

BIG BROTHER WATCH

BIG BROTHER WATCH: JOB INFORMATION PACK

HEAD OF RESEARCH & INVESTIGATIONS

Post details

Job title:	Head of Research and Investigations
Reports to:	Director
Working hours:	0.8 FTE
Starting salary:	£36,000 - £40,000 pro rata (depending on experience)
Location:	Vauxhall, London
Apply by:	Monday 20 th July 2020
Start date:	ASAP

To apply

Please send:

- Your CV
- A covering letter (1 page maximum)
- A portfolio/examples of investigative/research work

To recruitment@bigbrotherwatch.org.uk

Post summary

This is an exciting position for an exceptional person with a strong background in investigative journalism or in-depth research projects to work for one of the UK's leading rights NGOs. We're looking for an experienced professional to lead cutting edge research on automated decision making and AI in the welfare system, particularly within local government. Our preliminary research shows this will require tenacity and strong investigative skills.

The role will establish research leadership in the field on new technologies governing welfare, and over time will expand to include investigations across our organisational strategy: whether on data, rights and justice, freedom of expression online, policing and technology, suspicionless surveillance or emergency powers, as well as new organisational priorities.

In the first year, you'll significantly advance research into new digital welfare systems, illustrating specific systems of data processing and ultimately the impact on those affected. You'll advance digital welfare research both in breadth (across local authorities) but also depth (taking deep dives into a number of specific local authorities' systems) to develop a mature understanding of surveillance, profiling and predictive systems, working with an expert team to disseminate the research and develop impactful campaigns.

The ideal candidate will have a proven track record using a variety of investigative tools to pursue complex investigations in the public interest and communicating technical concepts to a wide audience. The position is well suited to someone looking to apply their skills in a dedicated team environment where investigations are utilised in powerful campaigns.

About you

We're looking for highly skilled, self-motivated, ambitious and experienced investigator. The ideal candidate will have a demonstrable interest in rights and civil liberties, especially privacy and data rights, and a high level of interest in new and emerging technologies – particularly big data, automated decision making and AI. An interest in welfare, social care disabilities or poverty in the UK will be advantageous.

You'll have strong experience in an investigative, journalistic or research capacity. Your publications will demonstrate a proven ability to produce cutting edge investigations, reports and/or research using innovative methods and leaving no stone unturned. You'll be an exceptional communicator, able to translate complex technical systems into compelling reports, whether for the general public or experts in our field.

You'll be at ease working on a strictly non-partisan, cross-party basis and grounding analysis in human rights and liberal principles.

You'll be able to work independently as well as within a close-knit team, and be proactive in pitching research and advocacy ideas for the organisation to pursue within the digital welfare project and beyond. Importantly, you'll also be proactive in building strong relationships and sharing information with partner organisations, sources, experts and stakeholders. We're looking for someone who is highly capable, self-motivated, flexible, diligent and able to produce high quality research work under pressure.

If you're committed to Big Brother Watch's mission, we'd like to hear from you.

Big Brother Watch

Big Brother Watch is a UK civil liberties campaign group fighting for a free future. We're determined to reclaim our privacy and defend freedoms at this time of enormous technological change. And we fight to win.

We're a fiercely independent, diverse, non-partisan and non-profit group of campaigners and researchers who work to roll back the surveillance state and protect rights in parliament, the media or the courts if we have to. We publish unique investigations and pursue powerful public campaigns to pursue real change. We work relentlessly to inform and empower the public to collectively reclaim privacy, defend our civil liberties and protect freedoms for the future.

We're a small, dedicated and highly effective team, now growing to five full-time staff and five volunteers.

Interviews

Invitations to interview will be sent no later than Friday 7th July.

Due to a high number of applications, unfortunately we cannot inform candidates whose applications are unsuccessful before this stage.

Job description

- Conduct in-depth investigations into digital welfare and (later) other organisational priorities
- Produce an in-depth digital welfare investigation via a comprehensive report
- Communicate complex investigations to varied audiences via accessible materials including articles, press releases, op-eds, blogs and presentations
- Use a range of investigative and research methods, from FOIs to sources and corporate/technical research
- Complement research with technical understanding acquired through background research of new systems and software
- Identify impact quantitatively and qualitatively where possible
- Build relationships across the sector and maintain regular communications between relevant researchers, campaigners and journalists to promote collective exchanges of knowledge and ideas
- Work closely with the team to disseminate findings (including report launch, press, roundtables) and inform campaign directions
- Manage Research Volunteer/s
- Uphold Big Brother Watch's reputational excellence in public fora (including potential for public spokesperson activities)
- Feed expertise into development of advocacy materials

Person specification

Essential

- Significant experience in a relevant journalistic or research role
- Experience managing long term research/investigations
- Demonstrable track record of producing impactful research/investigations and disseminating to a wide audience
- Proven ability to communicate clearly and persuasively on complex topics, to both expert and lay audiences
- A high level of interest in new and emerging technologies – particularly big data, automated decision making and AI
- Strong range of varied investigative and research skills
- Aptitude for managing and building positive relationships with sources, press, partner organisations and other stakeholders
- Proven ability to produce high quality, accurate, detailed and impactful work to deadlines, often under pressure
- Creativity and energy in approaching a workload consisting of large long-term projects
- Willingness to work in non-party, cross-party environment
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a dedicated team
- Commitment to Big Brother Watch's campaign objectives

Desirable

- Interest in welfare, social care disabilities or poverty in the UK
- Familiarity with digital rights, privacy and surveillance issues
- Project management experience
- Experience producing both research reports and journalistic reports
- Supervision or management experience