



Chief Scientist - Director of Research and Evaluation

Permanent: 39 hours per week
Salary range: £80,000 - £90,000 (negotiable) per annum, plus benefits
Based in Central London

The Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) is recruiting a Chief Scientist to lead a wide portfolio of projects at the cutting edge of our work programme in a number of areas, including quantitative and qualitative research, evaluations and data science. The successful candidate will be responsible for guiding BIT's 40 person global research community, as well as leading and managing a team and stand-alone business unit of approximately 30 research specialists in BIT's head office in Westminster, London.

About the Behavioural Insights Team

BIT is a global leader in the application of behavioural science to inform public policy and tackle societal challenges. The then Prime Minister created BIT in 2010 and in February 2014 we became a social purpose company, jointly owned by the Cabinet Office, Nesta (an innovation charity) and our employees.

BIT works with governments around the world in almost every area of policy. Whilst the subject and output of our projects varies considerably, there are common threads: we try to understand the contexts in which people make decisions; we notice small details; we find out what has and hasn't worked before; we come up with innovative ideas for solving policy problems and we test and measure everything we do as robustly as we can.

As well as displaying professional excellence, BIT selects staff on the basis of our company values: always prioritising social impact; empiricism and humility; fresh thinking, collaboration; and public service.

As well as applying behavioural science to public policy, we are at the forefront of a revolution in evidence based policy. With a body of nearly 500 randomised controlled trials (the gold standard of evidence), as well as quasi-experimental evaluations, we have significant knowledge of what works – and what doesn't – in a wide variety of fields, ranging from health to community safety, education, employment, consumers and the economy.

About the Research and Evaluation Team

The successful candidate will oversee BIT's research and lead a core specialist research team focused on experimental testing, evaluations, qualitative research and data science. The successful candidate will be responsible for the development and execution of a strategy for all of these areas, working closely with an established team of principal and senior advisors who lead individual areas of the portfolio and with directors and teams designing and delivering programmes of work in a wide range of policy areas.

Experimental testing

BIT's research team is a fundamental part of our organisation and is responsible for the design and delivery of our analysis and randomised controlled trials. The team ensures that the rigour of all of our work is kept to the highest possible standard, while taking a practical and pragmatic approach to policy and intervention development. The research work of BIT is conducted by researchers who work within BIT's policy teams, and by members of the core research team operating as a shared service.

Evaluations

BIT's evaluations team was established in 2014, and leads the team's work providing independent evaluations for other organisations. Although these are mainly randomised controlled trials, they include quasi-experimental evaluations such as difference in differences, regression discontinuity, and matching. The evaluation team works across a range of policy areas, with core strengths in education, children's social care, and health and employment work.

Qualitative Research

BIT's qualitative research team was established in 2016 and focuses on quality assuring and conducting in-depth qualitative research to inform BIT's work, including intervention theory, implementation and process evaluation, as well as the Explore phase of BIT's TEST (Target - Explore - Solution - Trial) Methodology. The Qualitative Research team works across BIT's programme of work, as well as running stand-alone qualitative research projects.

Data Science

BIT's data science team was established in 2016 and produced its [first annual report](#) at the end of 2017. The team's mission is to use new forms of data and new statistical techniques to try and solve social problems. In this role, you will work with the head of data science to coordinate this work programme and to ensure it is driven forward, while maintaining quality and policy relevance as the team expands.

Role and responsibilities

The successful candidate will lead a business unit, support research throughout the organisation and be a member of the BIT Executive Team that provides senior leadership for the company by shaping our corporate strategy and implementation.

Based in London, you will manage a team of thirty, and act as a coach and mentor to researchers in other teams, keeping in regular touch with our offices in Singapore, Sydney, New York, Manchester and Wellington, New Zealand to coordinate our approach to research globally. The role involves shaping and delivering plans and programmes of work to deliver social impact; secure financial sustainability; ensure work is of high quality and cutting edge; and support staff wellbeing, engagement and development.

Social impact

You will drive fairer and better outcomes for citizens through the application of behavioural science to inform policy and address social challenges. This includes:

- **Leading, developing and overseeing the work of the business unit** of 30 people to deliver a positive social impact over a large number of contracts.
- **Widening and deepening our trials and use of data and evidence** through projects and programmes. This requires an excellent grasp of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and a sophisticated view of strategic opportunities and risks in order to maximise social impact. It also requires strong management of relationships with clients, partners and colleagues to constructively challenge thinking.
- **Thought leadership within the capability areas** covered by the research and evaluations team, developing and championing new methods and behaviourally informed insights – both within the team and with government and external partners.
- **Providing trusted advice** to senior leaders, including heads of government departments, Secretaries of State and other senior leaders across government, public services, the voluntary sector and private businesses.
- **Acting as a social purpose conscience** in assessing business opportunities and project suitability, knowing when to say no to high profile or senior partners or when to escalate decisions to the Executive Team.
- **Representing BIT externally** at high level meetings, seminars, conferences and in the media to demonstrate the value and cutting edge of applied behavioural science and showcase the work of BIT. This involves giving presentations to large and senior audiences and academics on the world stage; appearing in national media; and publishing articles and thought papers.
- **Scaling impact** by growing our portfolio of work; driving the adoption and spread of what works in the UK and internationally; supporting BI Ventures; and contributing to BIT training and wider thought leadership initiatives.

Quality and cutting edge

You will lead and oversee BIT's research effort, set and manage the standards for our analysis and evaluations, and advocate with clients and publicly for improving use of rigorous evaluation in government policy. This includes:

- **Spearheading high quality research**, implementing and maintaining rigorous scientific and technical standards within the research team, writing policy proposals

for government departments and Secretaries of State, advising on project development including robust experimental design, developing impactful ideas for interventions, and clearly communicating findings to partners

- **Quality assuring the outputs of the business unit and broader team**, assessing the creativity and feasibility of applied behavioural science and research methods for all proposals and evaluations
- **Ensuring that projects are set up correctly** and managed by a competent project manager (in relation to, e.g., timelines and deliverables, stakeholder management, budgetary control)
- **Overseeing multiple projects, supporting junior staff on project management**, providing a supportive backstop to enable them to exercise autonomy, increase visibility with clients and stakeholders, and develop their own skills
- **Collaborating with other offices and business units** to ensure the spread of best practice, harnessing the best opportunities to progress ideas and policy areas, and leveraging the right expertise across the global team
- **Crisis management**, resolving issues with projects, clients and internal stakeholders as they arise, dealing with them effectively and sensitively

Financial sustainability

You will lead a business unit with overall responsibility for a portfolio of work spanning a value of circa £2–£3.5M measured on turnover. This includes:

- **Budget development, business planning and objective setting** for the business unit, in collaboration with the CEO, the MD and Director of Finance
- **Market engagement, business development and sales**, which involves developing and maintaining strong relationships with senior management within funding and client organisations, generating new opportunities and prioritising existing ones
- **Profit and loss management for the business unit against plan**, including staff utilisation, project management, and profitability
- **Authorising, tracking and managing budgetary spending** of staff within the business unit, particularly in relation to travel expenses, marketing and entertainment
- **Effective recruitment and resourcing** both across the business unit and programmes of work, building in realistic contingencies to ensure high quality delivery within time and budget
- **On-going risk and opportunity management** to build resilience and set the foundation for further development and social impact.

Staff development and engagement

You will sustain an effective, cohesive and well-functioning team by ensuring employees have the right skills, capabilities and behaviours to support a sustainable business. This involves:

- **Motivating, encouraging, guiding and inspiring others** through effective communication, setting expectations, offering opportunities for advancement and empowering others to make their own decisions

- **Being personally credible** with strong communication and influencing abilities, speaking with authority and generating confidence within the business unit and externally
- **Setting KPIs, objectives and holding regular performance conversations** with team members, tracking and managing performance according to the BIT values to ensure effectiveness and delivery
- **Holding regular 1:1s with team members** to support, coach, provide insight, review progress and activity
- **Line managing more senior staff**, explaining changes to their work, coaching them through difficult situations or running more formal sessions on behavioural science or trial design
- **Promoting effective people management** to ensure all employees have the skills and tools necessary to carry out their roles to meet the required expectations
- **Provide employees with good working conditions** and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development, ensuring they have regular conversations about their health and well-being with their line manager
- **Foster cross-business unit collaboration**, encouraging team members to seek opportunities to input into projects within other communities of practice

BIT wide leadership

As part of the Executive Team in BIT, you will play an active role in shaping the strategic priorities and day-to-day work of the organisation. This involves:

- **Contributing to the corporate strategy**, including company governance, structures, priorities and ownership
- **Leading on at least one cross-cutting corporate priority** e.g. knowledge management, quality assurance, brand, employee progression and retention
- **Communicating strategy and management decisions** to employees; keeping team members well-informed of all developments and updates company-wide that affect their roles and policy area
- **Leadership through sustained periods of growth and change** where there is no 'steady state' in terms of size, structure and priorities of the team

Skills and experience

- Expertise in quantitative research, in particular, experience conducting randomised controlled trials and quasi-experimental analysis;
- Strong management and leadership skills – including demonstrated ability to support team members, build a cohesive team, and tackle management issues constructively when they arise;
- Experience in a commercial environment, including managing project budgets, business planning and development, and track record of meeting targets;
- A good degree (masters or higher) in a relevant subject (such as economics, statistics or political science);
- The ability to communicate complex topics to a large audience clearly and effectively, including to non-technical and policy audiences; and

- Experience in working in research institutions and/or in central government policy.

How to apply: To apply candidates should upload their CV and complete their application through Applied: <https://app.beapplied.com/apply/mw3qtr9m2t>

Date of posting: 9th November 2018

Close of Applications: 10th December 2018 at noon GMT

Interviews and assessment tasks will take place: Early January 2019

Please note:

If you do not already hold the right to work in the UK and/or require sponsorship in order to continue working here, you should think carefully before applying. This is because we will be unable to sponsor you unless there is no other suitably qualified settled worker available to fill the role or your current immigration status means that the resident labour market test will not apply in your case.

To find out more about the organisation and the type of people who work in the team visit: www.bi.team

The Behavioural Insights Team is committed to a policy of Equal Employment Opportunity and is determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or race, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.