

Research Lead

We're looking for a Research Lead to help shape and deliver system-changing research at the Centre for Inclusive Money. Working closely with colleagues and partners, you'll take projects from ideas to delivery to insights, turn what we learn into compelling outputs, and be a confident voice for Inclusive Money when we share our work with the world.

Location	Canary Wharf, London
Workplace	On-site, Hybrid
Employment	Full-time, Part-time (at least 0.8 FTE) ; 12 month Fixed Term Contract

About the role

The Centre for Inclusive Money is recruiting a thoughtful, collaborative Research Lead who combines broad technical research expertise with the ability to project manage complex research projects. The Research Lead will work closely with an Associate Director (who will act as the overall Project Lead), designing and delivering the research while coordinating partners, resources and different strands of work. You'll be focussed on the smooth-running of projects and maximising impact from the work. You'll be as comfortable getting into the detail as stepping back to see what the evidence means. You'll have the technical and relational skills to drive projects forward, managing different moving parts and ensuring milestones are met. You'll bring curiosity, sound judgment and a genuine commitment to research that supports financial security and delivers real-world impact for people in low- and moderate-income households across the UK.

Objectives of this role

- Owns research delivery and keeps complex projects moving, bringing together people, partners, budgets and moving parts to hit milestones, manage risks and deliver on time and within budget.
- Leads rigorous, thoughtful research from design to delivery, bringing in the right expertise,
- Works with the Associate Director project lead and wider Inclusive Money team to turn research into insight and impact, joining the dots across the evidence and communicating what matters through compelling reports, presentations and other formats that can influence market and policy action.
- Contributes to building strong teams and trusted relationships, supporting and developing more junior colleagues, working well with partners and stakeholders, and contributing actively across the wider research team and Inclusive Money.

Responsibilities

As Research Lead at The Centre for Inclusive Money, you'll:

- Own the day-to-day delivery of one or more Inclusive Money projects, bringing together partners, resources and activities to keep things moving. You'll have the autonomy to make things happen, while working closely with an Associate Director on risks, dependencies and bigger decisions.
- Shape the research and trial approaches, designing methodologies, making sure the research plan works in practice, and leading the analysis that follows.
- Keep us on track with our commitments to funders, making sure any changes to the project are agreed, working with the Inclusive Money external partnerships team.
- Bring suppliers and collaborators on board, working with our operations team to get the right agreements and processes in place, then build strong relationships that keep the work moving.
- Work closely with an Associate Director to get the right people – both experts by experience and experts by profession – around the table, using their expertise and perspectives to shape our thinking about issues and solutions, and find ways for the research to have real-world impact.
- Structure and write a range of different outputs or parts of outputs including research reports, short papers, articles, and industry and policy briefings, working closely with the Associate Director, senior leaders and comms colleagues.
- Take our research out into the world, representing Inclusive Money and talking confidently about our work and what we've learned.
- Likely to line manage and support the professional development of one or more Inclusive Money Research Managers or Researcher.
- Overseeing research by different researchers across internal and external teams.
- Pitch in across Inclusive Money, sharing your research expertise and organisational skills where they can add most value. You'll act as a subject matter expert and adviser on one or more areas of research expertise on other teams' research projects.

Required skills and qualifications

Research leadership and delivery

- You know how to turn complex questions into thoughtful mixed-method research, bringing in people whose voices are often less heard, and working collaboratively to innovate and find approaches that work.
- You take seriously the responsibility that comes with involving people in research. You understand research ethics, have established data sharing partnerships, understand how to stay compliant with data protection protocols, and have experience working thoughtfully with marginalised or vulnerable participants.
- You're comfortable building research collaborations with external partners, balancing their commercial realities with what the research needs to be robust and credible.
- You're comfortable diving into topics you don't know yet, asking the right questions and quickly building enough knowledge to do great work.

Analysis, synthesis and insight

- You can bring together complex data and insights from different kinds of research, make sense of what they're telling us, and understand what the findings mean in the wider social, market and policy context.

Communication, influencing & stakeholder management

- You understand the importance of taking research out into the world. You effectively turn findings into clear, high-quality insights and publications, and you can communicate what we've learned in a way that progresses our systems-change ambitions with audiences ranging from specialists to people who are new to the topic.
- You know how to bring people with you, building strong relationships and communicating clearly with people who bring different perspectives and priorities.

Project and people management

- You know how to keep a complex research project on track, coordinating different strands of work, adapting when things change and making decisions about what matters most.
- You've line managed people before, or are ready to develop in this area.
- You're a proficient user of relevant Microsoft and other applications, and able to learn new platforms and IT systems quickly.

Essential technical skills

Mixed methods research

- You're a confident researcher with a broad toolkit, and you're comfortable leading work even when it takes you beyond your own specialist expertise. Our research projects usually include a combination of field trials and experiments, data analysis, literature and landscape reviews, qualitative research and human-centred innovation methods.
- You can turn a research question into a well-designed research project, and lead the analysis to understand what you've learned. You are used to working with data from a range of sources.
- You know what qualitative research approaches are right for different kinds of questions, and have lots of experience applying them in different contexts. You are generally happy cracking on with design, and have the skills to support or even help colleagues improve their skills in questionnaire and discussion guide writing, moderating focus groups and interviews.

Desirable skills

At least one of the following:

- Relevant subject knowledge and research experience: personal and household finance, employment and livelihoods, financial services, public policy development.
- Experience of product and service innovation, particularly in financial services and/or employee benefits.
- Experience of translating research insight into market and policy innovation for example through co-creation approaches.
- Familiarity working with academic research teams.

Personal attributes

- A relevant Masters or PHD and/or relevant professional research experience.

- Flexible, proactive and happy to get stuck in wherever needed.
- Takes ownership, uses initiative and cares about doing a great job.
- Curious, reflective and always looking to learn and improve how things are done.
- Detail-minded with a strong instinct for when to zoom out.
- Rigour in following established processes and compliance with regulation and policies.
- The ability to exercise judgement, confidentiality and discretion.
- A generous team player who is inclusive and collaborative, with a real commitment to the team and its culture.
- A strong commitment to the issues Inclusive Money works to solve.

Relevant relationships

Inclusive Money is a collaborative team. Good work here is rarely done alone. It comes from bringing together different skills and perspectives across the team, as well as working closely with partners outside it. External collaboration matters, and so does working closely across the team. It's central to delivering work we're proud of and living our values. The Research Lead's role involves significant internal collaboration, with a few key relationships:

- This role will report to and work closely with an Associate Director of Research and Innovation.
- It will involve managing, supporting and working closely with other members of the Inclusive Money team.
- The Research Lead will build trusted relationships with the people who make our work happen, from operations colleagues across Nest to research and delivery partners, funders and advisory groups.

About the Centre for Inclusive Money at Nest

Inclusive Money is a public-benefit research and innovation centre set up by Nest Corporation in 2016 to find ways to support low- and moderate-income workers to be financially secure, both today and into retirement. We conduct rigorous, cutting-edge research, working collaboratively with industry and academic partners to understand the needs and behaviours of the new generation of savers created by the UK's pensions auto enrolment system.

We also consider how self-employed workers and others at risk of missing out on pension saving can be brought in. We use our data-driven insights into this wide range of financial challenges to identify and test practical, real-world solutions.

Together our team of around 20 delivers an ambitious programme of research, publications and events, sharing best practice, both nationally and abroad. The team is passionate about the work we do and proud of what we are achieving. We are innovative thinkers, not afraid to challenge the status quo. We work flexibly, creatively and collaboratively. We are committed to supporting each other to learn and develop.

Our findings are shared widely and freely to help inform industry and policymakers so that people around the world can benefit from our work. We amplify our learnings and spark debate through our publications and digital media and by convening events that bring together industry, academics and policymakers.

The depth and breadth of our research garners attention. Our work is regularly covered by national media and financial trade outlets.

Whilst Inclusive Money is a business unit of Nest Corporation, we are responsible for raising our own operating budget through sponsorships, grants and in-kind support from organisations with similar research interests, goals and values.

By working in partnership with industry, academics, innovators and policymakers, and sharing our research widely and freely, we're generating insights that could improve the retirement outcomes of millions of savers worldwide. With lots of exciting projects ongoing and in the pipeline, and plans to expand our reach significantly, this is an exciting time to join Inclusive Money.

The principles that guide everything we do

Ambitious for impact

We don't think 'interesting' goes far enough. We always ask, 'so what?' and 'what now?' We're up for a big challenge and we don't give up easily. We do things that have never been done before. We don't wait for perfect – we make a start where we can and adapt when we need to. We understand that true impact usually takes time and iteration.

Inclusively human-centred

We listen hard to lived experience. We want to design to meet people where they are. Our work is grounded in real-life human insight – people's needs, behaviours and contexts – rather than theoretical models. We strive to be inclusive and position-aware, and to work against inequity. We think about power balance and accessibility in how we convene and communicate.

Real-world solutions focussed

We know a good idea is one that's been tested robustly and shown to really work. We test for effectiveness: does it support low- and moderate-income households' financial resilience and security? And we test for viability: is it deliverable and scalable from a policy and/or market perspective? We use our evidence to drive system-wide adoption of proven solutions that could make a big difference.

Rigorous, curious and creative

We're open-minded and inquisitive. We ask lots of questions and we'll dig behind the first answers. We combine different methods and approaches to see a problem from different angles. We set a high bar for our research. We're transparent about methods, learnings and limitations. We imagine how things could be different and explore 'what if...?' We will stand up boldly for what the evidence tells us, and we will scrutinise bravely when assertions are based on assumptions rather than facts.

Proactively collaborative

We strongly believe that we can't solve tricky problems on our own. We work across boundaries and silos to build communities of action with growing momentum. We don't have big egos – we prefer to all muck in together. We identify, try to understand and work with all the actors in the ecosystem surrounding low- and moderate-income household money management. We treat each other with care and respect. We build strong, purposeful teams.