

BLAVATNIK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Job title	Research Assistant (Qualitative Evaluation, UK Civil Service)
Department & Location	Blavatnik School of Government, Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG
Grade and salary	Grade 6.2: £16.97 per hour
Hours	Variable (hours are likely to vary from week to week. If you have particular requirements about maximum work hours per week please note these in your application and we will do our best to see if we can meet them)
Contract type	Casual engagement (12 months)
Reporting to	Policy and Research Associate
Closing date	12 noon (UK time) on Monday 13 February 2023

The role

This post will support a flagship evaluation of a high-profile leadership development programme delivered by the Leadership College for Government, Cabinet Office, on behalf of the UK Civil Service and public sector. The postholder will lead the design and analysis of qualitative evaluation within a multiple-methods, theory-driven evaluation design.

Data sources will include semi-structured diaries, interviews, and observational feedback from programme facilitators. The postholder's analysis will contribute to the process evaluation of this intervention by helping us understand what benefits or outcomes may be associated with participation, how and why the programme works (or doesn't work) and how participants' work contexts may shape the impact of the programme across the varied landscape of the UK Civil Service. This project is partly serving as a feasibility assessment for future evaluations of leadership development programmes, so the postholder will help us respond flexibly to any challenges which arise and contribute methodological insights to the evaluation design.

The postholder will be a core member of the evaluation team and, in addition to designing and implementing data collection instruments, analysing data, and



contributing to the overall evaluation research design, they will also support the impact of the evaluation by contributing findings to the final report (publicly published) and in varied formats suitable for a policy audience.

You will have a genuine interest and relevant experience in evaluation, including qualitative approaches, and want to use your work to drive programme development and help us improve how we evaluate this programme now and in the future. Experience of complex, realist and/or theory driven qualitative analysis and/or experience of educational evaluation (in any context) would be an advantage. This is a flexible post, where there is scope for you to influence the nature and extent of your contribution. The post will also require flexibility in being able to respond to the needs of the evaluation at different points of the programme. You will work directly with the evaluation leads in the Leadership College for Government day-to-day.

This is an exciting role which provides the opportunity to work closely with the Blavatnik School of Government and with the Leadership College for Government (Cabinet Office, UK Civil Service) who have overall responsibility for the evaluation. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn about evaluation in an applied setting, find out about programme development and implementation, and work directly with UK Government colleagues.

This casual engagement would start from 17 February 2023. You will also accrue holiday pay at 12.07% per hour worked.

Responsibilities

- Contribute to the development of qualitative evaluation tools, including reflective diaries, feedback forms for course facilitators to complete, interview topic guides etc.
- Gather and analyse data from various sources, and support data collection by liaising with programme participants as required.
- Support delivery of the programme on an *ad hoc* basis. This will be primarily by feeding emerging insights on participant experience and emerging outcomes to those running the programme.
- Contribute to required reporting, most likely in well-written summaries of key findings to be used in final reports.
- Help develop future programme evaluations by advising on additional qualitative and/or quantitative approaches that could be used from year two of delivery onwards.
- Ensure all aspects of the work meet GDPR and ethics requirements and are completed to the quality standards expected by the Government Social Research Profession.
- Support the broader evaluation needs of the programme. This would be subject to the needs of the programme and negotiable according to the skills and experience of the candidate, and could include conducting literature reviews, supporting quantitative data collection, processing and analysis, (for example, surveys) and collecting and analysing monitoring data.

- Maintain good records and oversee processing/storage/transfer of data, as agreed with Cabinet Office and participants, and ensuring confidentiality at all times.

Essential selection criteria

1. Relevant skills and practical experience of high-quality qualitative evaluation across the end-to-end research process including – research design, tool design, data collection, analysis, synthesis, and reporting.
2. Effective project management skills, including the ability to work flexibly to deliver competing priorities, to meet deadlines, and the ability to work independently on an aspect of a larger project, including being aware of how your own work fits into the bigger project.
3. Ability to build strong relationships with colleagues and to work collaboratively as part of a team, particularly to develop rigorous and comprehensive approaches to analysis.
4. Ability to successfully communicate findings from data, including in written reports, to draw out insights for colleagues, including those from policy and practitioner backgrounds.
5. Experience of processing, storing, and transferring qualitative data in a way which is compliant with ethical standards and UK GDPR legislation.
6. Bachelor's degree in a relevant field such as economics, political science, sociology, education, psychology, data science, or public policy is required for this role.

Desirable selection criteria

1. Experience of collecting data from those in positions of seniority and/or in a policy context.
2. Knowledge and/or experience of theory-driven evaluation, process evaluation and/or complex qualitative analysis, including realist or theory-driven methods.
3. Experience using specialist software (such as NVivo) to manage and analyse qualitative data.
4. Knowledge of evidence, theory and methods in leadership development, public sector management, professional development/adult training & learning and/or education would be an advantage; candidates that do not have this knowledge should be willing to develop it.

The Blavatnik School of Government

Our vision is of a world better led, a world better served and a world better governed. We are a global school committed to improving the quality of government and public policymaking worldwide, through three routes: teaching current and future leaders; applied research; and engagement with government and practitioners.

The School was founded in 2010 and our founding dean is [Professor Ngaire Woods](#). We admitted the first 38 Master of Public Policy (MPP) students in 2012 and we currently accept around 140 MPP students, eight MSc, and five doctoral students a year.

The Blavatnik School of Government holds a bronze Athena Swan award to recognise advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. You can find more information on the [Blavatnik School of Government's website](#).

How to apply

Please email your CV and a cover letter highlighting your experience and how you meet the selection criteria to recruit@bsg.ox.ac.uk with the subject "Casual Research Assistant (Qualitative Evaluation) - application".

Please note that you must have the [right to work](#) in the UK.

The closing date for applications is **12 noon (UK time) on Monday 13 February 2023**. Interviews will be held virtually (via MS Teams) on Friday 17 February 2023.