Recruitment Toolkit: Questions to ask when planning your recruitment strategy – A draft example of a smaller project

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| What do I need to achieve in the short and long term?  |
| Goal | Timescale |
| Job descriptions for all posts. | Within 2 weeks |
| Confirm finance and contracts in place so can complete post requisition form. | Within 4 weeks |
| Publicise award of grant and refer to opportunities coming. | Now - urgent |
| Design recruitment process. | Within 6 weeks |
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| Of the above goals, what can I do myself and what do I need help with? * Think about your own strengths and weaknesses, and your knowledge and skills base.
* Do you need to bring in new technical skills or do you want help with developing ideas and writing?
* What level of expertise do you need?
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| Myself | Help |
| Publicising award and telling my network. | Exemplar job descriptions. |
| Asking mentor for advice (trade secrets to recruiting). | Completed post requisition (copy and paste). |
| Developing the technical side of the job descriptions based on the grant. | Administrative processes – ask school HR what they need from me. |

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| What help is already available to me? e.g. collaborators, shared technical services, buying out time from existing staff |
| * School HR – inform them as soon as project awarded and what roles will be created.
* Collaborators on the project (they are recruiting as well so we need to write job descriptions together).
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| What funding streams are available to me, and what parameters or restrictions do they place on recruitment?e.g. types of roles, timescales, pool of applicants |
| Funding | Parameters/restrictions |
| Budget for advertising – ask HR what options are. | Check if needs to tie in with other posts.Likely to be generic if linked to other posts. |
| Budget for applicants’ expenses. | Not sure if available – talk to school HR, likely to be UK only. |
| Budget for recruitment panel members. | Cover expenses? Where does this come from as grant hasn’t started.  |
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| Are there any other factors to consider? e.g. other stakeholders, requirements of your fellowship, employer requirements |
| * HR department will confirm all processes followed.
* Check with research support post award team for any potential issues with funder.
* If we want partners to be involved in recruitment, tell them now to get into diaries.
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# Deciding the specific roles

You may want to fill this in after you have completed ‘Describe the role’ found in the ‘Clarifying the role’ section of the Toolkit.

## Which types of roles do I want to recruit? – Postdoctoral Research Assistants/Associates, PGR students, technicians etc.

## How many people do I need?

## What do I specifically want them to do?

## How quickly do I want to expand, and in what order do I want to recruit these roles?

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| Role  | Purpose | Timescale | Order |
| PDRA1 | * Intensive ethnographic fieldwork at XX, meeting with and observing teams, gathering and assembling strategic documents and conducting interviews, focus groups and workshops with specific cohorts (see cfs).
* Use of established methodologies, such as social network analysis, to produce information that will then be collaboratively structured (with support) into a computational model of future change.
* Research skills will include working with textual and visual data, the ability to synthesise and assemble large datasets, knowledge of secondary data analysis/use and ability to work sensitively and ethically within large institutions or structures.
* Will work independently for long periods of time so must be autonomous but also work well in a team.
 | **First research appointment – once Project Manager in post.** Aim to recruit within 6 months of project start date. | 2 |
| PDRA2 | * A skilled social scientist with research experience in knowledge-action systems, emergent governance and the behaviour of boundary organizations that are influenced multi-stakeholders (e.g. in public and private spheres).
* They will work closely with specialist expert and PDRA1 to tailor innovations for our trial departments and implement a monitoring system.
* They will also engage in an exchange programme with subject associations to expand our evidence base and to embed reforms through their processes.
 | **Second research appointment – once Project Manager in post. If any delays with approving two posts, make sure this one goes forward AFTER PDRA1.**Aim to recruit within 9 months of project start date. |  |
| Project Manager | * Provide support to the PI, Co-Is and the team e.g. organising and supporting research team meetings, ethnographic cohort meetings, inter- university travel, preparing and distributing project documentation and budget reports (e.g. expenditure, orders, invoices/income).
* The administrator will also work with (PI) to run the outreach programme which will include conference organisation, external meetings, training material preparation, blogging and awareness raising though social media.
 | **Urgent – they will help with recruitment of PDRA.**Aim to recruit within 2 months of project start date. | 1 |

## How will the different roles interact with each other?

Two PDRAs will work on connected work packages so need to meet regularly. Aim for them to support each other.

Project Manager will liaise closely with PI and other team leadership.

## Are there potential conflicting priorities or dependencies between the different roles (staff or student)? How will they be prevented or resolved?

PDRA1 ideally needs to start before PDRA2 but may not be possible with recruitment timescales. So need to ensure PDRA2 has sufficient work until data from PDRA1 emerges if they start together.

Potential conflicts surrounding publishing, so develop publishing protocol from outset and get all team to agree to it (joint authorship according to journal or industry protocols – many available online, ask mentor for advice on which to follow).

Discuss with other research leaders what tensions may arise and create a research team meeting core agenda so these conversations become part of the norm. Raise challenges and instil a group problem solving approach. Regular team meetings but also individual meetings to address career development (Does this need to be me? Could this be with a mentor for the RAs AND Project Manager).

## How will I ensure that I offer roles that are attractive to potential applicants?

Think about the benefit to individuals – talk about the opportunities for visibility and profile raising. Be clear on career development within the role. Highlight advantages of the research organisation (facilities, training, networks). Identify suitable training and talk about working with them to write a development plan.

Talk about impact of the work we’re doing and the advantages of being in this area. Future funding and opportunities.

## What are my contingencies if I fail to recruit first time?

Almost a given. Explore with research support team what options there are for no cost extension (not telling funder immediately, just knowing what options are). Look at the list of research staff who are approaching end of contract (“At risk of redundancy”) for reasonable fit. Ask all colleagues in similar areas if any good researchers likely to come onto the job market.

Review project plan and see what can be moved in the Gantt chart.

## Do I have the time and resources to support the career development of these people, at the same time as achieving what I need? How will I ensure this?

Understand institutional/organisational training offer. Find mentors for postdocs or encourage peer mentoring (Has someone else got postdocs we could bring into this?).

Don’t forget administrative staff also need career development.

Initial meeting where we discuss where they want to be by the end of the contract. Get them to draw up a personal plan then review. DO NOT WRITE FOR THEM.

## Who else do I need support from to make this happen?

Training providers in the organisation - Researcher Development and HR (for administrative roles).

Other research team leaders - To see if we can have occasional meetings across multiple groups to provide bigger cohorts for postdocs.

My mentor - May be able to suggest strategies or connect me with good mentors for my team.