

THE YOUTHSCAPE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH

A black and white portrait of a young Black man with a surprised expression, wearing a cap and a hoodie. The word 'RESEARCH' is overlaid in a colorful box.

**Senior Researcher,
The Youthscape Centre for Research**

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The Youthscape Centre for Research is a Think Tank situated at the heart of Youthscape. We believe that innovation in youth work, and sustainable change for young people, requires reflective, rigorous, and theologically grounded research. We serve the wider vision of Youthscape by creating and sharing knowledge that stimulates reflection and action to improve young people's lives. We particularly aim to serve and inform Christian youth workers, and the wider Church, by conducting research on the needs and experiences of young people in general, adopting a holistic approach to their emotional, spiritual, and social health. Our overarching aims are to:

1. Create new research that illuminates the worlds young people inhabit and that catalyses change in the ways people think about and act toward young people
2. Make relevant research accessible to those who can use it to support young people
3. Shape wider conversations, nationally and internationally, about young people, youth work, and faith
4. Support the work of the wider Youthscape team, particularly in the areas of innovation, evaluation, and the use of evidence

We undertake research in diverse settings, using a variety of methods including surveys, cases studies, interviews, and focus groups. We then disseminate our findings and other interesting pieces of research through our publications, blogs, social media, and quarterly online magazine 'The Story'. Finally, we look for opportunities to network and support other researchers, including through our Youth & Faith Research Community. We adopt an approach to our work that focuses on: working in community by creating new knowledge in conversation with young people, youth workers, churches, charities, and other organisations; bridging the gap by rooting academic reflection in local practice and making the rich resources of academia accessible to youth workers; and by fostering curiosity and intellectual and spiritual courage.

Following on from our latest major project Translating God which explored how young people understand and respond to the Christian story, in 2026 and 2027 The Centre for Research will be engaging in a major research project exploring youth discipleship in the context of the far-right influence.

About the role of Senior Researcher

The Senior Researcher will play a vital role within the Centre for Research, helping to conduct, analyse, and disseminate research within Youthscape, out into the Youth Ministry field, and beyond.

Working as part of a small team, you will be involved in all aspects of research life within the Centre for Research, particularly leading on the quantitative aspects of our projects.

You will be a curious learner who has; experience in conducting primary mixed methods research, a good eye for detail particularly when it comes to data analysis, experience in building rapport with people during field work, experience in public speaking, and a passion for developing and sharing knowledge around young people and youth ministry within the UK and beyond.

Key tasks and responsibilities

1. To undertake primary and secondary research under the Head of Research's Supervision, including, but not limited to:

- a. Literature Reviews**
- b. Analysis of Data Sets**
- c. Primary Data Collection**
- d. Data Analysis**

2. Advise on quantitative aspects of research projects

3. Support the internal monitoring and evaluation of Youthscape's work and projects

4. Ensure staff have a good understanding of internal and external research which can inform their work

5. Support the Head of Research in publishing and disseminating research, including via speaking events and opportunities

6. Maintain relationships with various stakeholders

7. To take appropriate responsibility for safeguarding at Youthscape

8. To fulfil wider responsibilities as a member of Youthscape's team

1. To undertake primary and secondary research under the Head of Research's Supervision

1.1 Undertaking a range of research tasks, including:

- Literature Reviews
- Primary Data Collection
- Analysis of Secondary Data Sets
- Data Analysis of Primary Research

1.2. Carrying out research using a variety of methods, including but not limited to; surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other creative methods.

- 1.3. Collaborating on ethics submissions for the Advisory Board and communicating with them to agree specific approaches for each project.
- 1.4. Adhering to ethical protocols throughout research projects, particularly when research includes children and young people (also see section 7 in relation to safeguarding).

2. To advise on quantitative aspects of research projects

- 2.1 Designing and using appropriate research methods to gather quantitative data relevant to each project.
- 2.2 Analysing data sets, both primary and secondary, to produce high quality evidence.

3. To support the internal monitoring and evaluation of Youthscape's work and projects

- 3.1 Actively engaging in research projects which focus on monitoring and evaluating the work of Youthscape.
- 3.2 Communicating research processes, findings, and recommendations to relevant staff, and assisting them in their own dissemination.
- 3.3 Supporting staff to undertake their own monitoring and evaluation.

4. Support the Head of Research in publishing and disseminating research, including via speaking events and opportunities

- 4.1 Collaboratively writing and editing up to four copies of 'The Story' each year, the Centre for Research's online research digest.
- 4.2 Collaboratively creating research blogs for the Centre for Research's section of the Youthscape website.
- 4.3 Identifying and attending conferences and events which offer the opportunity to network and share relevant research projects and their findings.

5. Ensure staff have a good understanding of internal and external research which can inform their work

- 5.1 Identifying, reading, and engaging with new and relevant research in areas pertinent to youth ministry.
- 5.2 Supporting the writing of a monthly internal 'Research Bank' which is shared with staff.
- 5.3 Supporting the delivery of termly Staff Research Seminars.
- 5.4 Thinking creatively about additional ways in which the Centre for Research might better share internal and external research with staff to inform their work.

6. Maintain relationships with various stakeholders

- 6.1 Working with the Head of Research to report on projects to funding bodies.
- 6.2 Liaising with the Centre's Advisory Board, particularly in relation to ethical protocol for research projects.
- 6.3 Supporting the development of the Youth & Faith Research Community.
- 6.4 Supporting the Head of Research with funding applications and research contracts where appropriate.

7. To take appropriate responsibility for safeguarding at Youthscape by:

- 7.1 Completing relevant and regular training, as required.
- 7.2 Ensuring awareness and understanding of Youthscape's safeguarding policies and practices.
- 7.3 Implementing Youthscape's safeguarding policies and practices in all aspects of their day-to-day work.
- 7.4 Conducting oneself in accordance with Youthscape's safeguarding policies and practices at all times, including outside of usual working hours.
- 7.5 Reporting any safeguarding concerns in accordance with Youthscape's safeguarding and whistleblowing policies.

8. To fulfil wider responsibilities as a member of Youthscape's team

- 8.1 Participating, as required, in meetings, training and development, and staff activities within Youthscape, including our weekly chapels on Mondays at 9am and attendance at three 48-hour retreats each year.
- 8.2 Participating – along with all staff – in the Youthscape innovation process, including contributing ideas and attending occasional creative meetings.
- 8.3 Supporting the planning and delivery of the National Youth Ministry Weekend event each November.
- 8.4 Supporting the planning and delivery of the Satellites event each August.
- 8.5 Carrying out other reasonable and relevant tasks as required by your line manager.

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Person Specification

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
People skills	
• Excellent interpersonal skills, including knowing how to relate to people in different contexts, particularly in research settings (e.g., rapport building when conducting interviews). • Ability to relate to people, including young people, from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and faiths, and build appropriate, positive relationships with them. • Strong communication skills, including oral, written, and social media. • Ability to work effectively as part of a team.	• Good understanding of different learning styles. • Awareness of additional needs, particularly in young people, including neurodiversity, and ways in which to adapt communication to ensure research participation is accessible.
Strategic skills	
• Excellent administrative skills. • Ability to multi-task and manage competing research priorities. • Ability to assess situations and make decisions confidently and efficiently, particularly when conducting field work or leading on specific aspects of a research project.	• Experience of writing and/or contributing to funding bids. • Confident in networking and in public speaking.
Personal skills	
• Gracious, compassionate, and accepting of others regardless of faith, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, gender, or background. • Honest and with high integrity. • Efficient, takes initiative, and manages self effectively. • Critical and creative thinker. • Committed to personal and professional learning and development. • Passionate about using research to support Youth Ministry.	

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Knowledge and education • Educated to a Masters level in a relevant field, or able to demonstrate equivalent research experience • High standard of computer literacy. • Awareness and understanding of general safeguarding practices and ethical procedures when working with young people. • Awareness of current research around children and young people.	• PhD in a relevant field. • Theological training, including practical theology approaches. • Social media knowledge and ways in which to share and promote research. • Use of infographics or experience with data visualisation. • Awareness of current research around youth ministry.
Experience • Practical application of a range of research methods, primarily quantitative. • Experience of working as part of a team to complete a primary research project(s). • Understanding and experience of youth culture, youth work, and/or youth ministry. • Experience in data collection processes and methods, particularly quantitative data. • Experience in using search engines effectively to support a literature reviews. • Competent in use of Excel to carry out data analysis.	• Experience of designing and/or leading on mixed-methods research projects. • Currently or previously involved in youth work in a paid or voluntary capacity. • Competent in using referencing, planning or analysis software e.g., SPSS, NVivo, or equivalents.
Values and ethos • There is a genuine occupational requirement that the post-holder be a committed and practicing Christian. • It is essential to align with Youthscape's vision and the value of Youth Ministry.	
Transport • Able to travel occasionally and be away from home overnight, when the role requires. • Able to travel to the office 1 to 2 days a week	
• Able to travel occasionally and be away from home overnight, when the role requires. • Able to travel to the office 1 to 2 days a week	• Hold a full UK driving licence and a car that can be used for work as an independent means of transport.



Terms of employment

This role will be part of the Youthscape Centre for Research team and line managed by Dr Hannah Bowden, Head of Research.

This role is offered part-time - 3-days-a-week (0.6 FTE).

The normal place of work for this role will be Bute Mills and your home. Other work-related travel will be required.

The salary for this role is from £34,000 (pro-rata) depending on experience.

We are committed to building a diverse team and strongly encourage applications from individuals of Global Majority Heritage, as well as those from underrepresented backgrounds.

Youthscape offer an employer's contributory pension scheme for all staff and a wide range of employee benefits including:

- 25 days paid holiday (plus bank holidays) rising to 27 days after three years and 30 days after five years service.
- Additional annual salary increases within a pay band.
- Three staff retreats each year.
- £300 annual training allowance to be spent by employee plus access to fund for formal qualifications.
- One month paid sabbatical after eight years service.
- Apple Macbook Pro provided and available for personal use.
- 24 weeks of paid maternity leave (12 weeks full pay, 12 weeks half pay) and 4 weeks of paid paternity leave.
- 4 week Sabbatical for longer serving staff.

How to apply

We welcome questions and scoping conversations from anyone interested in the role. If you would like to know more about what the role would be like on a day-to-day basis or discuss whether the role might be suitable for you, please get in touch with Hannah Bowden at hannah.bowden@youthscape.co.uk.

Applications must be made by 12-Noon on Monday 20th April.

You should download the Youthscape application form from our website and send the completed form, together with a short covering letter, to mulkina.mackay@youthscape.co.uk. Mulkina can also address any questions about the application process or any difficulties in completing the form.

A selection of candidates will be invited to interviews on Monday 27 April in Luton.

We hope the successful candidate will be able to start their employment with us as soon as possible or whenever existing contracts permit.

Youthscape

Youthscape is working to see every young person in the UK reached with the transforming love of God. We believe that this will only be achieved through the renewal of the local church's engagement with those young people; a church inspired and equipped with vision, research, skills and resources. This means that our primary focus is on inspiring, resourcing and training churches for the task of reaching young people.

We are youth workers. For more than 25 years, we have worked directly with young people and churches in our home town of Luton, Bedfordshire, and our work continues to flow out of this direct experience. Our vision to inspire the church and reach young people is rooted in both passion and practice.

We will engage three key groups through our work. We will invest in youth leaders, resourcing them for their task, training them to work innovatively with the emerging generation, and helping them to keep going for the long haul. We will seek to inspire and train church leaders to create a context for great youth work. And we will work directly with young people, both in Luton – where we continue to model excellent youth work - and nationally through events and resources which help to embed teenagers in their local church.

We will know that we are succeeding when more churches are growing because they prioritise the welcome and support of young people, and when more young people are finding a home in the Christian faith.









Youthscape
74 Bute Street
Luton
LU1 2EY

01582 877220

hello@youthscape.co.uk

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