

Head of Children and Young People's Reading Application Pack

Up to £42,000, depending on experience

37 hours per week

Closing Date: Monday 6 May 2019

Interview Date: Tuesday 14 May 2019

Welcome!

We are delighted that you are interested in joining us.

At The Reading Agency we bring reading to people of all ages and backgrounds, so everyone can read their way to a better life. We mean everyone - from children to young adults, prisoners and older people - irrespective of age or economic background.

We believe that reading can tackle life's big challenges, from social mobility to mental health and we're determined that no one is left behind as we strive towards realising our vision.

We want to ensure that every individual with whom we come into contact is treated with dignity and respect. We are committed to openness and equality of opportunity in every activity, from the way we recruit employees to the way we deliver services.

The work we do changes lives and it couldn't happen without the expertise, experience and passion of our amazing employees so if you think you have what it takes to join us then we would love to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan J. Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Wilkinson MBE
CEO

The Job

Context of the job

The Reading Agency is a national charity that tackles life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. We work closely with partners to develop and deliver programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds, working towards a world where everyone is reading their way to a better life. The Reading Agency is funded by Arts Council England.

We champion children's reading because we want everyone to experience the benefits of reading from an early age. The Summer Reading Challenge, which we deliver in partnership with Libraries Connected, is one of the UK's biggest children's reading programmes. The programme encourages children to read six library books during the long summer holidays, to keep up their reading skills and confidence. It runs in 96% of library authorities and reaches around 700,000 children every year.

We also work with young people; each year over 6,500 young volunteers help to deliver the Summer Reading Challenge as the legacy of our Paul Hamlyn funded Reading Hack programme. We want to develop the volunteering opportunities we offer because we know the difference it can make to young people's skills and confidence, the impact it has on their own wellbeing and the powerful role they play in inspiring children to read more.

As the Summer Reading Challenge celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2019, we have undertaken a [major review of the programme](#) to ensure it continues to grow and thrive. We are now looking to implement the review recommendations as part of the development of our work with children and young people. This will include maintaining our core partnership with public libraries, building new strategic relationships with schools and families and other potential markets as well as extending our work with publishers. We will also be fundraising to develop our work with young people.

We are looking for an ambitious and experienced strategic manager to head up our children and young people's team and lead this work in its next exciting phase of development.

Purpose of the post

To help us deliver our vision of a world where everyone is reading their way to a better life by:

- Developing and leading our work with children and young people, helping them to build their skills and develop a lifelong love of reading
- Ensuring that the Summer Reading Challenge continues to be a high-profile, high-impact and inspiring reading programme for all children aged between 4 and 11
- Developing a strong volunteering programme for young people which develops their skills and empowers them to inspire others to read more

The main areas of responsibility are to:

- Lead the development and delivery of our work with children and young people, collaborating with external partners, parents/carers and young people as well as our own staff
- Lead the process of blending and embedding our children and young people's reader offer into other relevant areas of our work. At present these would include our publisher partnerships, Reading Well, Reading Ahead and Reading Friends programmes

- Deliver the recommendations of the Summer Reading Challenge review; shaping the new business modelling for the Challenge, building the evidence base and forging the new partnerships needed to ensure the programme's long-term growth and sustainability
- Oversee the strategic delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge programme, ensuring it maintains high standards of creative content and meets agreed budget, sales and delivery targets
- Manage and build the strategic stakeholder relationships, partnerships and networks necessary to the delivery and sustainability of our wider work with children and young people
- Lead on our library partnerships and ensure the Summer Reading Challenge Strategy Group operates effectively. This group, attended by key library stakeholders, helps to shape strategy supporting the development and delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge.
- Secure the investment needed for the programme to grow and thrive. This will include: securing on-going library partner investment; identifying new business models and markets for the Summer Reading Challenge; and bid writing
- Act as a champion for The Reading Agency and for the role reading plays in helping children and young people to tackle life's big challenges
- Line manage the Programme Manager, Children's Reading
- Deliver other tasks as required including Reading Agency generic responsibilities.*

** Generic responsibilities are:*

- To represent The Reading Agency at external meetings, events and conferences as required
- To manage the relevant programme budgets within the financial framework agreed with your line manager and the Finance, Commercial and Business Director
- To manage the delivery of evaluation strategies and reporting within the framework agreed with your line manager and the Research & Evaluation Manager
- To contribute to internal planning and business planning
- To contribute to planning and delivering an effective fundraising strategy and/or business model for this area of work with your line manager
- To contribute to developing and delivering a communications strategy for this area of work as agreed with your line manager and the communications team
- To create, develop and maintain content for the websites and other digital platforms

Who you will work with:

- The CEO, Senior Management Team, Head of Publisher Partnerships and Head of Adult Reading,
- the Children's Reading Team, employees across the organisation and commissioned freelancers
- External stakeholders and partners

The Person

Criteria	Assessment	Essential/Desirable
Experience and skills		
A confident and experienced strategic manager and team leader, able to develop a vision for children’s reading and lead a high performing team to deliver it	A/I	E
Knowledge and understanding of the impact reading has on children’s future life chances.	A/I	E
knowledge and understanding of the trends which will shape the development of our work with children and young people, e.g. education, literacy, skills, publishing	A/I	E
High level influencing and negotiating skills	A/I	E
Successful track record of developing sustainable programmes with strong business models which inspire people to get involved and support	A/I	E
Commercial sensibility and business acumen	I	E
Experience of successful fundraising/and or income generation	A/I	E
Experience of evaluating the impact of projects	A	D
Excellent communication skills (written and verbal)	A/I	E
Excellent people management skills	I	E
Knowledge and understanding of the concerns and ambitions of the sectors we work with especially public libraries, schools and families	A/I	D
Excellent understanding and knowledge of new and emerging digital formats for reading and how we embed these in programme development and delivery	A/I	D
Personal Attributes		
Flexibility – a willingness to adapt and provide support throughout the organisation	A/I	E
Adaptable - able to work to deadlines, under pressure and to prioritise in a fast-paced environment	A/I	E
Persistent – to drive through change	A/I	E

Assessment Key: A = Application; I = Interview

Employment Details

Contract Type

Full time, permanent, 37 hours per week

Location

Based at our office in Free Word, 60 Farringdon Rd, London EC1R 3GA

Line Management

This role reports to the Creative Director and has line management responsibility for the Programme Manager, Children's Reading. The Programme Manager line manages the Assistant Programme Manager.

Salary

Up to £42,000 per annum, depending on experience

Office Hours

Our full time hours are from 9.00 am to 5.30 pm from Monday to Thursday with an early 5.00 pm finish on a Friday.

We also offer our employees the flexibility to work from home at least one day a week if they would like to do so.

Probationary Period

The post will be subject to a six month probationary period.

Annual Leave

We offer 25 days holiday in the first year. After one year, this increases by one day a year to a maximum of 30 days (pro rata for part time staff)

Notice Period

The notice period for this role is three months

Pension plan

The Reading Agency offers a contributory auto-enrolment pension scheme. The Reading Agency contribute 5% of salary and employees contributes 3% of salary.

Personal Development

We support the on-going development of our employees through a range of training and development opportunities, including access to online training courses, mentoring and shadowing.

We also offer up to 6 days per year for personal or professional development, e.g. pursuing a professional or educational qualification, training courses, volunteering.

All employees have a yearly review with their line manager to review performance, set goals and identify areas for personal development.

Travel

We offer an annual season ticket loan scheme and cycle to work scheme which employees can take advantage of after successfully completing their probationary period.

Other benefits

- Books are at the heart of everything we do at The Reading Agency. There are always books to read and book recommendations from colleagues.
- We hold weekly craft club sessions and yoga classes.
- We have regular employee meetings and social events and as part of the Free Word community we have access to a huge variety of live events and performances. It's a vibrant place to work and there's always something new happening.

How to Apply

To apply for the role, please download and complete the application form and equal opportunities form on our [website](#) and email these with your CV to us at recruitment@readingagency.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **5.00 pm on Monday 6 May 2019**

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview on **Tuesday 14 May 2019**

Interviews will be held at our offices at Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Rd, London EC1R 3GA

Unfortunately we are unable to give feedback to applicants not shortlisted for interviews. We do provide feedback upon request to candidates interviewed.