

Qualitative Research Manager

Full Time – Permanent Contract

Deadline for applications: Sunday 15th January 2017 at 12pm.

For full job and application details, visit www.theaudienceagency.org/careers

Interviews will take place week commencing 23rd January at our Manchester office.

Please see the Application Form for information about how to apply; please contact us on 0161 234 2956 or jobs@theaudienceagency.org if you require this information **in an alternative format**.

The Audience Agency

The Audience Agency is the national not-for-profit organisation supporting cultural organisations to understand and grow their audiences. The Audience Agency provides advice, intelligence and ideas for cultural organisations planning to increase and engage audiences. We work with arts, museums, heritage and other cultural organisations across England, to offer practical support and an unrivalled body of audience intelligence. For more information about our organisation and team please see www.theaudienceagency.org

Background to the post

Audience research is at the heart of The Audience Agency offer and the organisation enjoys a strong reputation within the cultural sector for the quality of its research. We now have a position within The Audience Agency Research Team for an experienced researcher who can lead the delivery and development of our qualitative research offer.

Based in the Manchester office (we also have a team in our London office) the successful applicant will provide high quality research to our national network of clients working both independently and with our consultancy teams.

This is an exciting role for a senior qualitative researcher who is interested in making a difference in the cultural sector. Once in post, the Qualitative Research Manager will work with the Chief Research Officer to build a dedicated qualitative function within the overall research team, including recruitment of further team members as appropriate.

Description of the role

The Qualitative Research Manager (QRM) will take the lead in the application of qualitative research methodologies at The Audience Agency (TAA) in a role that combines both hands on delivery with strategic development.

In all of the work that we do, TAA focusses on providing actionable insight for the cultural sector and to achieve this we bring together a range of research and consultancy specialists. The QRM role will bring specific methodological expertise to this and the successful applicant will need to be suited to working both independently and also in collaboration with our network of consultants.

As the qualitative research expert in the agency, the QRM will be involved in prospecting for, designing and delivering bespoke projects commissioned by a range of cultural organisations. These may include performing arts venues, art galleries, museums, heritage organisations and libraries. The QRM will also input into the design and development of new applications of qualitative methods in our research packages and wider services.

In addition to this client focused role, the QRM will generate sector level insight for agencies and funders as well as material for wider dissemination through our marketing team. They will also represent the agency at events and contribute to building the agencies strategic partnerships.

While this is a predominantly qualitative role, it is important that the QRM has a sound grasp of the full range of possible approaches, including quantitative research.

Although based in Manchester, this is a national role and the QRM will therefore need to be prepared to travel to work with clients, audiences and consultants.

Main duties of post

The Qualitative Research Manager will:

Lead on qualitative research applications

- Be the go to person in the organisation for advice and input on qualitative research. This may include, for example:
Discussion groups (offline and online), participatory workshop sessions, in depth interviews (structured, semi-structured and mini interviews), observation/ ethnographic observation, accompanied visits, visitor journey mapping, mystery shopping and analysis of qualitative online material (e.g. diaries, blogs, social media, visual content/photos). Note - applicants do not have to show experience in all of these techniques at this stage.
- Advise on how these methods can be best applied to both formative and summative research and a range of different evaluation techniques.
- Lead on thematic applications of qualitative techniques in the agency, for example applying culture to social impact models.
- Keep abreast of new tools, approaches and developments in this strand of work and how they may be included in our bespoke range of services.
- Suggest, develop and input into product and package development that may include qualitative techniques.
- Input into the strategic development of the research offer with the Platform director, Quantitative Research Manager and Chief Research Officer.

Deliver research project work

- Take an active role in prospecting for and winning work, including attendance at client pitches.
- Conduct the whole delivery process, from research design to application, analysis and reporting.
- Be a skilled facilitator of discussion groups, both working independently and with the support of wider research or consultancy teams.
- Take a cross disciplinary team approach to delivering projects and provide outputs that are robust in methodology and practical and insightful in application.

Manage workloads and team

- Manage and prioritise a workload that will consist of a number of projects at any one time. Manage research income and expenditure budgets.
- Work closely with the Business Development Unit (BDU), research team and our consultant network to spot and pursue opportunities.
- Manage a small team of research officers (to be recruited) who will support the QRM in their role. This will include recruitment, appraisal and development of staff.
- Deliver projects in a matrix approach as required. Oversee delivery from junior members of team.
- Contribute to team meetings and internal management meetings as required.

Input into organisation and sector learning

- Work with the communications team to produce sector level insights and case studies for dissemination.
- Share internally the insights and learning gained from research projects and client work.
- Provide training for internal team members in qualitative techniques and suggest external training opportunities.

Represent the agency

- Contribute specialist research content to The Audience Agency's events programme including training, surgeries and conference presentations.
- Represent the company externally to clients, strategic partners, funders and policy makers.
- Be aware of The Audience Agency's values and to conduct business with clients in their spirit.

Champion best practice & Quality Assurance

- Ensure research projects meet customers' needs; produce quality work, within budget and on time.
- Adhere and contribute to The Audience Agency's data management policies and best practice in relation to compliance with Data Protection regulations.
- Maintain a high standard of robust and reliable analysis in all work by adhering and contributing to the continual development of The Audience Agency's quality assurance measures.

- Help ensure that all staff are aware of and adhere to the Market Research Society's code and guidelines for good practice in research projects.
- Take an active role in implementing TAA's policies and procedures such as time management, equal opportunities, diversity and corporate identity guidelines.

Additional job details

Location

The role will be based at our Manchester office and the post holder will report to the Chief Research Officer.

Salary

The post is offered on a full time permanent basis at an annual salary of £32,000.

Hours

Normal working hours for full time employees are 35 per week, or 7 hours a day which can be worked flexibly in agreement with the your line manager. Core office hours are between 10.00am - 6.00pm daily. For full-time staff the normal working day includes one hour for lunch (unpaid).

The Audience Agency will try to be flexible and understanding in allowing staff to adopt hours which suit individual circumstances as long as these hours do not affect work effectiveness.

Holiday

The leave entitlement is 25 days per annum. Public/Bank holidays are in addition to this personal leave entitlement.

Contract

The post is offered on a full time permanent contract commencing as soon as possible. In accordance with standard business practice this role is subject to the successful completion of a three month probationary period.

For more details of the specific role please contact Gareth Davies, Finance and Administration Director, The Audience Agency: gareth.davies@theaudienceagency.org / 0161 234 2956.

Person Specification – Qualitative Research Manager

Please give concrete examples in your application of where and how you've acquired and applied the necessary skills and experience. The successful candidate will have the following skills and experience (E = Essential, D = Desirable).

Qualifications and/ or relevant training

Qualifications in research and analysis are not essential, but would indicate a specialism which the job requires. However this specialism could equally have been acquired through appropriate training through work.

- E Qualification and/or in-work training in qualitative research methods.
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- D Membership of the Market Research Society (MRS).

Research, analysis and reporting

- E Sound understanding of research theory and practice and the application of range of specific qualitative techniques within the broader social/ market research context.
- E At least 3 years' practical experience of carrying out qualitative research including research design and delivery.
- E Experience of working in an advisory or consultative way, applying research to both formative and summative research.
- E Specific experience of discussion group facilitation and depth interviews.
- E Ability to interpret research findings, distil key messages and present to non-research audiences.

Thematic applications of qualitative research

- E Experience of applying research in a customer or audience context.
- E Experience of working on development of research tools and applications based on qualitative methodologies.
- D Understanding of the principles of marketing and audience development.
- D Experience of evaluation techniques and models.
- D Experience of social impact models.

Knowledge of the sector and representing the organisation

- D Knowledge of the arts, cultural and/or heritage sector and the role of research within that sector.
- D Experience of presenting at conferences and providing training.
- D Experience of representing an organisation to sector level partners, funders and policy makers.

Prospecting and winning work

- E Experience of responding to client's briefs and tenders and writing proposals.
- D Experience of attending client pitches.

Project/ team working

- E Ability to manage and prioritise workload across a number of different projects and demands, in a busy environment.
- E Experience of working in a team environment in a cross disciplinary approach.
- E Experience of managing budgets and working to targets.
- D Experience of managing junior members of staff, including progress monitoring and development.

Best practice/ Quality Assurance

- E Understanding of, and adherence to, data protection legislation.
- E Experience of applying quality assurance to projects.
- D Experience of capturing best practice and applying to projects.

Personal qualities

- E Excellent IT skills including Excel, Word, PowerPoint, email and internet use.
- E Numerical confidence, accuracy and rigour.
- E Excellent written and verbal communication skills at a professional level. Diplomatic, articulate and persuasive.
- E Client focused, resourceful and entrepreneurial.