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| **General role information** |
| **Job Title:** | Head of Research & Innovation |
| **Reporting to:** | Director of Evidence & Impact |
| **Salary Band:** | BG10 |
| **Notice period:** | 3 months |
| **Career Band:** | BG10 |
| **Budget Responsibility?** | No |
| **Direct Reports?** | Yes -1  |
| **Client facing role?**   | No |
| **Introduction:** |
| MSI Reproductive Choices is one of the world’s leading providers of sexual and reproductive healthcare. We believe that everyone should have the right to choose. From contraception to safe abortion and life-saving post-abortion care, we are committed to delivering compassionate, affordable, high-quality services for all. We know that access to reproductive choice is life changing. For some, it can mean the ability to complete an education or start a career. For others, it means being able to look after the family they already have. For everyone, it means the freedom to decide their own future, creating a fairer, more equal world.Today, our organisation has over 9,000 team members working in 36 countries across the world. Our success lies in the fact that MSI teams are locally led, entrepreneurial and results-driven, and are passionate about delivering high quality, client-centred care in their own communities. As a social business, we focus on sustainable delivery, efficiency, and funding models that are built to last, so that the women and girls we serve today will have a choice in the future too. The **Evidence and Impact Team is part of** MSI’s Technical Services Department, serving as a trusted engine of technical leadership, insight generation, and innovation. The team plays a pivotal role in ensuring that MSI’s mission is grounded in high-quality, actionable evidence—driving programme improvement, strategic growth, and sector-wide influence.The team partners closely with country programmes to strengthen the use of routine data, turning it into powerful insights that shape operational decisions and boost performance. It also leads on the design and delivery of strategic research and tailored evaluations, supporting the scale-up of promising innovations and ensuring our services remain client-centred, equitable, and impactful.Through cutting-edge research, thought leadership, and a deep commitment to learning, the Evidence and Impact Team drives change by:* **Unlocking insights from operational data** to inform evidence-based decision-making at every level of the organisation.
* **Designing rigorous research** that enhances client experience and increases access to SRHR services—especially for marginalised populations—while maintaining the highest ethical and methodological standards.
* **Embedding a culture of learning and innovation** across MSI, ensuring that evidence translates into better programmes and supports global fundraising efforts.
* **Shaping the scale, quality, and sustainability** of service delivery across all channels through strategic evidence use.
* **Strengthening collaboration and capacity**, working hand-in-hand with country teams and research partners to ensure that research is co-created, contextually relevant, and used to its fullest potential.

This is a team that not only supports MSI's work—it amplifies it, ensuring our impact is measurable, meaningful, and mission-driven. |
| **The role** |
| **Lead MSI’s flagship research initiatives** and high-stakes third-party evaluations—ensuring world-class methodological rigour, strategic relevance, and real-world impact. This role is central to positioning MSI as a global thought leader in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). You will drive research excellence across the organisation while cultivating and strengthening relationships with research-focused donors who demand—and fund—the highest standard of analytical credibility. Your work will not only shape internal decision-making but also influence global SRHR agendas and investments.Success Metrics:* **Research Excellence:** All major studies meet or exceed donor expectations for methodological quality, ethical integrity, and utility—establishing MSI as a go-to centre of research excellence in the SRHR sector.
* **Donor Engagement & Funding Growth:** Tangible increases in funding and partnerships from research-oriented donors, with growing demand for MSI-led evidence initiatives.
* **Strategic Impact:** Research findings directly influence programmatic strategies, donor policy, and global SRHR discourse, leading to measurable shifts in access, quality, and equity in reproductive healthcare.
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| **Key Responsibilities** |
| **Research Excellence & Quality Assurance*** Steer and oversee all major third-party evaluations ensuring methodological rigor and usable outcomes
* Lead complex research initiatives including RCTs, impact evaluations
* Conduct ongoing oversight of evaluation processes and provide technical leadership on research methodology selection and study design
* Establish and maintain research quality standards across all MSI evaluation work
* Ensure research outputs meet the standards expected by data-driven donors
* Maintain high ethical standards in research, managing MSI’s independent Ethics Review Committee (ERC) and ensuring research across the partnership meets these standards.

**Strategic Research Leadership*** Lead the development and execution of MSI’s strategic research agenda, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and maintaining a robust pipeline of new research initiatives, including crafting competitive proposals for funding.
* Manage and strengthen collaborative partnerships with academic institutions and external research organizations to drive impactful, high-quality research.
* Advocate for research innovation by promoting the adoption of emerging methodologies and cutting-edge approaches.
* Monitor external SRHR trends and initiatives, integrating key insights into MSI’s learning agenda and operational best practices to keep the organization at the forefront of the sector.

**Donor research engagement*** Cultivate and sustain strategic relationships with data-focused philanthropists and partners who demand cutting-edge, methodologically rigorous research solutions.
* Serve as a confident ambassador of MSI’s research expertise at donor engagements and leading global conferences, elevating MSI’s profile as a trusted evidence partner.
* Provide authoritative technical guidance in high-stakes funding discussions, reinforcing MSI’s credibility and thought leadership in research.
* Drive MSI’s fundraising success by delivering compelling, evidence-based insights that strengthen donor proposals and inform strategic investment decisions.

**External research collaboration and insight dissemination*** Build and maintain partnerships with top research institutions and engage key donors like FCDO, CIFF, and Gates to secure research funding.
* Collaborate with peers on joint research projects and methodology development.
* Participate in SRH and global health research networks and communities of practice.
* Enable knowledge exchange between MSI and external researchers.
* Share MSI’s evidence through publications, compendiums, webinars, and other channels.

**Team Leadership & capacity development*** Lead and develop a focused 2-person research team
* Build MSI country team capabilities in advanced research methodologies and evaluation approaches
* Fostering collaborative relationships to integrate research insights into broader organizational strategies and innovations.
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| **Key Competencies** |
| **To perform this role, it is essential that you have the following skills:****Technical Research Expertise*** **Expert knowledge** of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies including RCTs, quasi-experimental methods; including multi-country evaluations and ethical research management.
* **Proficiency in advanced statistical analysis and research data interpretation**. Excellent data analysis skills using statistical software packages (STATA or R) and advanced excel skills; experience of advanced quantitative analysis techniques such as Interrupted Time Series Analysis, multilevel regression etc.
* **Proficiency in developing new metrics and frameworks** for assessing program impact, particularly in equity, disability, and marginalized group outcomes.
* **Deep understanding of research ethics**, protocols, and quality assurance processes
* **Highly proficient in steering large-scale third-party evaluations**.

**Sector Expertise*** **Substantial experience in sexual and reproductive health research**
* Understanding of SRH research challenges, indicators, and measurement approaches
* Knowledge of key global health research institutions and networks
* Familiarity with demographic and health research data sources and methodologies

**Stakeholder Engagement and communication*** **Highly developed skills to influence and persuade** ability to quickly and effectively build relationships with team members and stakeholders at all levels.
* Proven ability to communicate complex research concepts to diverse audiences
* Confident public speaking and strong communication skills, with the ability to craft persuasive, evidence-based narratives tailored to diverse external audiences such as donors, policymakers, and partners.
* Strong networks within academic research community and global health institutions
* Knowledge of evaluation standards expected by major donors and foundations
* Skilled in knowledge dissemination, including producing peer-reviewed publications and engaging in technical forums.
* Ability to build strategic research partnerships and secure funding through external engagement.

**Team leader:**  * Strong leadership in managing research portfolios and teams and skilled at capacity building approaches.
* Exceptional ability to foster learning cultures that value evidence-based decision making and continuous improvement
* Strong mentoring and coaching skills at individual and team levels

**Prioritisation and Multi-tasker:** Strong ability to manage multiple tasks and effectively prioritise workload |
| **Key Experience**  |
| **To perform this role, it is essential that you have the following experience:*** Extensive (minimum of 8 years) experience in leading research in global health
* Strong track record in managing multi-country research initiatives and partnerships.
* Demonstrated experience in thought leadership, research dissemination, and donor engagement.
* Proven ability to manage teams, budgets, and deliver high-quality research outputs in a fast-paced environment.

**Desirable experience includes:*** Proven experience working cross culturally and providing technical support to remote teams and in providing technical research assistance and training to staff, including non-researchers in resource constrained settings.
* Experience with financial modelling and cost effectiveness, impact measurement
* Experience in developing technical proposals, research logframes, case studies.
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| **Formal Education Qualifications** |
| * Advanced degree in Public Health, Social Sciences, or related fields is essential.
* Additional qualification or formal training in research design or impact evaluation desirable
* Proficiency in French is highly desirable (please state level in application)
* Additional qualification or formal training in research design, epidemiology or impact evaluation, data visualisation such as PowerBI; advanced excel skills - desirable
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| **Personal Attributes** |
| We recruit talented, dynamic people with diverse backgrounds and experiences, all united by a belief in our mission and a focus on delivering measurable results. We’re proud to be an equal opportunities employer and are committed to creating a fully inclusive workplace, where everyone feels able to participate and contribute meaningfully. You must be open-minded, curious, resilient, and solutions-oriented, and be committed to promoting equality, and safeguarding the welfare of team members and clients alike. **For this role, we’re looking for an individual who is:*** **Pro Choice commitment:** Energy, drive and passion for purpose and MSI Reproductive Choices’ mission and values. Ability and desire to inspire others with the MSI mission and values and highly supportive of MSI’s social business model.
* Uncompromising commitment to quality and excellence in all MEL deliverables
* **Natural evidence champion with a passion** for sharing relevant findings quickly and accessibly across the organisation and externally ensuring insights inform real-world impact
* **Enjoy and confident in high-level presentations** and in stakeholder engagement
* **Strong self-starter** with initiative-taking attitudes
* **Effective at fostering collaborative**, high-performing team culture: Enjoy collaborating across different teams and sharing knowledge. Open-minded approach to diverse perspectives and contexts.
* **Enjoy mentorin**g and building capabilities.
* **Comfortable challenging** eg. sub-optimal research practices and driving quality improvements or difference of opinions and do this in a positive, constructive way.
* **Intellectual curiosity**: curious about complex relationships between SRHR and broader global challenges and eager to explore innovative approaches
* **Resilience & adaptability:** Flexible attitude towards working in a fast-changing operating environment. Empathetic patience and thoughtfulness even in high-pressure, stressful situations, working collaboratively to find solutions. Strong ability to manage multiple tasks and effectively prioritize workload.
* **Committed to promoting equalit**y and safeguarding welfare of team members and clients
* **Able to travel internationally** and work across time zones as needed.
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| **Our Values** |
| **Mission Driven:** With unwavering commitment, we exist to empower women and men to have children by choice not chance.**Client Centred:** We are dedicated to our clients and work tirelessly to deliver high-quality, high-impact services that meet their individual needs.**Accountable**: We are accountable for our actions and focus on results, ensuring long term sustainability and increasing the impact of the Partnership.**Courageous:** We recruit and nurture talented, passionate, and brave people who have the courage to push boundaries, make tough decisions and challenge others in line with our mission.**Resilient**: In challenging situations, we work together and support each other, adapting and learning to find solutions, whatever we’re up against.  **Inclusive**: We believe that diversity is a strength. We all play our part in creating a culture where every team member can thrive, feel valued and contribute meaningfully to our mission, and where all our clients feel welcome and supported.  |
| By signing below, you indicate that you have read and agree to this job framework. |
| **Full Name:** |  |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |