC and Council.
- Build relationships and increase awareness of the Somerset HDRC and building blocks of health among Council colleagues, VCFSE organisations and other services, residents, and communities to improve health and reduce inequalities together.
- Work closely with Spark Somerset and the HDRC academic partners to maximise community participation in research and ensure evidence-based practice.
- Support the Council to establish partnerships with local people and organisations representing and serving them for community-driven research and evidence-based decision making.
- Build the community participatory research knowledge, understanding, and skills of all partners to affect positive change.
- Manage and coordinate the LEARNs, Community Research Connectors, and community peer research networks.
- Ensure accurate and complete data capture, and secure storage and management of all data.
- Contribute to and lead where appropriate quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Contribute to writing NIHR reports and papers and ensuring intellectual property alignment with the NIHR contract for HDRC outcomes.
- Disseminate research by assisting in the preparation of posters/ research papers for meetings, conferences, and publications accessible to a wide audience including local communities.
- Deliver research finding presentations locally.
- Use own initiative to engage with and establish mechanisms to cultivate participatory research and networks across Council functions and the VCFSE sector.
- Identify areas of low community participatory research integration across Council functions, working with all partners to inspire creative solutions. Using own judgement when to escalate more complex or strategic matters, whilst retaining responsibility for tracking their resolution.
- Use an agreed participatory evaluation framework to measure the process, outcomes, and impact of community-driven research and decision-making on the building blocks of health.
- Coordinate continuous process and impact evaluation of community participatory research mechanisms across Council functions and VCFSE sectors and identify recommendations for improvement.
- Co-produce reports with all partners which demonstrate activities and achievements of the Workstream and identify recommendations for continuous strengthening.
- Contribute to and support the development of research funding applications, and the monitoring of contracts, commissions or service level agreements relating to the Workstream projects and priorities.

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- Convey information about community participatory research and the building blocks of health in a clear and concise way to Council colleagues at all levels and other stakeholders.
- Champion the role and purpose of the HDRC and the Community Participation Workstream, internally with colleagues across all Council functions, and externally with all partners and communities.
- Work with all partners to develop effective, inclusive, and co-ordinated communications plans to cultivate community-driven research and evidence-based decision-making to support and strengthen the building blocks of health.

Impact

- Manage remuneration functions to gather community insights for research and informed decision-making.
- Work within allocated budgets to support the delivery of projects and specialist initiatives to achieve the agreed Workstream action plan and to address the agreed research priorities.

Contacts and Relationships

- Work in partnership with Spark Somerset and with colleagues across Council functions.
- Collaborate with and take guidance from the UWE Bristol and other academic partners as appropriate on standards for community participation in research.
- Establish and expand close working relationships with a variety of colleagues across the NHS and the VCFSE sector.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
• Knowledge and experience of community-engaged/participatory research. • Knowledge and experience of collaborating actively within organisations and externally, including with a variety of community organisations, forums, and networks. • Knowledge and experience of delivering public engagement initiatives, using co-production, participation, and consultation engagement activities. • Good understanding of governance, partnership networking, and decision-making processes. • Knowledge and experience of process, outcome, and/or impact evaluation and reporting.	E		
• Knowledge of Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR).		D	

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Experience			
Experience of working within Public/Community Engagement and/or Community Development.	E		
- Experience across the whole life cycle of a research project, including research ethics. - Some experience in software for designing research databases and data analysis.		D	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
Degree in Public Health or Community Development, or equivalent professional experience.	E		
- Master's level qualification in Public Health and/or Community Development or similar. - Qualification in Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) or Action Research.		D	
Skills			
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to convey complex and conceptual ideas to a range of groups. - Good IT skills and experience: MS Office suite of programmes. - Ability to manage time, own workload, and prioritise with minimal supervision.	E		
Working Conditions			
- Flexible attitude to working hours. - Willingness to work some evenings and weekends. - Car driver or otherwise mobile with appropriate business insurance.			
Working Arrangements			
Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.			
Corporate Responsibilities			
Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.			