

London Youth Defining Success: Research Placement

Project brief

Overview

Organisation: Project Oracle and a youth organisation

Role: Research Placement

Location: London

Start Date: January/February 2017

Duration and time: Around 15v 20 days in total on a flexible basis until May 2017¹

Application deadline: 17.00 on Monday 21 November 2016

Number of positions: 9v 10

This opportunity can be used as the basis for an academic dissertation, a credited university project or as an extra-curricular experience.

Project Oracle

[Project Oracle](#) is a children and youth evidence hub which aims to improve chances for children and young people by increasing the quality of evidence in the sector. It seeks to achieve this by supporting voluntary and public sector services, funders and commissioners and academics who work in the children and youth sector to gather, use and share evidence in order to improve service delivery. We do this by:

- building a growing resource of independently assessed and evaluated projects
- building capacity by supporting organisations and commissioners to develop the evidence base for their youth programmes

This is done through alignment of project evaluations with our [Standards of Evidence](#). Our aim is to move youth providers through the Standards by supporting them to gather better evidence. Research Placements are one of the ways Project Oracle supports organisations to build their evidence base and move through the Standards of Evidence. Project Oracle is organising these Research Placements for 10 youth organisations in London, all of which are members of [London Youth](#).

London Youth

London Youth is a network of diverse community youth organisations serving young people of all backgrounds right across the capital. They support young people to be the best that they can be

¹ Researchers can support more than one organisation if they would like to. Please make this preference clear on your application form.

through delivering a diverse range of programmes with their members and through their two residential centres.

Defining Success is a programme of support and training that London Youth are providing to 10 youth organisations in 2016-17, to support them explore and demonstrate their impact, and to become validated at Project Oracle Standard 1. Research placements will support these 10 youth organisations as part of the Defining Success programme.

Placement brief

The placement will involve the following activities and deliverables:

- Supporting the development of a project or organisational Theory of Change, which may include one or more of the following:
 - Reviewing programme documentation and data
 - Facilitating or participating in workshops
 - Conducting qualitative research with practitioners and/or participants
 - Conducting a literature review

- Supporting the development of a project evaluation plan, which may include one or more of the following:
 - Identifying and agreeing an evaluation question and evaluation aim(s)
 - Scoping and agreeing the most appropriate evaluation design
 - Developing a detailed evaluation plan, including what will be measured by whom and when
 - Identifying and/or developing appropriate evaluation and impact tools to be used for the evaluation
 - Ensuring the evaluation plan is ethical and that appropriate measures have been taken in this regard

It is also possible that, depending on the needs of the particular organisation and student, the researcher may be able to support the organisation to develop:

- A database for capturing and storing impact data

Benefits to the researcher

There are a range of benefits to researchers who complete one of these Research Placements, including:

- Gaining valuable real-world research, consultancy and evaluation **experience** in the youth sector
- Building **relationships and networks** with leading organisations in the youth sector and evidence community in London

- Access to **free** research, evaluation and consultancy **training** and support, provided by Project Oracle
- The possibility of using the opportunity as the basis for a **credited university dissertation** or project

Person specification

We are looking for someone who has the following experience and skills:

Essential	Desirable
Undergraduate, Masters or PhD student in a social science or related discipline	Courses covering topics related to children and young people
Social research methods experience and skills	Evaluation methodologies, especially impact evaluation Conducting qualitative research Research tool development
Conducting literature reviews and/or summaries of evidence of 'what works'	Experience or knowledge of conducting rapid evidence assessments
Developing research questions and/or aims	Developing evaluation questions and/or aims
Planning research to answer specific questions/aims	Planning evaluations to answer specific questions/aims

Successful applicants will also be:

- Good at working with others and as part of a team
- Passionate about social change and improving outcomes for children and young people
- An excellent communicator in writing and in person
- A methodical problem-solver and analytic thinker
- A flexible, coachable, enthusiastic, collaborative and positive team player
- Highly organised and able to manage competing priorities
- Highly reliable and delivery focused

Key dates

- Interviews will be held w/c 14th and w/c 21st November. Please state on your cover letter if you have a preference.
- Training will take place on either the 19th or 24th January 2017. Please state on your cover letter if you have a preference or are unable to attend neither date.
- London Youth Defining Success evaluation workshops will take place on the 8th February and 9th March

To apply

Please submit your CV and cover letter (not more than 500 words) clearly outlining how you meet the criteria to: esrcdtc@admin.cam.ac.uk by **noon on Monday 31 October**. Please state the following reference in your cover letter: London Youth Defining Success Research Placement.

If you have a preference, please state your first, second and third preference host youth organisation in your covering letter. A full list of all host youth organisations can be seen below.

Appendix 1

Below is a list of the youth organisations which will be hosting a Researcher. As above, if you have a preferred youth organisation(s), please state this on your cover letter.

Organisation name	Organisation Location	About the organisation
Watford FC Community Sports and Education Trust	Watford, London	Watford FC's Community Sports and Education Trust offers community sports and educational activities linked to Watford FC. The trust runs over 30 different projects engaging with over 158,000 participants annually. Each project focuses on one of the five key areas: Sport Participation, Social Inclusion, Health, Education and Community Facilities and is designed alongside our overarching aim to 'make a positive difference for all through sport and learning'. The Researcher will work on the Premier League Kicks youth club.
Enterprise LDN - Landsdowne	Lambeth, London	This project addresses the need and demand of young people seeking to transform their lives through gaining employment. It supports young people aged between 11 and 19, and Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) up to the age of 25. By delivering exciting and innovative accredited and non-accredited activity, Enterprise Un-Ltd encourages young people to make positive choices about their future, contributing to their local communities and preparing them for working life.
Lewisham Young Women's Resource Project	Lewisham, London	Lewisham Young Women's Resource Project is a Girls only organisation. It was established in 1986 by Youth Aid, to readdress the gender imbalance in youth work in Lewisham. It was originally set up to provide a safe environment for young women. The Researcher will work on the Young Women's Education project.
Coram's Fields	Central London, near Russell Square	Coram's Fields is a unique seven acre playground and park for children and young people living in or visiting London. It includes a Youth Centre, Children's Centre, Community Nursery, Sports Programme, a city farm and a cafe which is open from March until October. The Researcher will support the evaluation of open access youth and sports provision.
Fitzrovia Youth in Action		Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA) is a youth action charity that empowers children and young people to overcome the barriers they face, fulfil their potential and create positive change in their local community. Every year FYA brings together and supports hundreds of disadvantaged children and young people in tackling the issues that matter to them in the community they care about. They take a "youth action" approach, ensuring children and

Organisation name	Organisation Location	About the organisation
		young people are actively involved in each stage of our activities. Recent activities led by children and young people have addressed community cohesion, conflict, and substance misuse.
Action West London	Acton, London	<p>Action West London's Mission is 'Changing Lives through Employment, Education, and Enterprise'. The Researcher will work on the project 'GOLDD', Getting Over Learning Difficulties & Disabilities.</p> <p>The programme is aimed at 16-24 year olds who are NEETs (not in employment, education or training) with Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD). The programme will be providing 1-2-1 support, advice and guidance to achieve further education or support to find employment through traineeships or apprenticeships.</p>
Young Roots	Croydon, London	Young Roots works in London, and in partnership with community-based organisations in Lebanon and Nepal, to provide support and activities for young refugees and asylum seekers. Their mission is to improve the wellbeing and life chances of young refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and overseas. The Researcher will support the evaluation of the casework service which supports young asylum seekers and refugees on a one to one basis.
Copenhagen Youth Project	Central London, near King's Cross	CYP is a unique youth project working in partnership with young people aged between 7 - 25 to create and sustain a positive culture that inspires children and young people to plan, initiate and lead their own projects. Through Sports, Arts, Mentoring and Culture, CYP engage and progress children and young people providing education, training and support, helping to raise achievement and levels of aspiration.