
Senior Researcher (maternity cover) Recruitment pack

September 2021

Welcome to Local Trust

Dear applicant,

Thank you very much for your interest in this post. On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.

To apply, you should submit:

- An up-to-date CV which shows your full career history. We recommend that this is no longer than three pages.
- A supporting statement, with your name at the top of each page, explaining why you are interested in this role, detailing how you are a good candidate for this post and how you fulfil the person specification. Each section of the person spec should be addressed under clear headings. We recommend that this is no longer than two pages.

Please note that applications can only be considered if both a CV and supporting statement is submitted. Please send your application by email to: recruitment@localtrust.org.uk

Suitable candidates will be invited for interview via Zoom on 27th October 2021.

All applications must be received by 12 midday on Monday, 18th October 2021.

You will receive an acknowledgement within 24 hours of receipt and we suggest that if after that time you have not heard from us, you telephone Local Trust on 020 3588 0565 to ensure that it has arrived. Using a secure email address and putting **Senior Researcher** in the subject line reduces the chances of your email going into spam.

Due to the number of applications we are currently receiving, we are only able to offer feedback to applicants who attend interview stage.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role and your suitability you can call me on 0203 588 0563.

Good luck!

Kind regards,

Jayne Humm

Head of research and learning

Welcome to Local Trust

Local Trust was established in 2012 to deliver Big Local, a National Lottery Community Fund programme which committed £1m to 150 local areas in England.

Big Local is one of the most radical and exciting grant programmes ever launched by a major lottery funder. Between 2010 and 2012, the National Lottery Community Fund identified 150 areas that had historically missed out on lottery and other funding. Each of those areas was allocated £1m of Big Local funding. This could be spent in any way they chose, provided residents organised themselves locally to plan and manage that funding, involving the wider community in the decision-making process.



The programme was designed not just to provide funding for projects, but to do so in a way that would build community capacity, confidence and skills in the longer term. To accomplish this, Big Local is bottom-up and community-led; there are no top-down targets or centrally imposed delivery models. The rules, constraints and priorities that define Big Local have been for local people to decide. The timeframe extends over fifteen years, allowing communities to take their time, build confidence and skills, make decisions and deliver change, without the usual pressures to meet end-of-year spend targets or other arbitrary, bureaucratic deadlines.

To secure the funding, resident-led partnerships of local volunteers work together to form a common vision for their area and agree priorities, in order to make a difference to the things that matter most to their community. The outcomes set for Big Local at its outset were deliberately broad to provide maximum scope for communities to set their own priorities, and were as follows:

- Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them.
- People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future.
- The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises.
- People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.

To help them make the most of their opportunity, residents involved in Big Local are supported in developing and delivering their plans by an extensive programme of training, networking and light-touch, on-the-ground support provided by Local Trust and its partners.



Welcome to Local Trust

You will be joining a team of enthusiastic and supportive professionals, who care about their work. It's a great atmosphere as there is a genuine buzz and momentum about what we are doing. You will get to see the impact that Local Trust is making on the ground, as well as the extent to which our ideas and learning are influencing policy and practice nationally.

Research and evaluation at Local Trust has grown to support developments in Big Local. The team (a senior researcher, 4 researchers and research assistant reporting to the Head of Research and Learning) deliver an exciting range of both in house and commissioned research projects to explore what resident-led means, the effectiveness of place-based funding as well as developing tools to support the volunteers delivering Big Local and collecting data through regular surveys.



Our research team uses rigorous qualitative and quantitative methods to draw learning from Big Local. Over the last two years, we have significantly expanded the team which gives us greater capacity to deliver on our research ambitions. Given the scale of our activity and growing external profile we are certain that these could be career-defining roles.

We have put together this pack to give you a stronger sense of who we are and you can find out more at localtrust.org.uk.

Best of luck with your application.

Matt Leach
Chief Executive

About Big Local

Big Local is an exciting opportunity for residents in 150 areas around England to make a massive and lasting positive difference to their communities. These are areas that have significant challenges to overcome, places that are likely to have missed out on funding. Big Local brings together all the local talent, ambitions, skills and energy from individuals, groups and organisations who want to make their area an even better place to live.

Underlying this is a belief that residents have a capacity and desire to drive change. That they can achieve lasting and positive results when supported by those they trust and respect; and that this can build skills; confidence; networks; relationships; and expertise in each community. Residents identify what matters most to them, and can then take action to change things for the better.

Local Trust will distribute more than £1m to each of 150 Big Local areas over its fifteen-year lifespan. We commit our money at the outset, and then support local residents to develop their own plans to spend the funding in ways that they collectively agree will improve their local area and lives of those living there.

Because we are in it for the long term – our funding commitment runs through to 2025-26 – it provides time for areas to develop in confidence and capacity, moving from small initiatives to more ambitious projects, often leveraging in significant external funds.

But we don't just provide funding. As the largest and most broad-based place-based funding programme in the UK, we also look to share the evidence and learning from our work.

Over the next five years, we will be investing significantly in events, research and publications that contribute towards setting a new agenda around investment in place.



*Local Trust is registered as a charity (number 1147511) and as a company (number 7833396).
Big Local Trust is registered as a charity (number 1145916)*

Research at Local Trust

The Big local programme is new and innovative and this is reflected in our approach to research. Local Trust has moved away from using a theory of change to evaluating our work and adopted an approach to learning based around a hypothesis and lines of inquiry.

The hypothesis for Big Local is that:

Long term funding and support to build capacity gives residents in hyper-local areas agency to take decisions and to act to create positive and lasting change.

Three interlinked lines of inquiry have so far been pursued to test this hypothesis. These relate to:

- place-based funding and support
- effective resident-led decision making and action
- positive and lasting change and how to measure it

Research Strategy

The current [research strategy](#) develops our learning and understanding about community-led change and how to bring it about, not just in Big Local areas, but in disadvantaged and '[left behind](#)' [areas](#) across England. This work includes:

- Evaluating [Big Local](#) and the management and support Local Trust provides to Big Local areas
- Testing key aspects of the programme
- Diving deeper into key themes and topics
- Running our programme-wide data collection systems
- Contributing to the evidence base on how to deliver community power and control of resources and what impact community control has.

Testing our hypothesis

Projects to address the lines of inquiry, include studies looking at: [power in Big Local partnerships](#); [community responses to COVID-19](#); ['left behind' communities](#); [boundaries for place-based work](#); [community hubs](#). [Power in our hands](#) draws on some of our learning from the last few years.

External evaluation

There are two major evaluations of Big Local conducted by external consortia. [Our Bigger Story](#) is a longitudinal, multi-media evaluation conducted led by the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC). [Communities in Control](#) is conducted by seven universities under the banner of the School for Public Health Research (SPHR). It is independently funded by the National Institute of Health Research to assess whether health inequalities can be reduced by Big Local. Both projects commenced new phases in 2018. Our Bigger Story (OBS) has helped us to unpack what resident-led means and feels like to the people leading Big Local in areas and has developed three models of community leadership used in areas. Communities in Control (CIC) has highlighted the importance of spaces in Big Local – physical spaces to run activities and bring communities together and decision-making spaces (Big Local partnerships). CIC is also starting to unpack power in Big Local – what enables and restricts the exercise of collective community power.

Programme Support

There are multiple projects looking at different aspects of programme management and support. Recently there have been studies evaluating our approach to supporting areas, helping our understanding how Big Local works and exploring the reasons for different outcomes.



Research at Local Trust

A senior researcher's job at Local Trust

We asked one of our senior researchers to talk about what it's like to work in the research team at Local Trust....

"Working in the research team at Local Trust, you get to do such a variety of things, all of them helping to contribute to our knowledge about this amazing programme. It's a privilege to do such interesting work day-to-day, all of it within a really supportive research team.

As a senior researcher, you'll be leading on a range of complex, exciting projects. You might be developing a research project from scratch, thinking through what the key questions are and how best you can design a project that answers those questions. Although you have lots of autonomy, you'd be working within a close-knit team and we regularly talk through how our work is going. A really exciting part of the work of the research team is when we collectively scope out a project at the start, thinking about the purpose of the project and how it's informed by other research.

You'll lead in commissioning research, working with partners from tendering to contract and delivery stage. It's fantastic experience to work with a range of different partners, from senior academics to independent consultants! As a senior researcher, you will be line managing a researcher, which is very rewarding- you have the chance to actively support your colleague's development.

You'll be contributing to strategic thinking across the organisation by sharing what you are learning from the projects which you manage and linking the findings to colleagues' work and to the wider goals of Local Trust. You have lots of opportunity to work with different teams across Local Trust – you might be working with our comms team to plan how to promote a report, or you might be working to make sure that the findings of an evaluation report are used by those delivering support to Big Local areas. There's a really collaborative culture at Local Trust and within our team we frequently help out on each other's projects, acting as sounding boards or suggesting new approaches and methods.

Finally, working directly with Big Local areas is one of the most rewarding parts of the role. There are many opportunities to visit and connect with the volunteers delivering this programme on the ground and what's great is finding ways to make the research we do useful and relevant to them. "

Lucy Terry, senior researcher

Our staff structure

Most of the Local Trust team is based in our offices in CAN Mezzanine, 7-14 Great Dover Street, close to London Bridge and Borough stations.

We also have a number of staff based across the country in various locations and retain a flexible approach to how much time we spend in our office.

We are supported in delivering the programme by a network of local “reps” who provide light touch on the ground support to our areas to help them deliver.

Please note the following staff structure has recently been revised and may change as Local Trust develops over time to reflect our business needs.

This post is in the highlighted box

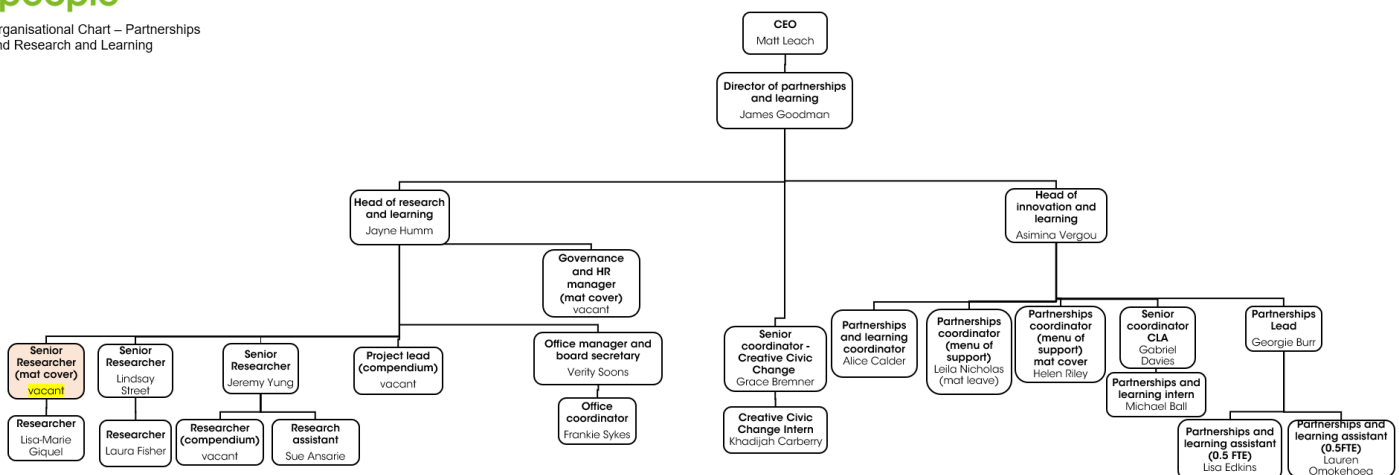
Click [here](#) for more information about our teams.



Organisation chart – September 2021

Local Trust
trusting
local
people

Organisational Chart – Partnerships
and Research and Learning



 **COMMUNITY
FUND**

As at 28/9/2021

 **COMMUNITY
FUND**

Our values

Having the right experience, skills and knowledge as defined in the person specification is important; but so too is how you go about your work. As an organisation, we constantly challenge ourselves to be:

- *Responsive and engaged* – constantly seeking to improve the way we work to ensure we are providing Big Local partnerships with access to the support and assistance they need to achieve their ambitions.
- *Outward looking and partnership oriented*, prioritising building new collaborations and partnerships – both nationally and locally.
- *Focused on the future* – putting Big Local in context, and ensuring there is a Big Local legacy, both for areas and for the programme as a whole.
- *Proactive, questioning and challenging* – of both ourselves and Big Local areas, gathering evidence, evaluating approaches and learning from everything we do.
- *Influential, connected and informed* – valuing insight and analysis and actively informing and influencing wider debates on the future of communities.



Job description

Job title	Senior Researcher (maternity cover)
Accountable to	Head of Research and Learning
Responsible for	Researcher, matrix management of Research Assistant
Term	Fixed term to finish 28 February 2023

Purpose of the role

The senior researcher role delivers an ambitious programme of research and learning and supports the head of research and learning in ensuring the effective evaluation of the Big Local programme. To support the sharing and dissemination of learning arising from research and evaluation to a diverse range of audiences.

Job description (key duties)

1. Design and deliver robust and timely research, that evaluates and identifies the learning from the Big Local Programme.
2. Commission, manage and support the delivery of research and learning from outsourced providers, ensuring they meet contractual obligations and add value to the research and learning strategy at Local Trust.
3. Support a cohesive and comprehensive approach to identifying and disseminating the learning from the Big Local Programme to a diverse range of external and internal audiences.
4. Ensure that the gathering of evaluation and research data uses valid and robust qualitative and quantitative methods.
5. Produce high quality, user-friendly and accessible outputs, including reports, papers and blogs, presenting findings in suitable formats and in line with Local Trust's communications guidance.
6. Line management of researchers and/or research assistants
7. Support a close working relationship with all other Local Trust teams to integrate learning across the different functions at Local Trust.
8. Design and deliver training in evaluation and research as needed.
9. Work with the communications and policy teams to ensure learning is proactively shared, particularly across influential policy makers; funders; and others involved in community development.
10. In line with our values, maintain an external profile using blogging,

Job description

speaking at events, social media etc. ensure an on-going interest in the learning from Big Local areas.

11. Work with the head of research and learning to proactively consider research and learning needs at Local Trust.
12. Support the consideration of innovation and the re-design of processes to further improve Local Trust's research and learning offer.
13. Act as a team player, contribute to organisational wide work and initiatives.
14. As a member of the Local Trust staff team you will need to:
 - demonstrate Local Trust's vision and values in your daily work
 - consistently contribute to organisation-wide learning drawing on experience gained in your role, and similarly seek to learn from the work of colleagues to inform your work
 - actively look outward and engage with the widest range of external stakeholders to influence, inform and excite others about the work of Local Trust and Big Local
 - proactively support the development of a working culture that promotes equality and diversity
 - help Local Trust deliver its environment and sustainable development policy and environmental management system
 - be aware that you have a duty of care for the health and safety of yourself and others.

While these are your main areas of responsibility, no role profile can cover every eventuality. As this is a post in a small staff team, you are expected to offer flexibility as we may reasonably require you to support other tasks from time to time.

Person Specification

	Criteria	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge and experience	1. Experience of designing and delivering rigorous research and evaluation, using quantitative and qualitative methods.	E
	2. Relevant degree or equivalent working experience. Prior work experience in the voluntary/ community sector, community development, grant giving or in social policy.	E
	3. Experience of using software packages for research, evaluation and data management.	D
	4. Contract management experience.	E
	5. Good IT skills with a good working knowledge of all Microsoft packages.	E
Skills and abilities	6. Exceptional writing skills, able to write clearly and accessibly even when dealing with complex matters.	E
	7. Proven skills in qualitative and quantitative research.	E
	8. Able to work flexibly and respond quickly to changing demands.	E
	9. Able to look at problems differently, brings creativity in suggesting new ways of working.	D
	10. Attention to detail.	E
Personal attributes	11. A team player, open to learning and supporting others.	E

Person Specification

12. Confident and approachable, gives professional advice and is accountable for that advice.	E
13. Cares about quality of work, takes pride.	E
14. Can work with autonomy and is used to using initiative.	E
15. Able to rely upon own judgement and knows when to seek further assistance.	E
16. Has a 'can-do' and proactive approach to service delivery, willing to go the extra mile.	E
17. Able to deal with multiple projects and determine priorities.	E
18. Commitment to equality and diversity.	E
19. Willing to work occasional evenings and weekends. Travel as required.	E

Principal terms and conditions

Salary

- Annual salary for the role is between £34,000 - £39,500. Other staff benefits include excellent development opportunities, time off for volunteering (two days per annum), interest-free travel season ticket loan and an additional 3 days leave for use between Christmas and New Year.

Pensions

- There is a salary exchange pension plan, with an employer contribution of 10%.

Hours

- The full-time hours of work for this post are 36 hours based around usual business hours. However, given the work of the organisation and the nature of the post, some flexibility will be necessary, including occasional evenings and weekend work. Some travel to Big Local areas will also be necessary from time to time.

Holidays

- 25 days' annual leave plus public holidays. Annual leave increases by one day per year, up to a maximum of 30 days after two years' service. Three additional days are also given for office closure between Christmas and New Year.

Probation

- This is a fixed-term post subject to the successful completion of a two month probationary period. During this time your performance will be reviewed. At the end of the period, you will either be confirmed in post, or in the case of unsatisfactory performance your employment will be terminated.

Notice

- During the probationary period, notice is one month on either side. After satisfactory completion of the probationary period, this will be extended to two months' notice on either side.

Location of post

- This post could be based at our office at Borough, London or from home. Please specify your preference in your application. At present we are working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will be trialling a hybrid working policy very shortly which will apply to office-based roles, more information on this can be shared at your interview.