

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Lead economist
MANAGED BY:	Head of Analysis & Evaluation
GRADE:	11

BACKGROUND

The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) is seeking to appoint a lead economist to join the Analysis & Evaluation team.

This is an exciting time to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority. In the last year nearly three quarters of a billion pounds of new investment has been secured for the region. New plans are in place to deliver on Mayoral priorities to improve transport, skills and housing for our residents, take decisive action to tackle the climate emergency, and to support communities facing the cost-of-living crisis. There is a relentless focus on delivery to put the West of England on the map for regional, national and global success.

Led by the regional Metro Mayor, the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority brings together three local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and works with communities, other public services, and industry to deliver for the region.

Come and help shape the future of the West of England, a place so many people are proud to call home.

THE ROLE

Reporting to the Head of Analysis & Evaluation, the lead economist will specialise in assessing the impact of regional projects. With an excellent background in economic development, including economic modelling, business case development, or appraisal, you will help ensure that we design projects that achieve results, and take decisions to provide good value for money. You will be adept at working at the boundary between policy and analysis thinking.

You will be responsible for:

- Leading wide-ranging research and analysis of how to deliver the Metro Mayor's priorities in driving growth, equality and net zero
- Assessing how far strategic proposals will achieve our objectives, including for the forthcoming Local Growth Plan;
- Developing and maintaining a framework for business case authors to articulate the impact of proposed projects;
- Assisting project managers to ensure that they provide an intelligent client where development of schemes is being undertaken by consultants; and
- Reviewing business cases and providing assurance of the benefits set out.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Lead Economist will inform the Mayoral Combined Authority's spending decisions by leading work to understand how regional action can achieve growth, equality and transition to net zero. By developing robust evidence of how our projects will drive change, and estimating the impact of proposals, you will ensure that our spending decisions achieve our objectives and provide high value for money.

You will be responsible for:

Supporting the development of impactful proposals by designing and leading research to shape action on the region's priorities

Modelling the growth impact of strategic proposals

- Working closely with policy colleagues to identify how strategic proposals will affect the region's goals
- Modelling the potential scale of benefits and cost, to inform decisions on prioritisation

Raising the quality of benefits estimates in business cases

- Setting expectations for business case authors to adhere to in writing the economic case
- Providing advice and guidance on suitable approaches to modelling impacts
- And assisting project managers to ensure consultants provide high-quality assessments, particularly for transport schemes

Providing assurance of business cases

- Working with colleagues across the organisation, review business cases submitted for funding, to test the impacts set out and guide decision-makers on the value for money the proposal provides

You will work across all the Mayoral Combined Authority's areas of responsibility, and will work closely with policy and delivery colleagues to ensure that your analysis directly informs decision-making.

With a strong technical background in economic modelling and/or business case development, you will have the ability to work across topic areas and with a wide range of non-analytical stakeholders. You will use your excellent understanding of the policy environment and economic development techniques to influence change. And your demonstrated ability to drive forward work independently and implement new systems and processes will be essential as our organisation grows and develops.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Educated to degree level with a significant economics component, or with equivalent experience
- An excellent understanding of how regional economies work and role of the public sector in driving change
- Understanding of the Government Green Book business case process for planning and appraising projects

Experience

- Proven ability to design and deliver economic analysis to assess the impact of policies, using robust methodology and reporting reliable evidence which supports practical improvements or informs strategic decisions
- Extensive experience of designing and delivering high-quality analysis in a policy-facing environment
- An influential communicator, with the ability clearly to understand analysis requirements and convey insights from evidence in a way that drives decision-making and the shape of priorities and projects

Skills and Competencies

- A significant track record of working effectively with partners and stakeholders to influence change throughout an organisation
- Highly motivated, with experience of working autonomously to achieve personal objectives and managing others to achieve shared objectives
- Proven project management and leadership skills, with the ability to work under pressure, prioritise and ensure the delivery of results

DESIRABLE

- Knowledge of the West of England regional economy and the institutions that support economic development
- Experience of working with the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

Alongside a competitive salary, we offer an excellent benefits package including:

- 26/31 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- Generous Employer-Contribution Pension Scheme through the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Discounted monthly bus tickets

- Hybrid working to split your week between the office and home to help you achieve the best work/life balance and career goals.
- Carbon Literacy training is available for all staff at the Combined Authority. We are working towards the authority's aim of becoming a Gold Level Carbon Literate Organisation by 2025, which means having more than 50% of staff trained and certified as Carbon Literate.

We are based in a new bright, airy, modern office space, with all the latest technology, under a 10-minute walk from Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. We offer flexible and hybrid working options too if you would rather work from home, or another suitable location.

As an equal opportunities employer, we invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE



We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer. Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £15.84 - higher than the government minimum for over 21s, currently £11.44 per hour. Find out more [here](#).

WE ARE A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE GOOD EMPLOYMENT CHARTER

We're proud to have been accredited as a founding Member of the West of England Good Employment Charter. Find out more about the charter [here](#).

