

Head of Adult Reading Application Pack

Up to £42,000, depending on experience

37 hours per week

Closing Date: Monday 11 February 2019 at 5.00 pm

Interview Date: Wednesday 20 February 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 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 employ 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 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 style with a large, looped 'S' at the beginning.

Sue Wilkinson MBE
CEO

The Job

Context of the job

One in six people in the UK struggles to read; this can mean that they also struggle to find employment, manage their health and achieve their ambitions for themselves and for their families. Reading to and with children is also vital to building future generations of readers.

As a national charity, The Reading Agency is unusual in prioritising working with adults. We work with skilled and confident adult readers but we have a special focus on less confident adult readers aged 16 and above and, following a generous gift from best-selling author, Jojo Moyes, of three years of funding for Quick Reads, we are now looking for an ambitious and experienced leader to grow, develop and manage our work with this audience.

Reading Ahead and Quick Reads are the two programmes which are currently at the heart of The Reading Agency's adult reader offer. Our goal is to extend the reach of these programmes and increase their impact by forging new and stronger partnerships with a range of providers whilst at the same time continuing to work closely with adult education, publishers, prisons and work places. We also want to look at new delivery models and new markets.

We are therefore looking for an ambitious and experienced strategic manager to lead this exciting new development for us.

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 adult reading offer with a particular emphasis on less confident adult readers and lapsed readers
- Overseeing the management of our Reading Ahead and Quick Reads programmes and developing the strategy and resources needed to help them continue and grow
- Creating the strong stakeholder relationships and partnerships we will need to achieve our goals
- Working with the Creative Director to advise on and support delivery of an element for less confident readers in our other adult reading programmes

The main areas of responsibility are to:

- Develop and lead a new adult reading offer for the organisation which has Reading Ahead and Quick Reads at its heart and which is designed to inspire people to develop their reading skills and become ambassadors for reading in their communities
- Forge the strategic partnerships with learning providers, publishers, workplaces, prisons and public libraries which will help us achieve this goal
- Lead the process of embedding our adult reader offer into other relevant areas of our work
- Identify sources of funding and investment which will help this programme to grow, develop and thrive
- Act as a champion for The Reading Agency and for the role reading plays in helping people to tackle life's big challenges

- Line manage the Assistant Programme Manager and commissioned freelancers
- 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 the programmes' 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 Manager
- To create, develop and maintain content for the websites and other digital platforms

Who you will work with:

- The CEO, Senior Management Team, employees across the organization 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 adult reading and lead a high performing team to deliver it	A/I	E
Knowledge and understanding of the societal and individual impact of low literacy levels amongst adults and a vision for how reading can help to change this	A/I	E
Knowledge and understanding of the adult education sector and/or literacy and skills sector	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 e.g. prison education, public libraries, workplace education or publishing	A/I	D
Excellent understanding and knowledge of new and emerging digital formats for reading	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 Assistant Programme Manager, Adult Reading along with various freelance consultants delivering key aspects of Reading Ahead and Quick Reads.

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 6 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

Employees are eligible to join The Reading Agency pension scheme from day 1. We will contribute 2% of salary during the first six months. After six months this will rise to 5% 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 complete the application form and email this along with your CV and a covering letter to us at recruitment@readingagency.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **5.00 pm on Monday 11 February 2019**

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview on **Wednesday 20 February 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.