

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Research Portfolio Lead	Department	Ada Lovelace Institute
Job holder	New post	Reports to	Associate Director, Public Participation & Research Practice
Job type	Permanent contract. 0.6 - 0.8 FTE	Date created	November 2025
Job aim	To ensure the Ada Lovelace Institute’s research is conducted with integrity, within a culture of care and support, by: - applying research management experience to support high-quality evidence building and a critical, rigorous and relational approach to research culture – to ensure Ada maintains standards and supports its mission of making data and AI work for people and society. - leading on guiding research projects and supporting researchers through the Research Pathway - working collaboratively to support research colleagues to overcome barriers and maximise the quality and impact of the work - contributing to or leading cross-cutting work that supports research practice and culture at Ada, including helping to design and deliver events and guidance, training programmes, or resources.		
Resources	The Research Portfolio Lead will work as part of the Public Participation & Research Practice team (PP&RP), and in close collaboration with Operations & Strategic Development, Communications and the other research directorates. Membership of the Research Pathway Working Group (RPWG), with Communications and Operations & Strategic Development teams. Administrative support will be provided by a part-time Research Assistant and through collaborative working with the Operations and Communications teams.		
Responsibilities (including but not limited to):			
1. Project management of research			
	▪ Work with Operations and Communications colleagues to co-develop a system to triage, manage and monitor projects through the Research Pathway, ensuring organisational oversight and quality assurance is present at every stage, including co-developing relevant documentation as needed. ▪ Work with SLT and PP&RP colleagues to ensure requirements of agreed project sign-off for each project are clearly defined, communicated to research leads and actioned through scoping, research design and delivery phases of the Research Pathway. ▪ Ensure effective management of progress where needed to maximise the quality and impact of each research project, by supporting researchers with identification and management of risks, provision of timely advice and coordination of input from colleagues, connecting researchers to additional support where required and escalating issues as appropriate.		

	▪ Work with Operations and Communications colleagues to ensure that documentation is reviewed, updated and socialised by researchers and research leads in line with the Research Pathway milestones, including e.g. project proposals, communication plans. ▪ Support researchers with external peer review, including identifying potential peer reviewers and ensuring reviews take place in a timely fashion. ▪ Prepare monthly summaries of project progress for SLT & RPWG, working with research leads, Operations and Communications.
2. Development of the Research Pathway	
	▪ Put processes in place to understand colleagues' experiences at every stage of the Research Pathway and feed back into future developments. ▪ Contribute to the ongoing development of Ada's ethics approval processes, ensuring alignment with broader Nuffield Foundation-wide requirements (Ada's parent organisation and other research centres). ▪ Contribute to the development of a reflective 'monitoring, evaluation and learning' culture, working with Communications and Operations colleagues to collect evidence of impact, carry out end-of-project retrospectives, organise regular whole-team retrospectives to share learnings and deliver improvements to the Research Pathway. ▪ Work with Communications and Operations colleagues to develop effective communication of the Research Pathway, including regular updates about new processes and features.
3. Development of research culture	
	▪ Working with the PP&RP Lead, lead the continuing development of ethical and accountable research practices and processes that centre equity and inclusion. ▪ Build relationships with all colleagues across Ada's directorates, to continue to develop a constructive and collaborative research culture. ▪ Support PP&RP to develop and deliver improvements and updates to research culture, including regular assessments of researcher skills, resources and guidance, and planning research culture-building activities. ▪ Manage and ensure the timely delivery of annual research integrity and impact audits. ▪ Work and coordinate with the Research Practice, Operations and Communications teams as well as Nuffield HR, to design and deliver training and research culture-building activities to support the development of a range of research methods and research design across the organisation.
4. Activities to maximise Ada's reflective monitoring, evaluation and learning practices.	
	▪ Scope and develop new initiatives and formative projects emerging from the Research Practice Working Group, collaborating with other colleagues as required. ▪ Develop the communication of impact and theory of change methods, to ensure they are available across the organisation.

	Work with Operations and Communications colleagues in planning, organisation and delivery of events to ensure all team members are equipped to contribute to the strategic positioning, development, delivery and communication of research.
5. Other	
	The above list of key responsibilities (and associated activities) is not exhaustive. It may be necessary to carry out other work within the scope of the role, as reasonably requested.

Person specification	Essential, Desirable, or Highly Desirable
Experience	
Experience leading the management of multiple projects, programmes or a research portfolio from inception to evaluation in a comparable context, such as public research organisations, charities, think tanks, universities, libraries archives or museums, public sector or civil service	E
Experience leading the management of research design and methods in a comparable context, which could include health or healthcare, economics, sociology, applied statistics, covering some quantitative and / or qualitative research techniques	E
Experience of leading or contributing to change programmes aimed at embedding principles and processes into the work of an organisation, for example research integrity, evaluation, or equity and inclusion	E
Experience of critically appraising research objectives, methods, design and proposed outcomes	E
Experience of managing a budget	E
Experience of working in one-to-one mentoring, peer-support or coaching roles within an organisational context	E
Experience of designing, leading and managing training in research methods and design, or comparable areas	D
Experience of writing or editing and publishing research-based outputs	D
Experience of drawing policy and practice implications from research findings	D
Experience of running workshops/setting up events	D

Knowledge and skills	
An excellent understanding of the design, development and management of research projects, with good understanding of research design and methods	E
A good understanding of developing and maintaining research cultures or research production in science, data science, social science, and/or arts and humanities research areas	E
A good understanding of some of the following: theory of change; monitoring, evaluation and learning practices; or impact frameworks	
A breadth of interest across Ada's core areas of work in the societal impacts of AI, data and technology, including public sector, policy, industry and public participation	E
Strong analytical skills, including understanding research design strengths and weaknesses and analytic use of evidence in framing a debate, an developing or assessing approaches to impact	E
Excellent verbal and written communication skills, and the ability to write clearly and accurately for different audiences	E
Personal Qualities	
Highly organised, with strong time and project management skills	E
A warm, empathetic and relational approach to developing collaborative relationships	E
A diplomatic and constructive approach to giving and receiving feedback	E
Ability to work both independently and flexibly, and as part of a team	E
The ability to solve problems, and to investigate, initiate and evaluate solutions	E
Confidence to work with autonomy and use initiative	E
Enthusiasm for embedding research integrity and EDI principles into your work	E