

**Senior Researcher
Application Pack
(RES2207)**



Welcome from the Acting Director

I am delighted that you are interested in applying for the position of Senior Researcher here at the Institute for Government.

The Institute was established in 2008 with the aim of making government more effective and improving the way it makes decisions. Our aim is to be a catalyst for improvements in government – we don't just conduct research but work closely with people in Westminster, Whitehall and beyond to fulfil our mission.

This role provides the opportunity to work at the heart of an organisation which is making an impact in the world of government and politics and to work in a stimulating and challenging environment. We provide excellent working conditions, with a lovely office in central London and the option for staff to work from home two days a week.



Senior researchers are an essential part of the IfG model. They form the core of our project teams – at the moment working on issues including levelling up, civil service reform, reviewing the UK constitution and performance of public services.

We recognise the benefit that having staff with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences can bring to our work and we are striving to increase the diversity of our workforce. We welcome applications from anyone with the passion and skills to make a contribution to our work of improving government, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds.

If this whets your appetite, I hope you'll consider applying for this position and joining us here at the Institute.

Dr Hannah White OBE

Acting Director, Institute for Government

About the Institute for Government

Who we are:

The Institute for Government is the UK's leading independent think tank promoting more effective government. We work with all the main political parties and with senior civil servants in Westminster, Whitehall and across the UK, providing fresh thinking through research, events and leadership development.

Our mission is:

To help to improve the effectiveness of government in the UK.

Why is that important?

Good government is one of the most important factors driving the UK's social and economic performance and the health of its democracy. But while Whitehall ranks among the world's best administrations, the sheer scale of today's political challenges demands ever more capable leadership from government, and challenges public trust in institutions. The Institute's role is to inform and support the process of improvement, working at the highest levels of politics and the civil service to improve capacity and provide evidence-based advice that draws on best practice from across the globe.

What we do:

- We undertake high quality qualitative and quantitative research, focusing on improving the effectiveness of government and producing practical recommendations for change.
- We organise and host regular high-level public and private events addressing different aspects of government in the UK and internationally.
- We provide tailored development opportunities for senior decision makers and their teams.
- We offer advice to departments and political parties, leading and shaping opinion on improving performance and effectiveness.
- Our headquarters are also a meeting place where senior officials from across Whitehall and the public sector can discuss the challenges of making government work and access practical insights from public servants, academics and opinion formers from across the world.

Our core values:

We seek in all our activities to be:

- **Innovative:** we will push at the boundaries of current knowledge, exploring and experimenting with diverse approaches to find the best solution.
- **Rigorous:** we will be thorough and precise in our methods and aspire to produce the highest quality data and services.
- **Impartial:** we will be neutral and politically non-aligned.
- **Trusted:** we will earn the confidence of all those we work with, being open and challenging as well as a trusted guardian of knowledge.

Our work programme:

Our work programme is structured around the following themes:

- **Civil service** – civil service reform, accountability and better policy making
- **Public finances** and outsourcing – levelling up, tax policy and competition and regulation
- **Public services** – the performance of public services
- **Brexit and beyond** – the UK’s future relationship with the European Union and the consequences of having left
- **Arm’s length bodies** – the role of ALBs in the pandemic and beyond
- **Devolution** – English devolution and metro mayors, the future of the union, government in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- **Ministers, parliament and the constitution** – standards and ethics, workings of the constitution, role of ministers, professional development of ministers and civil servants, [*Ministers Reflect*](#)

Publications:

Examples of recent Institute publications include:

- [How should the Foreign Office change now?](#)
- [Managing extreme risks: how government can learn from Covid to be better prepared for the next crisis](#)
- [Levelling up and innovation: how R&D and other policy can reduce regional inequality](#)
- [After Boris Johnson: what now for the civil service?](#)
- [Managing as a minister: how personal style and gender norms affect leadership in government](#)

Further information about our work can be found [on the IfG website](#).

Our offer to you:

Working at the Institute will provide you with opportunities to change the way government works, through research, analysis and influencing. The Institute’s excellent network and strong reputation in Whitehall and Westminster mean our work is influential; we are frequently consulted by government, invited to give evidence by parliamentary committees and asked for advice by civil society organisations seeking to understand government. In recent years, for example, we have helped shape government thinking on Brexit and coronavirus, persuaded the government to move to a single annual Budget, strengthened the impact of select committees and helped professionalise policy-making in government. While non-party political, our work offers the opportunity to make a real difference to how government functions.

The Institute has built a strong public reputation as a trusted commentator and communicator on government and how it works. This was recently recognised by the Political Studies Association, who awarded the Institute their 2022 Political Communicator of the Year Prize for enhancing public understanding of politics – the first time this award has been given to an organisation. As a Senior Researcher, you will have the opportunity to make key contributions to this part of our work.

Senior Researchers at the Institute for Government

The Institute for Government is inviting applications for a Senior Researcher position (Job Reference: RES2207), to start as soon as notice periods allow.

What our Senior Researchers do

Senior Researchers are important members of the research team, leading smaller projects and helping to deliver major pieces of work under the supervision of a Programme Director. Topics that Senior Researchers might work on could include but are not limited to levelling up, reviewing the constitution, civil service reform or the role of metro mayors.

We want our Senior Researchers to make a significant contribution to the Institute's impact, working independently and creatively, initiating ideas, facilitating meetings, and energetically employing a range of research methods to gather evidence, reach judgements and make persuasive arguments.

As a Senior Researcher at the Institute, you will:

- take a fresh, evidence-based look at a range of problems facing government and **take the initiative to identify interesting questions, design research and shape arguments.**
- conduct **quantitative and qualitative research and analysis** to develop innovative solutions to these problems.
- **lead elements of complex research projects and manage them from beginning to end**, including significant publications and events.
- **deliver the results of projects**, including high-quality **written reports and presentations** in a suitable format and style for specific targeted audiences, **to challenging deadlines.**
- **communicate our recommendations credibly and persuasively to senior civil servants and politicians** as well as in the media and social media.
- **build strong working relationships** both inside the Institute (including research, communications, partnerships and operations staff) and externally (including MPs and civil servants, government departments and agencies, other organisations in the academic, public and commercial sectors, and public policy commentators including journalists).
- work with our events team to organise **public events, seminars and meetings**, and present project findings and recommendations in these forums.
- assist in the development and delivery of tailored **workshops and toolkits** to aid senior decision makers in government.
- work closely with other Institute staff to **maximise the impact of our insights** on government decisions.

What we're looking for

We are looking for candidates with:

- A **undergraduate degree at 2:1 or above**, or international equivalent.
- **Considerable knowledge and/or experience of UK government**, public policy and/or public service reform.
- **Relevant work experience** (such as but not limited to working in central or local government, non-departmental public bodies, consultancy, journalism, or another think tank) or postgraduate research experience.

- **Ability to communicate confidently and clearly**, and influence a range of audiences with well-reasoned and appropriately evidenced arguments for change, in writing and orally.
- **Excellent analytical skills**, including the ability to synthesise complex information, identify important questions that are relevant to the Institute's mission, and to generate new perspectives and frameworks to solve problems.
- **Confidence in using data and quantitative analysis**.
- **Confidence in undertaking qualitative research**, such as conducting semi-focused interviews.
- **Strong project management skills**, with the ability to lead projects with tight deadlines and to a high standard, both working alone and managing others, sometimes in a rapidly evolving working environment.
- **Excellent interpersonal skills**, with the ability to work effectively with colleagues and partners both inside and outside the Institute, and confidence in managing external stakeholders (including funders).
- **Commitment to the Institute's values, aims and objectives**, a keen interest in public sector improvement, and the highest possible level of professional integrity.
- A **proactive attitude** to work, and the ability to identify and capitalise on ideas for impact and opportunities for the Institute.

The following attributes are useful, but not essential:

- Experience of organising roundtables, workshops or public events.
- Experience of securing funding for projects.
- Data visualisation skills.
- Experience of managing junior colleagues.

This role could suit people with a wide range of different experiences. If you are interested in applying but are not sure you have all the skills or experience we are looking for, please do so and give us the opportunity to consider you as a candidate.

The Institute is committed to supporting greater diversity and inclusion within our workforce, and to fostering an environment in which everyone feels welcome and valued. We welcome applications from anyone who is interested in government and how to make it more effective, and particularly encourage applications from candidates who belong to groups currently underrepresented in the think-tank sector. This includes but is not limited to Black, Asian and ethnically diverse candidates, disabled candidates, and candidates from low-income backgrounds.

Information for all applicants

Employer:	Institute for Government
Location:	2 Carlton Gardens, SW1Y 5AA
Who can apply:	Applicants who can demonstrate they have the relevant skills and experience as set out in this pack. Applicants should either: i) be entitled to work in the UK without a visa, or ii) hold a relevant visa allowing them to work without visa sponsorship.
Closing date:	Wednesday 14 September at 11am.
Start dates:	The start date will be as soon as notice periods allow for.
Terms:	Successful candidates will join on a permanent contract subject to a three-month probationary period.
Salary:	The salary range for this role will be £38,000 to £44,000. Your starting salary will be based upon skills and experience.
Working hours:	You will normally work a five-day week of 37.5 hours (9:00 – 17:30 with a one-hour lunch break) but you will, as the occasion requires, work outside these hours. The Institute is open to supporting flexible working, and Senior Researcher roles may be available on a part-time basis, subject to the needs of the Institute.
Remote working:	Full-time staff are typically expected to work from the Institute's offices in London for at least three days a week, including Mondays, with the option to work remotely for up to two days a week. Expectations may be different for part-time staff or staff with flexible working arrangements.
Benefits:	Contractual: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 30 days of annual leave in addition to eight days of bank and public holiday for full-time staff (pro-rated for non-full-time posts).- The Institute has a pension scheme which you will be auto-enrolled into in your third month of employment. The contribution is a minimum of 5% from the employee and a fixed 10% contribution from the employer.- Death in service life assurance of 4 x salary is given to all staff.- 20 days sick pay in first year and thereafter 30 days per rolling 12 month period. Non-Contractual: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staff may take two weeks each year where the requirement to come into the office does not apply.- Lunch is provided when working in the office.- Employee Assistance Programme (via Health Assured).- Six months' maternity / shared parental leave at full pay.
Equal opportunities:	All job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment regardless of sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation,

marital status, civil partnership, gender reassignment, age, disability, or religious beliefs.

Our assessment process is anonymised up to and including the point of shortlisting in order to eliminate as much bias as possible.

The Institute collects equal opportunities monitoring information with applications. This information is anonymised and is not given to those involved in the recruitment process. It is used only for monitoring purposes and to help us better understand how we, as an employer, can ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Privacy policy:

When you apply for a job with the Institute, we collect and process information (personal data) about you according to data protection law. For full details of our privacy policy please visit:

<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/recruitment-privacy-policy>

How to apply

Stage One

The Institute uses an anonymised online application process for the first stage of its Senior Researcher recruitment. To apply, follow [this link](#).

The online stage of our application process has three main parts:

- **Multiple choice test:** Here we ask you to complete a multiple-choice test, which is formed of 16 questions covering numeracy, data interpretation and verbal reasoning.

You will have 32 minutes to complete the test. Once you start the test, a timer will count down in the corner of the screen. We recommend having an Excel spreadsheet or calculator, paper and pen to hand before you begin. You cannot save during the test or return to this part of the application once completed.

If you have a disability that might affect your ability to complete the timed multiple choice test, then please contact us at recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk before completing the test, so that we can make any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary.

- **Short written questions:** Here we ask you to complete four questions covering your interest in and suitability for the role. This section is not timed, and you do not have to complete these questions in one go. Each question has a 250-word limit.

Each of your answers will be reviewed separately and anonymously by different people. This means the person reviewing your answer to question 2 will not have access to your answer to question 1, and so on. Therefore, do not refer in one answer to something you have written elsewhere (by saying things like “as explained above”). If it is relevant, explain again in full.

- **CV:** you will need to upload a copy of your CV. This should be no longer than two pages, and provide an overview of your educational background and employment/other experience.

You do not need to complete the entire application in one sitting - you can save your in-progress application and return to complete and/or submit it at any time before the closing date.

Stage Two

We expect that first interviews will be held online in the week beginning 26 September, with second interviews held in-person the following week. Candidates may be asked to complete a written task prior to either the first or second interview.

Any questions?

If you would like further information about this position or the selection process, then please contact us at recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk. Further information about the Institute for Government can be found on our [website](#). We send out regular emails, including a weekly newsletter, about our reports, publications and events. To receive these emails, you can subscribe [here](#).