## **User Researcher**

User Researchers are key figures in service teams, working to generate the feedback and insight service teams need to build a clear picture of their users and deliver solutions that they need. They will support service managers by generating new and useful user insights and translating it into features and actions that will allow them to iteratively improve their service for users.

You should be experienced in using a variety of user testing methodologies to reveal actionable customer insights. You will have excellent analytical and problem solving skills, and the ability to quickly develop recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative evidence. You will need to be confident in explaining user needs to senior civil servants, and for acting as a persuasive advocate for those needs both within the team and the department at large. You will also be comfortable working with data, from gathering and analysis through to design and presentation.

**The main responsibilities of the post are:**

* planning, designing and conducting in-house usability testing sessions to support the design and development of government services
* leading the usability testing process from developing user recruitment briefs through to test moderation, analysis and report writing
* conducting in-house research to test new product and concept developments (including user requirements gathering and early stage concept and prototype testing, guerrilla research, and other approaches to ensuring the user need is fully understood in the service design)
* working with Service Managers to devise appropriate research strategies to generate focused insights and to convert concepts into high quality stimulus material
* working closely with designers and developers to turn user data into actionable product/service requirements that feed into prototype development, and influence product direction
* Designing, scripting and analysing ad-hoc quantitative surveys using in-house software licences
* Managing ad-hoc qualitative/quantitative research projects such as proposition development, visual identity and customer experience mapping
* applying knowledge in human factors, ethnography, and the user-centered design process to product and service design in an iterative development environment
* presenting findings and related design/business recommendations and customer insights to senior decision makers
* managing day-to-day operations with a range of usability and market research agencies with accountability for schedules, value for money and deliverables
* promoting user centered design principles and best practice within government

## **Personal Specification - Competencies / Skills**

***Setting Direction***

**MAKING EFFECTIVE DECISIONS**

**Essential**

* Draw together and present reasonable conclusions from a wide range of incomplete and complex evidence and data – able to act or decide even when details are not clear
* Weigh up data from various sources, recognising when to bring in experts/researchers to add to available information
* Identify the main issues in complex problems; clarify understanding or stakeholder expectations, to seek best option
* Make difficult decisions by pragmatically weighing the complexities involved against the need to act

**Changing and Improving**

**Essential**

* Encourage a culture of innovation focused on adding value – give people space to think creatively
* Effectively capture, utilise and share customer insight and views from a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure better policy and delivery
* Spot warning signs of things going wrong and provide a decisive response to significant delivery challenges

***Engaging People***

**LEADING AND COMMUNICATING**

**Essential**

* Be visible to staff and stakeholders and regularly undertake activities to engage and build trust with people involved in area of work
* Clarify strategies and plans, giving clear sense of direction and purpose for self and team
* Confidently engage with stakeholders and colleagues at all levels to generate commitment to goals
* Be open and inviting of the views of others and respond despite pressure to ignore, revert or concede

**Collaborating and Partnering**

**Essential**

* Actively build and maintain a network of colleagues and contacts to achieve progress on objectives and shared interests
* Effectively manage team dynamics when working across Departmental and other boundaries
* Actively involve partners to deliver a business outcome through collaboration that achieves better results for citizens

***DELIVERING RESULTS***

**DELIVERING AT PACE**

**Essential**

* Get the best out of people by giving enthusiastic and encouraging messages about priorities, objectives and expectations
* Clarify business priorities, roles and responsibilities and secure individual and team ownership
* Maintain effective performance in difficult and challenging circumstances, encouraging others to do the same
* Review, challenge and adjust performance levels to ensure quality outcomes are delivered on time, rewarding success
* Managing across boundaries to ensure delivery of benefits and sharing lessons learned

**MANAGING A QUALITY SERVICE**

**Essential**

* Exemplify positive customer service behaviours and promote a culture focused on ensuring customer needs are met
* Establish how the business area compares to customer service expectations and industry best practice and identify necessary improvements in plans
* Create regular opportunities for staff and customers to help improve service quality and demonstrate a visible involvement
* Ensure the service offer thoroughly considers customers’ needs and a broad range of available methods to meet this, including new technology where relevant

**SPECIALIST SKILLS**

**Essential**

* Demonstrable knowledge, experience in and passion for web user centered design practices.
* Proven experience of gathering user requirements for web based services.
* Proven experience of managing, executing and analysing usability test sessions
* Proven experience of working in an agile development environment with User Experience teams, designers and developers to create new digital products and services
* Experience of audience modeling and developing design personas.
* Desirable
* Degree in HCI/Usability/Cognitive Psychology/Market Research or related field.
* Experience across web content, tools and transactional services, especially those with complex user journeys.
* Experience within a research and digital environment.