

Come and join our team!

Junior Research Associate

Full-time role (though we're open to part-time options)
£25,750-31,500 FTE depending on experience

We are looking for a new Junior Research Associate to join our team

We want to hear from people who have a passion for the education/youth sector and a commitment to improving young people's lives.

We are particularly interested in recruiting people who have experience designing and/or conducting research projects, and combine this with a desire to support organisations in the education and youth sector. If you have experience working directly alongside young people in youth settings this would also be a bonus.

We foster an inclusive culture at CfEY and are committed to building a diverse team. Therefore, we particularly welcome applications from people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, neurodivergent people, and people that have taken non-traditional routes to get where they are today.

About us

The Centre for Education and Youth (CfEY) is a 'think and action-tank'. We believe society should ensure all children and young people receive the support they need to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood. We provide the evidence and support policy makers and practitioners need to support young people.

We use our timely and rigorous research to get under the skin of issues affecting young people in order to shape the public debate, advise the sector and campaign on topical issues. We also have a particular interest in issues affecting marginalised young people. We research, write and publish in order to influence policy makers, those working in the sector and the public as a whole.

Our approach is special because...

1. We **bridge different realms** – we work with schools and the wider youth sector and our projects bridge policy, practice and academia
2. We are '**constructively critical**'. We avoid unhelpful cynicism, focus on how things could be better and are analytical and intellectually rigorous. We always seek pragmatic ways of helping people take action grounded in evidence and experience
3. We look **underneath the surface**, speaking to young people and practitioners in order to grapple with complexity and understand what's really going on
4. We do not rely on a set catalogue of solutions. Different approaches and strategies are appropriate in different situations and settings. It is our job to have the **emotional and intellectual competence** to identify what will work where

5. There is almost always **a simple way of doing things**. Our job is to find it. We steer clear of time-consuming and gimmicky ways of doing things
6. We are **a social enterprise**. We are guided in everything we do by our view of society's responsibility as well as being committed to delivering high quality projects for our clients. Income generation and social impact are mutually reinforcing for us
7. We are **approachable and personable**. We interact in a friendly and informal manner. Professionalism is not about pretension
8. We are committed to **social justice** and are acutely aware of the interaction between power imbalances and inequality. Our work exists to ensure society provides the support all children and young people need in order to make a fulfilling transition to adulthood.

About you

We get that life is complicated. If you've taken an unusual, less travelled path to get to where you are now then get in touch. We're keen to hear from you whether or not you have a university degree and years of experience.

Essential

Personality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You are 100% committed to, and passionate about, improving children and young people's life chances. ● You live and breathe our mission and approach. You are determined to build on CfEY's success. ● You are pragmatic and creative in balancing the need for practicality and rigour in research and policy ● You build rapport quickly and are energetic and enterprising. Seeing a problem invariably leads you to spot a solution. You are comfortable mixing the social and the professional. ● You are keen to embrace the challenge of working in an organisation that generates its income by delivering work that meets clients' needs. ● You take a collaborative but ambitious and driven approach. ● You are keen to take on new challenges and have ideas which you follow through independently.
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You know how to design research methodologies to answer research questions or measure impact. ● You have experience of quantitative and/or qualitative research methods. ● You are familiar with our previous published work.
Skills and competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You write extremely well. You adapt your style to suit different genres including media (traditional and social), blogs, impact, academic and policy reports. ● You are organised, and can support colleagues to manage projects efficiently.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are competent in Excel and can use it to analyse data and produce data visualisations. • You are comfortable making presentations and speaking to unfamiliar audiences. • You work flexibly and efficiently. You can work from different places and manage your time creatively, balancing periods of intense work with quieter periods. You are self-motivated and don't need to be told what to do. • You can think strategically to plan how organisations can meet their goals.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have designed or delivered research projects, ideally (but not necessarily) on topics related to education and youth.

Desirable

- You have an understanding of how England's education and/or youth system works, and you are well-informed about policies and trends in these sectors.
- You have direct experience working with young people.
- You have written project proposals or bids to secure funding.
- You have written research reports and/or impact reports.
- You have worked with the media (e.g. writing press releases, developing social media, communication campaigns).
- You hold a Masters or PhD (preferably ESRC accredited).
- You have an understanding of impact measurement and theory of change.

About the job

You will work closely with the rest of our team, contributing to the delivery of research, policy and organisational development projects for our clients. We plan to add one or two Junior Associates to our team in this round of recruitment.

This will involve:

- Lots of writing: reports as well as blogs and articles, both about our own research and other people's research.
- Carrying out impact measurement and supporting organisational development for our wide range of clients.
- Gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data.
- Getting up to speed with a range of sources quickly and synthesising them clearly.
- Building our networks and communicating with key contacts.
- Using a range of media to promote and disseminate our work.
- Attending events and meetings with key individuals in the sector.
- Building relationships and coming up with ideas that help us secure future projects and funding.
- Responding to tenders and writing project proposals and bids.
- Helping the team to explore new avenues for research, developing ideas for topic areas we are interested in and securing funding for them.

- Keeping abreast of developments in social research, including new methodologies, datasets, systems and software and helping the team to understand and deploy these on projects.
- Supporting the team to conduct high-quality, ethical research.
- Keeping up to date with the latest research findings and sharing these with the team.
- Developing partnerships with academics and other researchers.

We will expect you to:

- Pursue our vision and social mission and embody our ways of working.
- Work with us in an enjoyable and productive way, challenging and supporting the rest of the team and making working together fun.
- Work fast but flexibly, managing your own time and producing high-quality work.
- Have close, positive and friendly relationships with our clients and network by building rapport and understanding and responding to their needs.
- Create a niche for yourself as your role expands. This means developing your own interests, ideas and specialisms, and using these to further our social impact goals and generate income.
- Be part of our team by embracing our ethos, contributing to meetings, mucking in and having fun.
- After a couple of months learning the ropes of our project work, you will join one of our three team strands (Research, Policy or Engagement), which means that alongside project work, you'll develop and support the strategic aims of the organisation in one of those three areas. Which strand you join will be dependent on both our needs as a team and your interests and skills! If you have an interest in one of these strands in particular you can mention this in your cover letter, but you do not have to.

Working at CfEY:

- You can be located anywhere in England/Wales. Our office is located in Hackney, London and the team gathers there fortnightly on a Monday. Everyone spends at least one more day per fortnight in the office. The rest of the time you can decide when to come to the office, and when to work from home, although there will often be specific events and meetings to attend and these have an annoying habit of being concentrated in London. You will also have to conduct fieldwork which will involve travel across the country (expenses will be covered).
- You will be paid £25,750-31,500 (pro-rata). The exact salary will be agreed depending on your previous experience. We offer an employer contribution pension (following a three-month probation period) and 33 days holiday per year (including bank holidays).
- We will want to speak to at least two references and you will need to undergo an enhanced DBS check. Although we must ensure the safety of the children and young people we work with, we understand that people have different life experiences and come to the sector from different pathways. Please talk to us if you have concerns about a DBS check and we may still consider your application.
- Ideally, we would like someone who can start in January 2023, but please talk to us about when you might be able to start, if it's sooner or later than that.

The process

To support equal opportunities and minimise the risk of bias, we are asking candidates **NOT to include their name** in their CV and covering letter.

Please send your application to gemma@cfey.org. Gemma will anonymise your application documents before handing them on to the shortlisting team.

1) CV and letter

- Please send a **two-page CV tailored to this role** (including two referees who we can contact by phone) as well as a **one-page letter** explaining why you think you are suited to this job and why you'd like to work with us, by the end of the day on **Sunday 20th November**.

3) Interview

- We will inform you if you have been shortlisted by the end of the day on **Friday 25th November**.
- **Interviews will take place on Monday 5th December, in person at our office in Hackney, London**, as long as public health considerations allow. Please ensure that you are free on this date.
- The interview process will involve a group discussion with the CfEY team and all candidates between **11am-12pm**, followed by a break for lunch.
- We will then ask applicants to complete a written task and take part in one-to-one interviews between **12.30pm and 5.00pm**.
- Please ask us if you would like to see the interview questions in advance, but we do not expect you to bring scripted answers.
- Please talk to us about any access needs or support you might find useful.

4) References and DBS check

- We will inform candidates who have been successful at interview as soon as possible, before contacting referees.
- Appointments will be confirmed once we have received satisfactory references and DBS check.
- We would ideally like you to start in **January 2023**.