

Researcher, compendium project 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 Monday, 1st November 2021.

All applications must be received by 12 midday on Wednesday 20th 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 **RESEARCHER** in the subject line reduces the chances of your email going into spam.

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 compendium project researcher will be joining the research team 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.

Research at Local Trust

Big Local Compendium

The researcher will be working on an exciting new project: the Big Local compendium.

The compendium project is a new initiative that will sit within the research team but work with all teams in the organisation to deliver its ambition of drawing together a clear and accurate story of the Big Local programme and each of the Big Local areas.

The Big Local compendium will be a collection of data sources drawn together to tell the story and clearly set out the learning of community-led change in Big Local: how it came about and how it was supported across the programme and at individual Big Local area level. All this will be pulled together in a website of information about the work and achievements of the Big Local programme and individual Big Local areas. The compendium will begin building now and will continue to be populated through to the end of the programme.

The project will help to achieve multiple goals, for Local Trust, for Big Local partnerships and for our other stakeholders.

For Local Trust:

- Build understanding of the Big Local approach
- Articulate how community-led change has happened across the programme and in 150 unique places;
- Provide a resource to evidence of the Big Local model and how it generates power in communities;
- Create a complementary path to Local Trust's main website where research, practice and knowledge can be explored;
- Plan for the retention of data on Big Local for future generations of policy-makers, funders and practitioners.

For Big Local partnerships:

- Support partnerships to reflect on community-led change, their journey, achievements and legacy;
- Create a resource that partnerships can learn from and draw on, for example with funding bids.

And for other stakeholders:

- Create a resource that policy-makers, funders and practitioners can draw on to learn about community-led change;
- As Big Local comes to an end, future-proof access to the data.

In meeting these objectives, there are a number of principles that the Big Local Compendium should align with.

- *Meet important timelines.* Some Big Local partnerships are already close to spending out, and although we anticipate being able to keep many of the people involved connected with the Big Local programme in some way, it is critical that the Compendium is in place before this happens so that a comprehensive picture of the whole programme can be presented.

Research at Local Trust

- *Consider Big Local partnership priorities and bandwidth.* Big Local is a resident-led programme and this project should also be as resident-led as possible, shaped in large part by what Big Local partnership members feel is important and want to share balanced with Local Trust's need to showcase the work of the programme and individual areas. Time from Big Local partnership members should be offered on their own terms.
- *Be consistent and comparable across different Big Local partnerships.* The compendium should be easy to access and navigate, and structured so that the same sort of data is presented in the same way across all 150 Big Local areas.
- *Be dynamic, flexible and scalable.* The initial build should be a small-scale version which we can learn from and improve, and should be capable of scaling up to the whole programme and supporting new features and ideas as the priorities of the programme and Local Trust evolve.
- *Be designed for the long term.* Although Big Local and Local Trust will cease to exist in 2026/7, the Compendium should be designed to continue well beyond that with minimal need for support or investment.
- *Consider the interests and goals of external stakeholders.* Assumptions about the needs and interests of external stakeholders should be tested and the project should evolve to respond to changing objectives.
- *Connect and correspond with wider research conducted by Local Trust and others.* Local Trust commissions and delivers a wide range of research that will be useful and relevant for the Compendium, and this should provide a great resource.
- *Complement and extend Local Trust's other channels:* The Compendium will need to be designed with a user journey in mind that encompasses Local Trust's main website to avoid duplication, confusion and competition, and succeed it after 2026.

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 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.

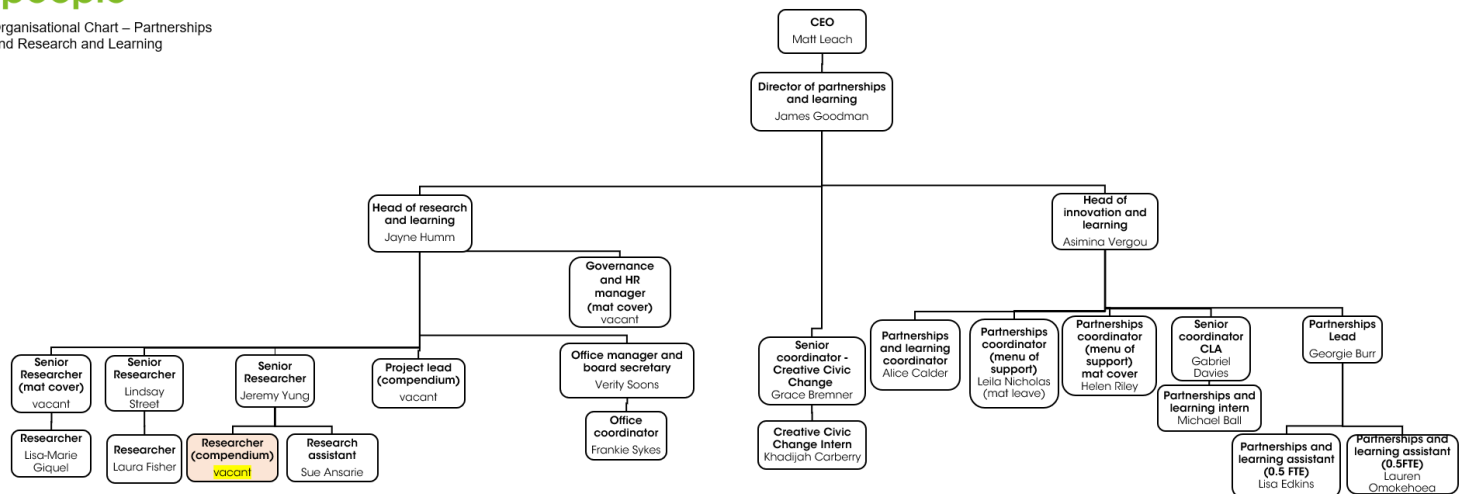
This post is in the highlighted box



Organisation chart – September 2021

Local Trust trusting local people

Organisational Chart – Partnerships
and Research and Learning



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	Researcher, compendium project
Accountable to	Senior researcher (compendium project lead when recruited)
Responsible for	Interns/temps as required
Term:	Permanent – full time

Purpose of the role

The researcher designs, collects and collates qualitative and quantitative data to populate the compendium project website. To support the sharing and dissemination of learning arising from research and evaluation to a diverse range of audiences.

Job description (key duties)

1. Draw together and collect data on the Big Local programme and the work of each of the 150 areas to present on a website.
2. Build a thorough understanding of Big Local partnerships' perspectives and aspirations, liaising closely with Big Local partnerships as necessary
3. Build the capacity of Big Local partnerships' thinking and planning on legacy
4. Design and deliver robust and timely direct research, that evaluates and identifies the learning from the Big Local programme and individual areas.
5. 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.
6. Ensure that the gathering of evaluation data and the research uses valid and robust qualitative and quantitative methodology.
7. Manage contracts with commissioned researchers and research organisations.
8. Produce user-friendly and accessible reports, summaries and blogs presenting findings in suitable formats.
9. Support a close working relationship with other teams across the organisation to help integrate learning across Local Trust.
10. Deliver or manage training in self-evaluation and research as needed.
11. In line with our values, maintain an external profile using blogging, speaking events, social media etc. ensure an on-going interest in the learning from Big Local areas.
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.

Job description

It is envisaged that the postholder will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Establish, agree and deliver a comprehensive workplan plan with timeline, key milestones and deliverables reporting regularly to the head of research and learning on progress
- Immerse in understanding of community-led change and the Big Local programme in particular
- Liaise with consultants recruited to set up the compendium project including exploring the best ways of collecting and presenting data and assisting with website user journeys
- Develop and pilot a range of ways to collect data from Big local areas and help them to articulate their stories
- Work with Big Local partnerships to improve how they think about and articulate their legacy
- Draw together data we collect for management, comms and research purposes, combine with data collected from areas to produce accurate, meaningful learning about community-led change
- Work with the senior researcher and consultants to assess the gaps in data available and creatively explore ways of filling these
- Work with the senior researcher, consultants and Local Trust teams to ensure that internal systems capture relevant data and can support the compendium.
- Work with the senior researcher and consultants to curate ongoing relevant learning from programme-based research and ensure that it is reflected in the compendium.
- Work on other research conducted by Local trust, as required.

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. Good writing skills, able to write clearly and accessibly even when dealing with complex matters. Good communication skills, able to engage and enthuse others.	E
	7. Proven skills in qualitative and quantitative analysis.	E
	8. Able to work flexibly and respond quickly to changing demands.	D
	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
	12. Cares about quality of work, takes pride.	E

Person specification

13. Can work with autonomy and is used to using initiative.	E
14. Able to rely upon own judgement and knows when to seek further assistance.	E
15. Has a 'can-do' and proactive approach to service delivery, willing to go the extra mile.	E
16. Able to deal with multiple projects and determine priorities.	E
17. Commitment to equality and diversity.	E
18. Willing to work occasional evenings and weekends. Travel as required.	E

Principal terms and conditions

Salary

- Annual salary for the role is between £28,000 to £32,000, depending upon experience. Other staff benefits include excellent development opportunities, time off for volunteering (two days per annum) and interest-free travel season ticket loan.

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 per week, 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 permanent post subject to the successful completion of a three-month probationary period. During this time your performance will be reviewed. At the end of the period, you will either be confirmed in post, the probationary period extended (up to 12 months in total) 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 is based at our office at Borough, London. 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.