

Call for expressions of interest

Education Researcher for Language Futures

The Association for Language Learning (ALL) is seeking to appoint an experienced education researcher to take responsibility for the Language Futures research initiative.

The Language Futures programme has recently been transferred to ALL from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation through a grant funded arrangement. The information below provides some background to the initiative as well as a role description and person specification for the role as Researcher.

Whilst the Language Futures programme has been running since 2010, one of the fundamental requirements for its future continuation, under the stewardship of ALL, is to undertake a thorough research exercise throughout the funded period, to evaluate the impact of the programme on learners, teachers, the school community and beyond.

Applicants should have proven experience of leading research projects in school settings, of scoping out a research proposal, conducting qualitative and quantitative research and analysis and presenting research findings for a non-technical audience.

The successful candidate will be appointed on a consultancy contract from 10 August 2015 to 31 March 2018. There are likely to be peak periods of activity at pertinent times during the Language Futures initiative, meaning the time committed to the programme will need to be negotiated with the Language Futures Programme Director (the Director of ALL) and could be subject to change, dependent on the needs of the evolving Language Futures programme. The anticipated commitment from the appointed Education Researcher is expected to be 55 days across the entire funding period. This is remunerated at a rate of £500 per day, working to agreed deliverables.

This consultancy role will mainly be undertaken remotely. The successful candidate will need to provide their own access to IT with appropriate data security arrangements. There will be desk space available at ALL's Leicester office as required by the successful candidate and there will be a requirement to travel to this office on a scheduled basis, to meet with other Language Futures colleagues. There may be a greater frequency of travel to the Leicester office during the initial planning and implementation phase of the initiative.

There may occasionally be meetings with partners in London or in Language Futures schools to support the initiative and the work of the Language Futures Programme Director, Project Manager and Schools Adviser.

The Education Researcher will be expected to comply with all of the requirements of the Data Protection Act, including seeking appropriate consents from participants, handling and storing data in a secure and sensitive manner.

Potential applicants wishing to find out more should contact ALL's Director, Rachel Middleton, at rachelm@all-languages.org.uk or on 0116 2297603. General background information about the approach which underpins Language Futures can be found [here](#).

To apply for this post, please write to us, specifying in a covering letter why you are a suitable candidate and how you meet the person specification (up to 2 pages). Additionally please submit a detailed CV and either web links or copies of two extracts of your written reports or analyses from previous appointments (these will be treated in strictest confidence).

Please provide the names and contact details of two professional colleagues who can attest to your suitability for the role.

This information should be submitted to Rachel Middleton at rachelm@all-languages.org.uk by **Friday 3 July 2015**.

Postal address: Association for Language Learning, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to an interview during the **week beginning Monday 13 July 2015**.

Background to Language Futures

Language Futures originated as part of a wider Paul Hamlyn Foundation Special Initiative, 'Learning Futures,' delivered in partnership with the Innovation Unit. It was developed by Linton Village College, a co-educational comprehensive school in Cambridgeshire, as a prototype for a very different model of language learning – potentially offering a paradigm shift in pedagogy in the same way that the Paul Hamlyn Foundation already achieved for music education in schools (www.musicalfutures.org).

In summer 2015 the Language Futures initiative was transferred to the Association for Language Learning (ALL) with legacy grant funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 academic years.

ALL has made a commitment, alongside partners Whole Education and the British Council, to oversee the further development of the Language Futures Programme, principally in KS3. There will be six key thrusts to the new Language Futures programme throughout the funded period:

- support for schools who are already using or wishing to adopt Language Futures as an approach to language learning **in curriculum time** (nominally 10 schools)
- support for schools wishing to pursue Language Futures **as an after school model** (nominally 20 schools),
- development of resources, case studies and best practice guidance for use across both curriculum models
- developing an engaging online forum for teachers to foster discussion and share ideas about the Language Futures approach
- fostering links with partner schools overseas through the Schools Online service offered by the British Council

Additionally, ALL has also committed to conducting a rigorous research exercise which will evaluate the impact of the Language Futures approach on learner autonomy, engagement and motivation and language learning provision. It will evaluate how Language Futures fits into schools' strategic approaches to learning and how the programme is delivered. Importantly, it will also evaluate the impact of the approach on learners' attainment. The Education Researcher role will play a pivotal role in this aspect of the Language Futures programme during the funded period.

What is different about Language Futures?

The Language Futures approach is not designed to 'teach' a language, but to equip students to be autonomous and informed language learners – to create a community of language learners supported by a school, home and the wider community. Students' learning is enabled through online learning, family support and mentoring, with the class teacher acting as a facilitator of language learning rather than a teacher of a specific language.

There are 5 core features which underpin the Language Futures approach:

- Student choice and agency
- Teacher as designer and facilitator
- School as base camp
- Project-based learning
- Building a learning community

[More information on these 5 core features](#)

The Language Futures approach is versatile. It can draw upon the expertise of native speakers who form part of the school community, as well as a partner school overseas. It can be adapted for various curriculum contexts:

- as a first language choice
- as a second language choice (with the possibility of developing home language skills if this is a preferred option)
- as a means of introducing more engaging teaching and learning approaches (e.g. using staff and parents as language mentors)

[More information on the adaptability of the model](#)

Role Description - Language Futures Education Researcher

We aim to recruit an experienced education researcher who has worked directly with schools, who will be responsible for shaping and delivering the research initiative which will run throughout the duration of the funded Language Futures programme (until the end of March 2018).

Overall purpose of the Language Futures Education Researcher role:

to take responsibility for shaping and delivering a formative and summative evaluation for the Language Futures programme, using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods. This research initiative will measure the impact of the Language Futures programme on learners, teachers, schools and the broader community; explore the range of delivery approaches and develop evidence as to how these can work in different contexts. This research project will work across the in-curriculum mode of delivery for Language Futures, as well as the after-school club model. By the end of the project the aim is to provide an evidence base which will inform senior school leaders about the impact of the Language Futures programme on learners' attainment, engagement, motivation, access to language learning provision, level of autonomy, learning delivery styles, ability to access authentic resources, and attitude towards continuing to learn a language at KS4 or above.

The research will also inform options for sustaining the Language Futures approach beyond the funding period.

Core aspects of the role:

- to shape the research initiative in line with the strategic objectives identified by the Language Futures Steering Group
- to scope out a research plan and milestones for the funded period of the programme, working to negotiated milestones
- to design, in consultation with the participating schools, research protocols for the project, including research ethics, data collection and guidance on how and where data will be stored and anonymised
- to seek appropriate ethical approval for the research
- to be responsive to the evolving needs of the programme as it develops during the funded period
- to assess, select and / or design accessible research tools which meet the requirements of the project, having determined their validity and reliability
- to have operational oversight of all the research strands of the Language Futures programme, reporting in to the Project Manager and Director
- to work collaboratively with other Language Futures colleagues to support the dissemination of research activities in school settings and the collection of data from the participating schools
- to undertake appropriate quantitative and qualitative analysis as required for the evaluation
- to present formative and summative research findings in formats which are suitable for a range of audiences to utilise designated social media and web channels to provide updates on research findings and project milestones
- to liaise with senior school leaders about the Language Futures research initiative
- to provide research updates to the Language Futures Steering Group, Programme Director and partners
- to present research findings at ALL's annual conference – Language World

Reporting to: Language Futures Project Manager

Person Specification - Language Futures Education Researcher

Area	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	Educated to degree level	Relevant postgraduate qualification
Experience	Proven experience of leading research projects in school settings	
	Experience of scoping out an education research proposal, including drafting a research protocol and negotiating data access	Published research relating to the schools sector
	Proven experience of undertaking quantitative and qualitative research projects	
	Working as a member of a small team; working without direct supervision; managing own workload and responsibilities	
Skills/Abilities	Proven competence in assessing and designing research tools	
	Proven competence in selecting research tools which are appropriate for the needs of a research cohort	
	Data collection skills, including interviewing	
	Data management and analysis skills for both qualitative and quantitative data	
	Strong organisational and planning skills and ability to meet deadlines	
	Excellent written skills, with the ability to present information and interpret findings for a non-technical audience in a range of accessible formats	
	Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate with senior school leaders and teachers	
	Ability to brief and support other colleagues to assist them to cascade information about data collection exercises with teachers	
	Flexibility and the ability to respond quickly and appropriately to an evolving programme	

Knowledge	Familiarity with the Data Protection Act	
	Familiarity with human research ethics	
	Understanding of the schools setting with regards to research participation, permissions and data collection with minors	Interest in alternative models of pedagogy and 21 st century learning
Qualities	Commitment to the aims and values of the initiative and the partner organisations	
	Personal integrity relating to the handling, use and storage of data	
	Willingness to undertake necessary travel in carrying out responsibilities	