



Job description: Researcher

Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales

The Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales

The Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales (the Foundation) contributes to the development of a fair and equitable justice system for the community of New South Wales, particularly considering access to justice for people experiencing economic and social disadvantage. The Foundation is a body corporate constituted by the *Law and Justice Foundation Act 2000* (NSW).

The Foundation achieves its objectives through high-quality research, knowledge translation and evidence dissemination.

Overview and purpose of position

The Researcher contributes to the design, delivery and dissemination of social justice research. The Foundation's research program aligns with our strategic priorities and is reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure relevance and responsiveness to priority needs of the sector and community. Our research activities support evidence-based approaches to creating a more fair and equitable justice system. Examples of our scope of work include:

- Qualitative studies in collaboration with service providers, policymakers and community members to understand issues that intersect with justice inequalities.
- Surveys of legal needs and access to legal supports, to identify inequalities and opportunities for strengthening the justice system.
- Analyses of legal service and official quantitative data (such as ABS data), and sharing findings via products such as dashboards, reports and other communication products.
- Evaluations and reviews of programs, to identify lessons for ongoing development of effective strategies for improving access to justice.
- Tailored evidence checks

Term: Full-time (part-time will be considered)

Responsible to: Research Director (supervision delegated to Principal Researchers as relevant)

Duties

The specific tasks vary depending on the research projects in progress at the time. We undertake qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research. Skills in any and all of these methods are valued. All research staff have opportunities to develop new research skills across diverse methods. In general, the Researcher will apply a range of research skills, to contribute to the following:

- Plan and design research studies and evaluations in collaboration with other research staff



- Conduct social research on topics related to access to justice, civil law and legal needs. This includes:
 - Literature reviews (narrative, integrative, systematic)
 - Qualitative research design, data collection, and analysis, using methods such as interviewing, observation, and focus groups
 - Quantitative research design, data collection, and analysis, using methods such as surveys, descriptive and multivariate analyses, and working with publicly available datasets and non-public service datasets
- Write, contribute to, and proofread research reports, research updates, articles and a range of other communication resources
- Prepare and deliver research presentations via formats such as conferences, meetings and webinars
- Contribute to the conduct of high-quality research through activities such as preparation of human research ethics documents and peer review of the team's work
- In coordination with other research staff, maintain effective relationships with relevant stakeholders, including service providers, academics and other researchers, peak bodies, government agencies and funding bodies
- Keep up to date with issues and trends in the justice area and in research methods, and proactively share relevant information with other members of the team
- Work effectively with staff across the organisation in support of the Foundation's Objects and its day-to-day operations, as required.

Selection Criteria: Essential

- Postgraduate qualification in social sciences, psychology, social work, public health, criminology, law or other relevant discipline. Note that we do not undertake 'legal research' and legal qualifications are not necessary for this role.
- Experience of undertaking social research, such as in an academic, public-sector, not-for-profit or another applied research organisation. Some research experience is important, but we welcome applications from recently completed postgraduates and early career researchers.
- Established skills in research methods and a commitment to building new research skills. We value quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research skills and the willingness to expand your research skillset.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to adapt communication styles to translate research to a diverse range of audiences.
- Strong project management skills, including planning, time management, and reporting skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team, to produce high quality, timely outputs.
- Experience in the use of relevant research databases and software packages. Software packages that we use include SPSS, NVivo, Endnote, Excel and Tableau.



Appendix: Core Competencies

The Researcher is expected to demonstrate the following competencies when performing the role:

Strategic research planning

- Good awareness of the research planning process
- Aware of progress across the research plan
- Able to identify future areas of work for consideration
- Developing awareness of national and international literature that bears on the Foundation's research work

Research design and implementation

- Good awareness of the principles of research design
- Developing awareness of the range of methodologies and their strengths and weaknesses in answering different research questions
- Can apply this knowledge to prepare appropriate research proposals
- Ability to plan and project manage small research projects
- Can produce first drafts of data collection instruments, such as questionnaires
- Can undertake interviews and observations with supervision

Analysis

- Skilled in one or more analysis techniques (e.g., survey, data mining, systematic reviews, interview analysis, inferential statistical analysis, economic analysis, legal analysis)
- Good application of the relevant software (NVIVO, SPSS, MLwiN etc.) required for their role

Use of evidence

- Can assess the quality of evidence and give a reasoned argument
- Can design and undertake a basic literature search, by identifying appropriate key terms and literature sources
- Is developing peer review skills

Delivery

- Developing project planning skills: breaking tasks down and identifying co-dependents and contingencies
- Ability to deliver work in accordance with targets and deadlines
- Ability to complete work to good standards (and short reports to publishable standards) and timelines

Communication

- Skilled in planning and writing own research reports, with support from senior staff
- Is developing the ability to present complex information in a clear and persuasive narrative



- Can adapt written and oral communication style to a range of customers
- Has helpful and supportive communication style, both internally and externally
- Developing oral presentation skills

Effective working

- Proactive in managing own workload to ensure effective utilisation
- Willingness and ability to provide advice and support to the Grants team as required
- Ability to consult and negotiate with other Foundation staff and/or stakeholders
- Builds constructive relationships, showing awareness of other's perspectives
- Can work under pressure and manage changing priorities
- Aware of own development needs and actively seeks appropriate development opportunities and formal training

Sector knowledge

- Has a good awareness of the Australian legal system and legal assistance sector and how agencies differ in service provision
- Aims to keep up to date with relevant research literature
- Aims to keep up to date with published policy and operational developments in the sector