

**Job Title:** Head of Research

**Location:** Flexible

**Reports to:** Assistant Director, Research

### **Introduction to Multiple Sclerosis and the MS Society**

Over 130,000 of us in the UK have multiple sclerosis (MS). It's unpredictable and different for everyone. It's often painful and exhausting, and can cause problems with how we walk, move, see, think and feel. It can make it hard for us to work, and do the things we enjoy. But it doesn't have to be this way.

We're the MS Society – a community of people living with MS, scientists, campaigners, volunteers and fundraisers. We understand what life's like with MS, and we support each other through the highs, lows and everything in between. And we're driving research into more – and better – treatments for everyone. Together, we are strong enough to stop MS.

### **Purpose**

- To lead the day to day work around our research programme and help implement the wider strategy and relate it to work across the organisation
- To provide leadership and strategic direction for MS Society's research function across the MS Society
- As a member of the Research and External Affairs Management Team, to contribute to the leadership, planning and policy formulation of the Directorate as a whole
- As a member of the management community to influence and implement the Society's direction of travel to meet our organisational objectives
- To represent the organisation externally, taking a key role in stakeholder management

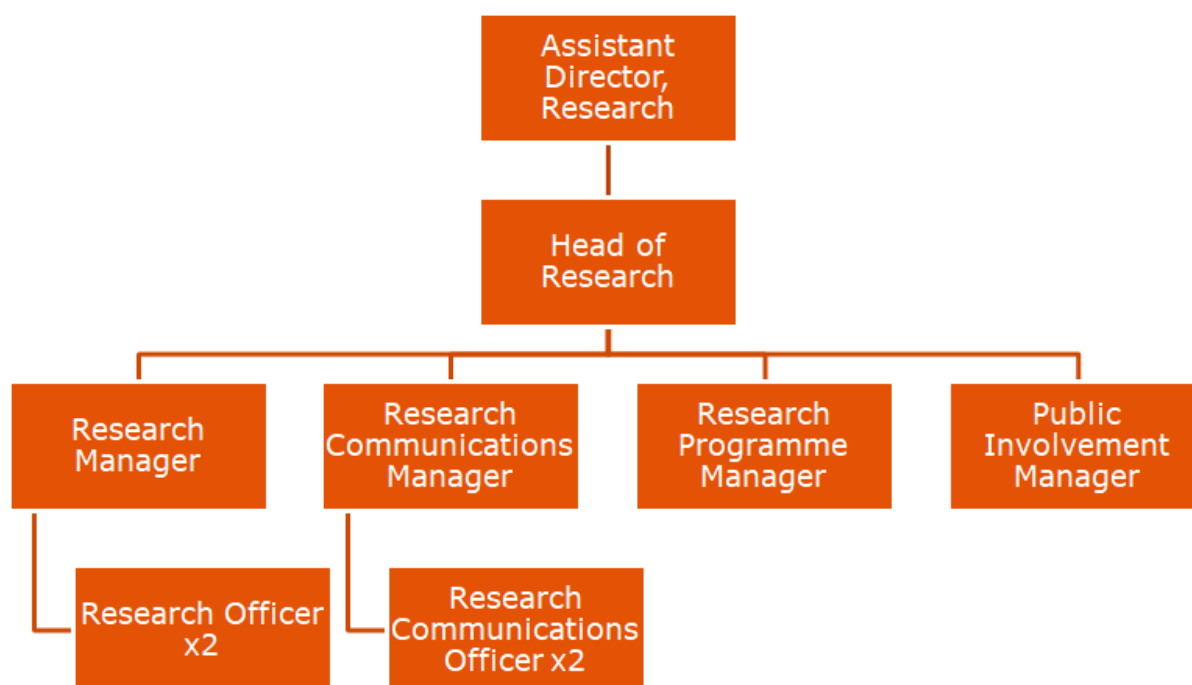
### **Key Relationships:**

Internal: The post holder works closely with the Assistant Director, Research; Executive Director of Research and External Affairs; Heads of

department across the MS Society; research team, fundraising teams, communications teams

External: The post holder will be expected to build and foster collaborative working relationships with

- Research scientists and other clinical and scientific professionals
- Other charities with an interest in MS, neurology and associated issues
- Relevant professional organisations
- International MS research partners
- Government and non-governmental funding agencies
- Philanthropic donors and Trusts



### **Key Accountabilities:**

The MS Society Head of Research will support both development and implementation of the Society's research strategy and work to achieve the MS Society's strategic goals through excellence in these key areas of work:

1. Research Strategy
2. Fundraising for research
3. Research Awards Programme
4. Research Communications
5. Internal and external relations

6. People management
7. Financial management, including our complex research grants budgeting
8. Monitoring and reporting on performance
9. Strategic leadership of research programme and its relevance to work across the Society

### **Our values**

All MS Society staff are expected to model and promote our values:

#### **Bold**

We are brave and innovative. We're not afraid to take risks and speak out, even when it is not easy. We are pioneering and dynamic in our approach to achieving our goals. We will campaign and push boundaries, and will not give up until we have beaten MS.

#### **Expert**

People with MS are experts in their own condition. We bring together their own experience and knowledge, along with that of staff, volunteers and professionals, and the best available evidence, to improve the lives of people affected by MS.

#### **Ambitious**

We do not accept the status quo. We set high standards and work hard to reach them, driving real change. We push the boundaries and are positive about beating MS.

#### **Together**

We achieve success by working with the whole MS community. We are collaborative and inclusive in our approach to succeed in delivering our goals. Everything we do shows we support and care about each other.

### **Detailed responsibilities:**

#### **1. Research strategy (10%)**

- Works with the Assistant Director, Research and a range of key stakeholders, including the Research Strategy Committee, to ensure on-going development of our research strategy
- Regularly reviewing all relevant national and international published research, to develop and maintain the required expertise
- Undertake periodic 'futures research' to identify opportunities, gaps, threats and risks in MS research and ensure that the Society remains a world leader

- Through the research we fund, but also through maximising our influence of others, ensuring that our research strategy is implemented effectively.

### **2. Fundraising for Research (10%)**

- Support the MS Society's major appeal for research, as well as a wide range of initiatives where our fundraising activities need a strong contribution from the research team.
- Ensure that we offer potential donors a compelling case for their support; this will also include supporting effective donor relations and a broader internal collaboration around marketing the MS Society's research programme.
- Proactively identifying opportunities for fundraising work.

### **3. Research programme management (15%)**

- Ensure our grant processes support our objectives of funding high quality research that addresses the questions agreed as being most important, aiming to have the greatest impact for people affected by MS
- Initiate the design and commissioning of research, to support the research strategy, consulting widely with the Assistant Director, Research and research, academic, other relevant professionals and people affected by MS
- Oversight of project and programme management (operationalised by the Research Manager and Research Programme Manager), to ensure research projects and programmes we support operate as agreed with the MS Society
- Take lead responsibility for MS Society's major infrastructure and programme grants, including opportunities for income generation

### **4. Research communications (10%)**

- Ensure that developments in science related to MS are well communicated to our internal and external stakeholders and often to people affected by MS.
- To represent the Society internally, nationally and internationally on matters related to the Society's research strategy and research programme, including acting as a spokesperson for the MS Society.

### **5. Internal and external relations (20%)**

- Ensure excellent relationships with the MS scientific community, nationally and internationally.
- To identify and develop collaborative relations with governmental and non-governmental organisations, donors, Trusts and other key stakeholders (including our partner MS organisations) to raise the profile of MS and to lever additional funding to support the Society's research strategy.

- To represent the MS Society within the Progressive MS Alliance and with other important collaborations
- Ensure that research contributes to and supports the work of the MS Society.

### **6. Financial Management (5%)**

- Working alongside the Assistant Director, Research, assist the efficient management of expenditure of a large budget, including effective monitoring of funded projects and programmes, budget preparation, planning, and review.
- Ensure effective financial and resource management.

### **7. People Management (15%)**

- Responsible for the leadership, recruitment, development, retention and appraisal of staff in accordance with the standards set out in the Human Resources policies and procedures.

### **8. Monitoring and reporting on performance (5%)**

- Accountable for the analysis and evaluation of performance information, monitoring and reporting against objectives, outcomes and KPIs.
- Ensuring action is taken in a timely manner to enable corrective action.
- Ensuring the social impact of the department's work is measured in accordance with the MS Society's outcomes framework.

### **9. Strategic leadership across the Society (10%)**

- Leading and providing advice on policy and strategy on matters relating to research, ensuring that the MS Society as a whole benefits from insight and forward thinking on matters concerning science and research.
- Action as project manager or project board member providing strategic advice, management or contribution to relevant programmes and projects.
- Developing and maintaining effective working relationships across the department, directorate and wider MS Society.

### **10. General**

- Compliance with MSS's governance procedures.
- Ensure compliance with MSS policies on working with people with MS, Volunteers, Recruiting Safely, Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity.
- Ensure compliance with MSS guidelines on the requirements of Disclosure, where applicable.

### **Other Duties**

- To be prepared to travel to meetings across the UK and be away from home overnight, as the job reasonably demands.
- To undertake any other works as could be expected of a postholder with Head of status.

### **Reporting Responsibilities:**

- To supply information as required by the Executive Director, Research and External Affairs and Assistant Director, Research.

### **Person Specification**

In addition to demonstrating our core MS Society competencies that are listed at the end of this job description, the role requires knowledge and skills in the areas of:

### **Qualifications**

#### Essential

- Qualified to doctorate (PhD) level in relevant discipline or equivalent experience.
- Evidence of continuous professional development.

### **Experience**

- A successful track record in the funding, management and evaluation of complex, multi-disciplinary research programmes
- Demonstrable experience of building successful partnerships with medical research organisations
- A proven track record of success in leading and managing a team of comparable size and complexity, to achieve high quality results to deadlines
- Experience of working in a senior team to develop, communicate and implement business plan
- Proven planning, programme and project management experience to control effective use of resources
- Demonstrable experience of applying effective problem solving techniques when the situation demands
- Experience of financial and budgetary management

### **Knowledge and skills**

- A good understanding of MS science and the health research environment
- A clear understanding of a range of research methodologies
- Demonstrable skills in analytical and strategic thinking with the flexibility and ability to develop innovative solutions to complex problems
- The ability to drive and embed lasting change
- The ability to focus on impact and achieve outstanding results in a team environment
- Demonstrable commitment to collaborative team work



- Demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equality and valuing diversity
- Exceptional interpersonal skills, and able to influence/persuade a wide range of stakeholders
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of media and to diverse audiences

**Employment terms**

Salary: **Band H, Level 3**

Signed by postholder

Date

Signed by Executive Director

Date



MS Society Core Competencies

June 2020

Competence	Descriptor: behaviours that can be observed	Linked to BEAT values
<p><b>Fosters co-production</b></p>	<p><b>Acts with and for the MS Community, seeking the expertise of people living with MS to co-produce services and solutions.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, supports individuals to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the MS Community, sharing their own experience and examples of doing so.</b></p>	<p><b>Together</b></p> <p><b>Expert</b></p>
<p><b>Open to change and innovation</b></p>	<p><b>Challenges the status quo to find new and better ways of working, adapting and responding to change and learning from failure.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, supports and motivates team to try new things, pursue innovation that leads to better organisational outcomes, and share lessons from failures.</b></p>	<p><b>Bold</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious</b></p>
<p><b>Sound decisions</b></p>	<p><b>Makes timely decisions with appropriate information, balancing evidence and insight with appropriate risk assessment and action.</b></p>	<p><b>Ambitious</b></p> <p><b>Expert</b></p>





	<p><b>As a team manager, makes and acts upon clear, transparent and timely decisions even in challenging circumstances, encouraging robust dialogue around assumptions and outcomes.</b></p>	
<p><b>Collaborative working</b></p>	<p><b>Invests time and energy to establish trust and build positive working relationships with individuals and teams across the organisation.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, actively enables learning and working as a team, supporting the work of other teams and creating opportunities for cross organisational working.</b></p>	<p><b>Together</b></p>
<p><b>Effective Communication</b></p>	<p><b>Demonstrates active listening skills and communicates clearly and succinctly in a range of formats, tailoring messages to audiences as appropriate.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, engages team through seeking feedback, listening and responding to different viewpoints while ensuring everyone is clear about key messages, role expectations and organisational goals.</b></p>	<p><b>Together</b></p> <p><b>Expert</b></p>
<p><b>Outcome focussed</b></p>	<p><b>Focuses on impact and the priorities, resources and deliverables needed to achieve desired outcomes.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, maintains focus on successful outcomes rather than hours worked, empowering and trusting people to be responsible and accountable for their work.</b></p>	<p><b>Bold</b></p> <p><b>Together</b></p>



<b>Inclusivity</b>	<p><b>Treats people fairly and respectfully regardless of background, role or status, seeking to understand and incorporate different values and viewpoints into decisions and work.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, promotes an inclusive culture that recognises and values what each individual brings to the team, ensuring reasonable adjustments are put in place to support this.</b></p>	<p><b>Together</b></p>
<b>Accountability</b>	<p><b>Takes responsibility for work and personal actions; delivers on commitments, indicating where work is behind and help is needed, and acknowledges and learns from mistakes.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, sets and communicates clear expectations for self and others, speaks up and appropriately challenges when things aren't working and addresses problems quickly and transparently.</b></p>	<p><b>Bold</b></p> <p><b>Expert</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious</b></p> <p><b>Together</b></p>
<b>Tech Savvy</b>	<p><b>Embraces rapidly changing technology solutions, and understands how technology improves delivery of goals and drives efficiency and effectiveness.</b></p> <p><b>As a team manager, creates opportunities to explore and learn about the changing technology environment, apply learning and champion digital innovation.</b></p>	<p><b>Bold</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious</b></p>