

Research Director

£80,490 +p.a., depending on experience, depending on experience
London | SW1 | Full-time and part-time applications welcome

The Resolution Foundation is an independent think-tank dedicated to lifting living standards in the UK. Our reputation for rigorous analytical work that results in effective policy solutions places us at the forefront of the UK debate on economic and social policy.

The Resolution Foundation is looking for an exceptional candidate to help lead our research team. This is an exciting opportunity to join the Foundation's senior leadership as we seek to turn around the stagnant living standards of the last twenty years, through influencing both the policies that can boost economic growth, and those that affect families' living standards directly.

What does the role involve?

Working as part of the Foundation's Senior Management Team, the post-holder will plan, manage and communicate major strands of our research and policy output. In particular, they will develop and lead our ongoing work on growth and productivity, building on the legacy of the Economy 2030 Inquiry. The research team works flexibly and there is scope to adapt other responsibilities to the experience of the successful candidate.

This is a permanent role based at our Westminster office. Applications for full-time or part-time hours are welcome, with a minimum of three days a week required.

What kind of person are we looking for?

This is a high-profile role, and successful applicants will need experience of both leading major research or policy programmes, and line managing a team of high-performing individuals in a research or policy-making environment. The post holder must also demonstrate a first-rate understanding of quantitative analytical techniques, excellent written and communication skills, and the capacity to direct research that results in practical policy change. Post-graduate level economics (or equivalent work experience) is essential, and candidates will be expected to contribute unique insights and policies on UK growth policy.

We are a fast-paced organisation, focused on responding to the current economic challenges as well as contributing to crucial longer-term public policy debates. The ability to work at pace on several different projects concurrently and a strong desire to have an impact on government policy are essential.

We are keen to hear from individuals with skills obtained from experience working in government, think tanks, applied academic research, or the private sector.

What is the organisational culture?

The Foundation prides itself on analytical rigour and we strive to achieve standards of excellence in all our work. This commitment is matched by dedication to our core purpose, working to improve living standards. These twin pillars of rigour and purpose inform our culture and underpin everything we do.

All members of our research team are given opportunities to interact with senior stakeholders in government, media and the wider policy-making world. We hold a regular programme of external events, and we regularly engage with politicians from across the political spectrum. We also hold internal masterclasses and roundtables with leading experts who engage with our work in detail. The research team have backgrounds in economics, social sciences and a range of other disciplines, and carry out quantitative and qualitative

research and analysis, using a wide range of micro-datasets and macroeconomic data sources.

Investing in our team is a priority for us and we work hard to ensure each employee feels valued, respected and able to give their best. We use formal training, on-the-job learning and mentoring from colleagues to actively develop the skills and reputations of all our team.

Diversity at the Resolution Foundation

The Foundation recognises the lack of diversity in economics and the policy-making sector, and works to address this through implementing and promoting best practice in internal policies and procedures, and through devising and supporting sector wide initiatives promoting careers in economics and think tanks to underrepresented groups.

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy encompasses all areas of our work and also our contribution to wider efforts in the sector. Many of our positive action initiatives are focused on helping to feed the pipeline of future policy makers. For more information about our work in this area, please see our recruitment brochure.

As part of our commitment in this area, we offer job specific pre-application discussions to Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic candidates and all candidates with disabilities who would like to speak to someone about the role in advance. We are happy to provide reasonable adjustments to assist candidates to navigate the application process or the demands of the role itself. Please contact sharmina.khanam@resolutionfoundation.org if you would like to arrange a pre-application discussion, or speak to someone in confidence about your needs.

We also offer the option to opt into guaranteed interview schemes for both Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic candidates, and all candidates with disabilities if they meet the essential requirements for the role. Please tick the box during the application process if you are interested in participating in this scheme.

Closing date: 08:59am on Monday 17 November 2025
First interviews are expected to be held w/c 1 December 2025
Second interviews are expected to be held w/c 8 December 2025

Main duties and responsibilities

- Lead the Foundation's research and policy programme across growth and productivity, working closely with the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and other senior staff.
- Design, commission, manage and deliver projects within the research programme, which will deliver innovative insights and policy proposals.
- Establish a personal research programme and reputation as a leading expert on economic growth and productivity, including its link to living standards.
- Engage with key stakeholders at the highest level in government, media, the private sector and the voluntary sector.
- Forge close working relationships with leading experts in other research institutions and academia.
- Line manage parts of the Foundation's research team.
- Represent the Foundation in the media and at seminars, conferences and other public events (including speaking at events).
- Produce, and oversee, high quality written outputs ranging from major research reports to regular short articles (e.g. for newspapers).
- Manage the research budget, ensuring programmes are taken forward cost-effectively and within budget.
- Any other duties as deemed reasonable by the Chief Executive.

The Foundation is a small team and staff members support each other, work flexibly, and share cross-organisational work in addition to fulfilling individual responsibilities

Summary of main terms and conditions

Some of the main terms and conditions for this post are summarised below. This summary does not form part of any subsequent employment contract.

Job title: Research Director

Salary: £80,490 +p.a., depending on experience, depending on experience

Location: London, SW1

Contract: Permanent

Other benefits include: a defined contribution pension scheme and a range of flexible and family friendly policies.

Annual leave: 30 days annual leave p.a. plus bank/public holidays

Probation period: Three months

Notice period: Three months

Working Hours: Full-time hours are 37.5 per week. Our core hours are 10am–4pm, with flexibility around when you start and finish your day. Exact timings may vary, and occasionally you may be asked to participate outside your usual hours.

Part-time arrangements are also available (3 days per week minimum), with hours agreed based on role requirements and individual circumstances.

We offer a competitive benefits package and a range of flexible working and family-friendly policies including generous occupational benefits and annual leave allowances. Some of the main terms and conditions for this post are summarised below. This summary does not form part of any subsequent employment contract.

The Foundation is a small team and staff members support each other, work flexibly, and share cross-organisational work in addition to fulfilling individual responsibilities. Our office is based in Westminster with home working available up to two days per week, subject to business need. Due to the nature of this post, sometimes you will be expected to work outside normal office hours. Time off in lieu is available when appropriate.

About you

Essential requirements:

- A proven and extensive track record in original research or policy making.
- Extensive experience of developing a research strategy and managing a programme of projects.
- A first-rate understanding of quantitative research techniques and evidence-based policy development.
- A post-graduate qualification (or equivalent experience gained in another environment) in economics.
- Proven writing and presentation skills in a range of contexts and to a range of audiences, including published reports.
- A commitment to upholding and improving the Resolution Foundation's reputation for analytical rigour; and to furthering the Foundation's mission of lifting living standards.
- An excellent appreciation of the economic and social policy context in the UK.
- Experience of line managing a team, including delegating and coordinating work effectively.
- Excellent inter-personal skills and the ability to work flexibly and creatively in a fast-moving environment.
- A track record of building networks and managing multiple stakeholders.

Desirable characteristics:

- Particular expertise and experience on growth and productivity.
- A proven ability to commission and monitor external projects.
- A track record of generating income for research projects.
- Experience of working with broadcast and print media.

How to apply

Resolution Foundation uses an online application platform for all our roles. Developed by the Behavioural Insights Team, Be Applied is designed to eliminate unconscious bias in the recruitment process. If you would like to apply, please visit <https://app.beapplied.com/apply/zpdtc4oqtv>.

The application process has two stages.

I. About you: The platform will ask you for some personal details and to upload your CV. The work-based scenario questions are first assessed blind by multiple reviewers so your personal details and CV will only become visible to the Foundation if you are shortlisted.

II. Work-place scenario-based questions: You will be asked to complete three work-place scenario-based questions which are relevant to the role and will be marked against the essential requirements section of the job description. Each question has a 250-word limit and you will have the opportunity to amend these sections before submitting your application.

N.B. Each of your answers will be reviewed separately and anonymously by different people. This means the person reviewing your answer to question 2 will not have access to your answer to question 1, and so on. Therefore, do not refer in one answer to what you have written in another (e.g. avoid using phrases like “as explained above”). If it is relevant, explain again in full.

Use of AI in the application process

Please refrain from using AI software to help answer the application questions. While we appreciate AI software can be a useful work tool, the Applied system requires all candidates to certify that the answers they provide are their own original work and not plagiarised nor automatically generated. Applied provides an AI generated answer for reviewers to refer to when sifting and asks them to flag responses they suspect may be AI generated. Using AI to help construct your answers may therefore be detrimental to your application.

Closing Date

To be considered for this opportunity, please ensure you submit your application by 08:59am on Monday 17 November 2025.

Interviews

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date. We expect to hold first interviews w/c 1 December 2025 with second interviews w/c 8 December 2025. Please indicate your availability and let us know if you have any specific requirements so we can make any necessary reasonable adjustments in advance.

Financial Assistance

Assistance for interview expenses may be provided subject to agreement in advance. If you are invited to attend an interview and would like to be reimbursed for travel expenses, please let us know when confirming your attendance. We are unable to cover international travel expenses but can offer virtual interviews instead.

Visa Sponsorship

We welcome international applicants. We are unable to sponsor visa applications, but this position qualifies under the Global Talent Visa criteria and we can provide supporting information for endorsement, if required, to the candidate who meets the requirements for the role.

Office-Based and Remote Working

The Foundation's office is based in Westminster with home working available two days per week, normally Wednesday and Friday, subject to organisational requirements. If you have any health concerns that may impact your working arrangements or queries about caring responsibilities, please contact sharmina.khanam@resolutionfoundation.org.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

In line with our determination to attract a diverse workforce, we constantly review our recruitment procedures. To help with this, we would be grateful if you would also complete the equal opportunities monitoring form provided on the application platform. Any information you provide is collated anonymously and used solely to track the effectiveness of our recruitment campaign.

Feedback

All unsuccessful applicants will be sent feedback about their application through the Applied platform. Candidates who have attended an interview will be offered in-depth feedback in order for the experience to assist in preparing for future interviews. We also welcome any feedback candidates have about the application process.

Privacy notice for job applicants

For full details on how we process your personal data, please see our privacy notice for job applicants which can be found on our Opportunities page on our website.

The Research Team

The Foundation prides itself on analytical rigour and we strive to achieve standards of excellence in all our work. This commitment is matched by dedication to our core purpose, lifting living standards in the UK. We focus particularly on households with low and middle incomes; those on low pay or in precarious work; and those vulnerable to financial shocks. These twin pillars of rigour and purpose underpin everything we do.

Researchers

Researchers provide support on a wide range of economic and social policy issues, including writing up the findings of primary analytical work and conducting secondary analysis of relevant literature. They work closely with senior staff to draft research notes and publications, and they monitor and keep the team informed of external policy developments relevant to the Foundation's research programme.

Researchers also contribute to key projects within the research programme by conducting qualitative and quantitative research and developing appropriate policy proposals. An understanding of the wider economic and social policy context in the UK and an appreciation of some of the key drivers of living standards are essential.

Economists / Research and Policy Analysts

Economists and Research and Policy Analysts contribute to the design, management and delivery of key projects within the research programme by conducting qualitative and quantitative research and developing appropriate policy proposals. They disseminate research projects through written reports and support the Foundation's research programme by engaging with stakeholders in government, academia, and the private and voluntary sectors.

They represent the Foundation at seminars, conferences and other public events and make appearances in print and broadcast media. Our Economists and Research and Policy Analysts have a sound knowledge and understanding of public policy issues relating to people on low and middle incomes in Britain and have proven project management skills, and experience of managing and delivering high quality projects on time.

Senior Economists / Senior Research and Policy Analysts

Senior Economists and Senior Research and Policy Analysts propose, design, manage and evaluate new projects and policy ideas as part of the Foundation's research programme, and lead key projects by conducting qualitative and quantitative research and developing appropriate policy proposals. Senior Economists and Senior Research Policy Analysts have excellent quantitative research skills and experience of using a range of research techniques. They may manage junior members of the research team, as well as a rich network of stakeholders in government, the private sector, the voluntary sector and academia.

They also make regular appearances in print and broadcast media. A thorough knowledge and understanding of a specialist area of policy making in the UK and a thorough understanding of public policy issues relating to people on low to middle incomes in Britain is essential. Our Senior Economists/ Senior Research and Policy Analysts also have a proven track record of delivering research impact and influencing policy change.

Principal Economists / Principal Research and Policy Analysts

Principal Economists / Principal Research and Policy Analysts lead the Foundation's research and policy programme across specific work streams, working closely with Directors to ensure programmes advance broader organisational strategy. They have proven project management skills and extensive experience of designing, managing and delivering high quality projects on time.

They also have a proven track record for delivering research impact and influencing policy change at the

higher levels of government. They manage members of the Foundation's research team and oversee the budget of relevant programmes, ensuring they are taken forward cost-effectively in addition to achieving the research aims.

Research Directors

Research Directors lead the Foundation's research and policy programme across multiple work streams and deliver a personal research programme focused on their specific expertise. They engage with key stakeholders at the highest level in government, media, the private sector and the voluntary sector, and forge close working relationships with leading experts in other research institutions and academia.

They manage the research budget, ensuring programmes are taken forward cost-effectively and within budget and they also help to devise and implement broader organisational strategy as part of the Senior Management team. They each have an established reputation as a leading expert on UK living standards and economic policy, extensive experience developing research strategies and managing projects, and an impressive track record in original research or policy making.