

# Job Specification

## Research Officer (Higher education)

<b>Contract type:</b>	Full-time (open to job share), fixed term one year in the first instance
<b>Location:</b>	Flexible, though a requirement to be in London or other locations on certain dates (for example, to conduct interviews or support key meetings and events)
<b>Remuneration:</b>	£23,000 - £26,000 per annum (paid <i>pro rata</i> if the appointment is made on a part-time basis), depending on experience
<b>Working hours:</b>	We welcome applications from those who require, or would like, flexible working arrangements with regards to main location and working hours. We are open to making one full-time or two part-time appointments to cover this role. If you wish to apply for a part-time appointment, please state the fraction of FTE you would prefer (for example, 0.5).
<b>Applications:</b>	Please send your CV and cover letter (addressed to Penelope Griffin) to <a href="mailto:penelope.griffin@the-bridgegroup.co.uk">penelope.griffin@the-bridgegroup.co.uk</a> Your cover letter should outline why you are attracted to the role and how you meet the person specification, in no more than 1,500 words. Please also include the names of two referees.
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	Midday on Monday 25 March

We will invite shortlisted applicants to an interview, which we envisage will take place in London on Monday 8 April.

## **Background to the Bridge Group**

The Bridge Group is a non-profit consultancy that works to create evidence-based social change. We support organisations of all kinds with independent expertise, research and practical know-how to enable them to make a real and lasting impact on socio-economic diversity and equality. Recent clients include, for example, the Sutton Trust, KPMG, the Cabinet Office, the Wellcome Trust and the BBC.

More information about the Charity is available on our website:

[www.thebridgegroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgegroup.org.uk)

Delivering robust and relevant research is the beating heart of the Bridge Group: it is a catalyst for evidence-based social change. Our research usually comprises quantitative and qualitative elements, and always involves the translation of findings into impactful, practical recommendations. Our research thus supports our objectives as a Charity. We carry out most of our research projects via small collaborative teams of Bridge Group staff. In some cases, we engage leading academic colleagues or other specialist external expertise to support our work.

An opportunity has arisen to be at the heart of this pioneering charity, during an exciting period of growth.

## **Job specification**

We are seeking a candidate who can undertake robust qualitative and quantitative research, supported by a more senior researcher; and understand the context in which this analysis takes place. This role will focus on higher education in relation to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds: their access to it, success on course and progression to graduate employment. Much of the work will have been commissioned by universities, employers, or our other stakeholders to evaluate their programmes or other practice. The role will also be expected to contribute across a range of the Bridge Group's other work.

This role will be responsible for undertaking routine research analysis, typically as a discrete part of a broader piece of research, and with the methodology and outputs agreed in advance. This role will also provide practical research assistance. This could include, for example, entering or mapping data in an accurate and timely manner or extracting relevant information from programme monitoring reports and highlighting trends. It could also include administrative tasks such as organising interviews and focus groups; and liaising with external stakeholders about data formatting and transfer.

The role will be expected to develop a wider understanding of each project in which s/he is involved. This will include engaging productively with the wider research team, for example through attending and contributing to discussions; and relating the findings of his/her own work to the wider research questions.

The role will present findings from his/her own work coherently, accurately and precisely. This may be verbally and/or in writing, for example through writing short reports and/or presenting findings to an audience (for example, a client).

## **Skills, understanding and experience**

The successful candidate will:

- Be passionate about social equality and socio-economic diversity; and the role of education, charities and employers in strengthening this
- Understand and have experience of using qualitative social science research methods (e.g. designing questionnaires, running interviews and focus groups) and analysis (for example, thematic analysis)
- Understand and have experience of statistical techniques (e.g. correlation, ANOVA and basic tests of statistical significance), and the tools used for these (e.g. SPSS and Excel)
- Understand deprivation/disadvantage metrics (e.g. Index of Multiple Deprivation and HESA measures) used in education-related research
- Understand the aims of widening participation in higher education and have experience of delivering measures to support it
- Be able to demonstrate excellent organisational and administrative skills, as required e.g. to arrange and run focus groups
- Have excellent verbal and written skills, including the ability to communicate complex information clearly and accessibly to a range of audiences
- Have excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to engage interviewees from a range of backgrounds sensitively and productively
- Experience of handling sensitive information, and adhering to strict confidentiality and data security protocols
- Be highly numerate and computer literate, with excellent Excel skills
- Be able to work both independently and collaboratively, plan and manage own workload, and meet strict deadlines
- Understand how to meet safeguarding requirements in social sciences research.

We anticipate that the successful candidate will have a degree or equivalent professional experience in a relevant discipline (e.g. social sciences, education)