



Job Description

Job title	Research Assistant
Reporting to	Head of Research – Theos
Staff responsibility	None
Location	London-based (with some flexibility to work from home)

What we do

Theos is a Christian think tank which exists to stimulate debate about the place of religion in society, challenging and changing ideas through research, commentary and events. Since our foundation in 2006, we have produced nearly 100 original research reports and books on a range of issues pertaining to the wider intersection between religion and society, from the future of funerals to faith-based social action, the role of faith in education to the impact of churches in fostering social cohesion. We have been described by The Economist as “a body that commands attention”.

Theos is part of Bible Society. Around the world, we're translating, producing and distributing the Bible, helping people learn to read it and relate it to their everyday life, and equipping pastors, teachers and other Bible communicators to promote its message. In England and Wales, we're resourcing churches and individual believers to increase their confidence in the Bible and working to change the perception of the Bible in wider culture. We believe the Bible is God's gift to the world, and we want everyone to discover its message for them.

Summary of role

The Research Assistant (9 months fixed term, part-time) will work with an existing Theos researcher on a major mixed-methods research project exploring the spiritual, existential and political impact of new motherhood. As such, they will help to deliver insights that position Theos at the heart of public conversations on the intersection between faith and society, and especially the social, political and economic status of new mothers. Some domestic travel will be required to assist with qualitative fieldwork.

Main responsibilities

- Assist the Lead Researcher in the delivery of the project – including shaping briefs, undertaking literature reviews, questionnaire design, conducting in-person and online interviews and analysing data using established research methods
- Ensure the relevant research tasks are delivered on time, on budget and to the requirements of the brief
- Plan, sequence and regularly update the rest of the project team on progress
- Play a full role in the Theos team, including writing blogs, public speaking and building relationships of trust and respect across a range of audiences, and work with the Head of Communications to interpret and disseminate research for a range of media and audiences

- Keep abreast of the public debate and take an interest in how a Christian perspective can contribute to it

General

- Adhere to our policies and standards in all areas of your work
- Carry out ad hoc duties that may be required to ensure we maintain our effectiveness
- Participate fully in the corporate life of Theos and Bible Society, by attending All Staff Meetings and departmental meetings as required

Who we need

Qualifications

- An undergraduate degree in a relevant subject (e.g. theology, politics, social sciences, psychology or similar) with a strong emphasis on research methodology is essential. A higher degree would be advantageous for this role

Knowledge

- Basic understanding of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research
- Ability to understand the client and their particular reporting style when delivering on commissions
- Basic knowledge of contemporary Christianity and religious trends in Britain or a willingness to learn

Skills

- Strong project management skills, particularly research project management, from design to completion, to deadline
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to manage and prioritise a range of tasks when facing competing deadlines
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills (including confidence to present). An interest in visual design is advantageous
- IT skills including MS Word, Excel and Outlook. Willingness to learn Nvivo (if not already known) and panel management software

Personal attributes

- Sensitive to the potential concerns, difficulties and joys of the pregnant women and new mothers who will be interviewed as part of this project and an interest in issues and themes affecting new mothers
- Excellent interpersonal skills, essential for undertaking research and building relationships with other teams
- High attention to detail

- Ability to work individually as well as part of a team, being self-supporting and self-motivating when necessary
- A passion for helping others through great research and excellent communication
- An interest in understanding what motivates people, religious belief, and communications
- A creative problem solver with a curious mind
- Willing and able to travel nationally on occasion

Culture and character

Culture

We're committed to building on our unique culture, which is based on our Christian faith and seeks to bring out the best in our people.

We want to build a culture that demonstrates our values:

Prayerful – we're honest, attentive and humble, because we work in the sight of God

Imaginative – we're experimental, creative and dynamic, because we're made in the Creator's image

Bold – we're willing to work hard and face hard questions, because we trust each other

Skilful – we study, learn and practise, making the effort to serve others with our best

Joyful – we enjoy our work and seek to build others up, because we're designed to flourish together

Character

As well as recruiting for talent, experience and expertise, we're interested in the character of our staff. We'd like to know how you demonstrate the following:

Character for leadership – you'll be self-aware and know what it takes to connect well with others, enabling you to inspire, challenge and support them.

Character for teamwork – you'll have strong interpersonal skills, loyalty to and respect for colleagues, and a collaborative style of solving problems through a shared sense of common mission and purpose.

Character for followership – you'll be committed to our vision and mission, and will constructively and proactively support these so we operate effectively.

Date produced: 14 November 2024

Updated:

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