



## Candidate Specification

# What Works Centre for Children's Social Care - Prototyping Workstream Lead

**Salary:** Competitive salary or day rate  
**Location:** London  
**Terms:** 6 Months (employment or contractor arrangements considered  
-possible extension to 12 months)  
**Hours:** Flexible (3 working days per week as required)

## Background

The Alliance for Useful Evidence champions the use of evidence in social policy and practice. A partnership between the Big Lottery Fund, the Economic and Social Research Council and Nesta, we aim to stimulate the demand for and use of evidence in decision-making across national government, local government, practitioners, and service delivery organisations.

The Alliance is working in a consortium to set up a What Works Centre for Children's Social Care. This is a new project to foster evidence-informed practice in the sector in England. With £10m funding from the Department for Education, the Centre is currently being established by a Development Team and its Research Partner. The Development Team is a consortium, led by Nesta and its Alliance for Useful Evidence, in partnership with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), FutureGov and the consultancy Traversum. The Centre will become a fully independent organisation by summer 2020. The Centre will develop a strong evidence base around effective interventions and practice systems in children's social care, and support their implementation by practitioners and decision makers. Its goal will be to improve outcomes for children and their families by supporting translation of evidence into better practice on the ground. For more information:

<https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/what-works-for-children>

**Job purpose:**

The Prototyping Workstream lead will work as part of the Development Team for the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care. Prototyping is primarily an approach to learning – a rapid and cost-effective way to develop and test solutions to practical problems. See more on prototyping ideas here:

[https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/prototyping\\_framework.pdf](https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/prototyping_framework.pdf)

The role will lead on the delivery of the What Works Centre's prototyping work stream. This is a body of work that involves developing and testing a variety of promising approaches to generating, sharing and applying evidence in a children's social care context. This work is the responsibility of the What Works Centre Development Team and will be delivered in partnership with local authorities that are currently applying via a competitive process, and CASCADE at Cardiff University, the WWC Research Partner.

**Main duties:**

Delivering the prototyping work stream will involve:

- Overseeing the successful delivery of prototyping activities at the What Works Centre's partner local authorities (initially three-to-six sites, commencing July)
- Building on the extensive work of the Development Team, developing and taking ownership of the prototyping work stream plan
- Working in partnership with the Organisation Design function and others in the Development Team and Research Partner, to maintain and develop a pipeline of further prototypes
- Identifying leads for individual pieces of work within the programme team and holding these team members accountable for delivery (matrix management)
- Developing client relationships with local authority partners and acting as an ambassador for the prototyping programme and the What Works Centre as a whole
- Regularly reporting on the progress of the prototyping programme
- Attending steering group meetings to report on progress and receive input on shaping the workstream plan
- Representing the What Works Centre at external events



## Person specification

### Skills

- Excellent project management skills and ability to prioritise a complex and demanding workload
- Ability to build a wide range of effective stakeholder relationships, including with practitioners, policymakers, service leaders and research communities
- Ability to deliver a work programme through a matrix management approach, requiring skilful negotiation with team members and stakeholders not under your line management to ensure that work is delivered
- Understanding of the use of research and evidence in an applied context
- Maintaining stakeholder engagement and motivation to complete a complex programme of work
- Confident public speaking

### Experience

- Experience in successfully developing and managing the delivery of a programme of work, within agreed timescales and budget
- Experience of delivering a programme of work through a matrix management approach
- Familiarity with the children's social care sector (it is particularly desirable if this experience is in a local authority operational context)
- Experience in representing an organisation or programme of work at public events and with senior decision-makers
- Experience of building relationships with senior stakeholders and successfully working with them in partnership to maintain momentum and deliver a programme of work.

### About Nesta

Nesta is a global innovation foundation. We back new ideas to tackle the big challenges of our time.

Our mission is to spark and shape new ideas that improve how the world works for everyone. We use our knowledge, networks, funding and skills - working in partnership with others, including governments, businesses and charities. We are a UK charity but work all over the world, supported by a financial endowment.

- We see - we spot opportunities in challenges



- We spark - we generate novel ideas to solve big problems that matter to everyone
- We shape - we provide the help needed for promising ideas to grow and adapt
- We shift - we join with others to back world-changing ideas

### **How to Apply**

To apply, please send your CV and a supporting statement outlining clearly how you would succeed in the role to [recruitment@nesta.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@nesta.org.uk), citing "WWC PWL Application" in the Subject of the email.

Please outline your salary expectations for the role or standard daily rate. This role can be appointed through an employment contract or contractor arrangement.

The **closing date** for completed applications is 5pm Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**Interviews** will take place 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> June 2018