Community Research and Data Officer

Job Description and person specification

Role title: Community Research and Data Officer

Salary range: £33,000 - 36,000

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours per week)

Contract: Permanent.

Annual leave: 31 days (28 days + 3 days Christmas closure)

Location: London hybrid.

Reporting to: CEO.

About the Work Rights Centre

Work Rights Centre is a charity founded by migrants, and for migrants. Every day our multilingual team of advisers support people who struggle with socioeconomic disadvantage to stand up to unscrupulous employers, apply for jobs, access benefits, and secure their immigration status. Since our foundation in 2016 we have supported over 5,000 individuals, recovered over £200,000 in unpaid wages, and helped more than 750 EU citizens to secure their status in the UK after Brexit. We're just getting started.

Our frontline team addresses the most urgent aspects of socioeconomic disadvantage. But to tackle it in the long-term, we need to change systems. This is why we are looking for a dedicated colleague to join our team, and drive our policy and research work with grit and grace.

Our research work

The main aim of our research and advocacy work is to document and expose the causes of migrant workers' exploitation. This takes nuance. Exploitation does not have a singular cause, but intersects with immigration status security, welfare, and the accessibility of the justice system. We seek to engage with stakeholders across each one of these domains. First, by providing clear accounts of their role in migrants' precarity, and by offering recommendations for how to do better. Second, by pursuing these recommendations in bilateral and multilateral relationships.

Why community-based participatory research? As an organisation founded by migrants, and for migrants, we want our publications to be representative of the people we serve, and the issues they face. This is why we are looking for a candidate who has not only research expertise, but also an in-depth understanding of the realities of seeking justice as a migrant worker.

In the coming years, we will focus our efforts on documenting and exposing the risks of exploitation encountered by migrant workers under the employer-sponsorship regime. Specifically, we will examine the impact of macro factors, such as the structure of labour enforcement agencies, middle factors, such as the state of the legal advice sector, as well as micro, individual level factors.

Responsibilities

There are three main responsibilities in this position: leading on data collection with migrant communities, leading on the analysis of secondary migration data sources, and contributing to our research publications.

1. Data collection with migrant communities

As a community embedded researcher, we'd like you to lead on primary research with migrant communities. Working in partnership with our frontline team or independently, as needed, your goal is to open channels of communication, build trust, and obtain data that is robust and ethically sourced. In practice, you will:

- Build a profile of our migrant communities, using internal and external data sources;
- Map out relevant channels of communication;
- Engage with these channels, distributing information and building relationships;
- Prepare information sheets, consent forms, and other materials needed to build trust and ensure compliance with research ethics;
- Collect and analyse primary data. This might be through interviews, surveys, or participant observation;
- Coordinate with colleagues, volunteers, and other stakeholders as needed, to ensure access to participants.

2. Secondary analysis of migration data

We would also like you to lead on secondary data analysis. You will analyse data from our client management system (PowerApps), as well as from national statistics such as Home Office entry clearance data, or LFS data. We want to see that you can situate our clients' issues in the big picture, and that you can build a coherent narrative, as well as smart visuals. You will receive ample guidance from your colleagues and line manager. But we expect you to know the data space well, and to trust your analytical skills. In practice, we count on you to:

- Monitor internal and external statistical sources relevant to our migrant communities;
- Analyse and visually represent data, including internal data from our client management system, and external statistics from trusted sources;
- Produce accessible summaries of the data, sharing them with relevant stakeholders;
- Adjust the data schema in PowerApps and train team members as needed, to ensure it remains relevant to organisational needs.

3. Contribution to research publication and policy influencing

We regularly publish briefing notes, reports, or blog posts which document and expose migrant workers' exploitation. We'd like you to contribute to them. In practice, this will involve:

- Reviewing literature;
- Drafting, revising, and adequately referencing publications.
- Presenting research findings and policy recommendations.

Flexibility. There is a lot to learn, and to offer, at the Work Rights Centre. The charity has grown substantially since our foundation in 2016, both in terms of casework, policy influencing, and media interventions. This relies on our ability to remain agile. We trust you to be responsive to our changing needs, and to adapt your workload and undertake any other duties that may be reasonably required.

Person specifications

Qualifications

- Graduate degree in social sciences or a related discipline - preferred, but we'll consider candidates with extensive relevant professional experience.

Knowledge and experience

- Excellent knowledge of migration data sources.
- Good knowledge of the UK work-migration system and the employment justice space.
- Three years + of professional experience working in a research capacity.
- Significant experience of frontline advice or outreach with migrant worker communities.
- Experience of undertaking primary research, analysing data and writing up findings.
- Experience of publishing evidence-based policy recommendations.

Skills

- Excellent data analysis skills, you are as comfortable crunching quantitative data as you are analysing interview transcripts.
- Excellent written skills, you are clear, concise, and never lack a call to action.
- Strong presentation skills, you are comfortable talking to and adapting to different communication styles depending on the audience .
- Ability to deliver complex outputs, prioritising, and delivering in a timely fashion.
- Excellent IT skills, including Word and Excel.

Personal attributes

- Confident and resourceful, you can work to a high standard with minimal supervision.
- Enthusiastic and proactive you are able to juggle multiple and varied priorities
- You are self-motivated by a strong sense of justice and have a real commitment to the aims and values of the Work Rights Centre.

Desirable

- Experience with data visualisation software (such as Datawrapper, Tableau or PowerBI) (highly desirable).
- Experience with building and iterating data schemas and/or dashboards.
- Knowledge of a language other than English (preferably a language spoken by migrants under employer-sponsored visas).
- Lived experience of the UK immigration system and/or precarious work

Even if you are not sure whether you have all the experience, if you have the qualification, share our values, and trust your ability to make a positive contribution to our team, we encourage you to express interest. We particularly encourage applications from candidates who have lived experience of the issues the charity set out to address.

How to apply

Please send your CV and Cover Letter, including a link to at least one piece of published research (eg: blog, report, briefing), to recruitment@workrightscentre.org by Sunday, 13 August. Successful candidates will be notified shortly after the deadline. We seek to appoint a candidate as soon as reasonably possible, and are prepared to accommodate hybrid working to ease their transition into the post.