



## Labour Research Department

### **Vacancy for the post of researcher in the area of collective bargaining, pay and conditions (28 hours a week). Closing date for applications is Sunday 13 October 2019.**

A job description, person specification and some information about the work of the Labour Research Department (LRD) are set out below. Please use the accompanying application form to complete your application.

#### **Job description**

The Labour Research Department (LRD) is a not-for-profit organisation providing unions with research and publications. A core part of its work is tracking and analysing movements in collective bargaining and pay and conditions, and it has developed its own database of negotiated settlements (Payline), which is used by the UK's largest unions, as well as providing the basis for the LRD's own research. This is a unique resource that gives the LRD an unrivalled perspective on bargaining developments.

LRD is looking for a permanent, part-time (80% - 28 hours a week) researcher who will contribute to our work in this area as well as working on other topics. The main tasks will be:

1. to research and write features and news items for LRD magazines, primarily (but not necessarily exclusively) on collective bargaining and pay and conditions issues, making use of a wide range of data sources including government statistics and LRD-generated data including our own database of collective agreements, Payline
2. to write or contribute to LRD Booklets on issues relevant to the unions' representative and collective bargaining role;
3. to carry out research projects commissioned by external bodies (primarily UK unions);
4. to respond to enquiries from trade union affiliates;
5. to present pay and conditions information, and to otherwise represent LRD, at external events;
6. to build links with union representatives and negotiators in order to help fulfil LRD's objects; and
7. to assist with the maintenance and development of the Payline collective agreements database.

The researcher will also undertake other tasks, as required, and contribute to the overall work of the LRD.

## Person specification

The successful applicant will meet the following requirements:

1. **Subject knowledge:** Interest in and some understanding of issues relating to collective bargaining, pay and conditions, the labour market, and workplace developments.
2. **Writing skills:** Ability to write quickly and clearly, and to present complex information from a variety of sources in an accessible and coherent way in different contexts for a primarily trade union readership.
3. **Analytical skills:** Ability to acquire, research and analyse information from a variety of sources, and to evaluate developments, including the ability to understand and use numerical information and data, and present it in a way which is accessible to a non-specialist audience.
4. **Communication skills:** Ability to communicate effectively, primarily on the telephone and by email but also in person. This can range from initial individual contacts to presentations to large groups.
5. **Computer skills:** Expertise in the use of spreadsheets and other software tools for data analysis/data presentation.
6. **Approach to work and flexibility:** Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team to achieve agreed objectives, together with a capacity to work autonomously. Ability to work to deadlines and to prioritise tasks. Willingness to work outside the main areas of work and outside normal hours/days of work where needed. Willingness to travel to external meetings and conferences, potentially involving overnight stays.
7. **Trade unions:** Sympathy with the aims and objectives of the trade union movement.
8. **Equality and diversity:** A commitment to equality and diversity.

## About LRD

The Labour Research Department (LRD) is an independent research organisation delivering a wide range of publications and services, most of which are directed at trade unions and trade unionists. It celebrated its centenary in 2012.

LRD is supported through affiliation by over 50 national trade unions, along with trade union regions, branches, workplace committees and individual members. Its income depends also on the sale of publications and electronic services, and on commissioned research. Affiliated unions have access to LRD's enquiry service.

LRD is not a charity, it is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Its Board of Directors includes members from a wide range of trade unions. It is based at its own premises, close to Southwark tube station and Waterloo, and has a staff of around 15 employees, most employed as researchers but with a small number in more administrative roles.

The range of topics covered in LRD publications, reports and services is extensive, but most work concentrates on employment, trade union and industrial relations issues. These include, for example, employment law, pay and conditions, health and safety, European Union developments, equal opportunities, social security, trade union developments and directors' pay.

LRD produces four regular publications:

- Labour Research (monthly) – deals with issues of general interest to trade unionists
- Workplace Report (11 times a year) – more specialist, concentrating on issues of concern to workplace representatives and those involved in collective bargaining
- Safety Rep (monthly) – covers health and safety issues using material already published in Labour Research and Workplace Report
- Fact Service (weekly) – brief details of key developments relevant to trade unionists

In addition, LRD publishes 10 or 11 LRD Booklets each year on specific topics, which play a very important part in LRD's output and income. The most important of these is a comprehensive guide, the Law at Work, which is updated annually. Other booklets cover specific aspects of employment law, health and safety issues, and broader workplace and equality topics.

LRD also provides two web-based services: the Payline database, which contains details of pay agreements across the economy; and Publications Online, which provides electronic access to the contents of our major publications.

Commissioned research on a range of topics is a further area of activity and source of income. It is usually carried out for national trade unions, but sometimes for European bodies. Recent projects have included the TUC's Equality Audit, union membership surveys, developments in public and private sector pay, worker participation, gender equality, trends in collectively agreed wages, and union recruitment.

LRD is ultimately managed by a Board of Directors which takes decisions on major items of expenditure, the planned content of future publications and the levels of affiliation fees and subscriptions. On a day-to-day basis, most other work and the organisational tasks required to keep LRD running are managed by staff, individually or collectively.

The staff meet regularly to discuss issues such as the content of publications, LRD's finances, its priorities and direction, proposals for new developments, including in the area of IT, and marketing of our products and services.

Individual members of staff are expected to be able to prioritise their own workloads and meet deadlines without direct supervision; to take part in the collective life of the organisation and to contribute to its overall needs, as required.

The Labour Research Department recognises the GMB union and employment policies are discussed and agreed from time to time by staff. It operates a flexitime scheme within a framework of normal office hours of 9.30am - 5.30pm Monday to Thursday/9.30am – 4.30pm on Friday (the office is usually closed on public holidays and between Christmas and New Year).

Staff may sometimes be required to travel away from the office and to undertake occasional evening and weekend duties, including some overnight stays.