

# Networks Manager



Role description

 **Hello,**

With all being well, you've come upon this document because you too want to ensure that **all children and young people can enjoy lives of choice and opportunity** *and* you excel at running events, building community, and organising teams.

The purpose of this document is two-fold. In the **first section**, we'll provide some background information about us, the **Reach Foundation**—chiefly, who we are and how we've come to be.

Then, in the **second section**, we'll share some thoughts about how our work is evolving and what we're going to need some help with. Here, you'll find lots of information about our prospective *Networks Manager* role and—crucially—what to do if you think you're the person to take it on.

# Section 1

About *us*

1

Our ambition

2

Our story

3

Our team

4

Events  
management

5

Community  
building

6

Operational  
support

# Section 2

About *the role*

# About us

The **Reach** Foundation

# About us

We've broken this section down into three parts:



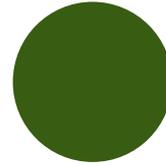
## **Our ambition**

Why we're here,  
what we're doing, and  
what we want to achieve



## **Our story**

Where we've been—  
the story so far..



## **Our team**

Who we are and  
how we work together

# Our ambition

*Why* we're here, *what* we're doing about it, and *what* we want to achieve

# Our purpose

*Everybody* at the Reach Foundation is working to ensure that **all children and young people are able to enjoy lives of choice and opportunity.**

In order to realise this, we believe that **great schools are necessary but not sufficient.** Great schools, alone, are not enough.

Over the following slides, we'll explain *how* we've arrived at this point 🙌

# The need

While we know exactly what children and young people need to thrive...



## To be safe and well supported

*Every child should be free from harm and enjoy secure, nurturing, positive experiences—especially during their first 1,001 days*



## To be healthy

*Every child should develop positive well-being—physically, mentally and emotionally*



## To achieve well academically

*Every child should be challenged and supported by great teaching and a rigorous curriculum—especially during their first 1,001 weeks*



## To build strong, trusting relationships

*Every child should have strong peer and familial relationships and engage positively with their local community*

# The need

... far too many children in England are not having these basic needs met right now.

In fact, 1.6 million children in England currently receive no or patchy support, with more than 800,000—a *third* of the country's most vulnerable young people—being declared '**invisible**' to local services by the government's own *Children's Commissioner* [8].

Worse still, these are *pre*-pandemic figures.

Over the last two years, a global health pandemic and ensuing macroeconomic crisis have combined to increase both the intensity and complexity of families' challenges, while significantly reducing the capacity of already overstretched and disjointed public services.

# The work

Something has to change, and **we believe that schools—and school trusts—are *uniquely well-placed to develop the support that children and families need*** because they:

- ✓ Provide **trusted, universal services**
- ✓ Are **visible** and **deeply rooted** in their communities
- ✓ Maintain **long-lasting relationships** with families
- ✓ Are well-placed to identify children's needs for **early intervention**
- ✓ Are **reliably funded** with facilities to support their communities

How many institutions—private or public—can claim the same?

# The work

Over the last ten years in Feltham, we've shown that when a school truly embraces its role as a *civic* institution, it can strengthen its community and transform young people's lives.<sup>1</sup>

This is what we mean when we say, *great schools are necessary but not sufficient*.

Today, we're partnering with schools, trusts and community leaders around the country to develop the cradle-to-career support *their* communities need to secure better outcomes for all.

We're hoping to create systemic change through local action.

<sup>1</sup> *In the following section of this document, we'll explain how this work continues to evolve within and around Feltham. If you want to find out more about our vision for the education system as a whole—with school trusts embracing their roles as 'anchor institutions'—take a look at the whitepaper we recently co-authored with the Confederation of School Trusts*  

# Our story

*How we got here*

# In 2012, we opened our all-through school...

## WHY

**Because we believe in the power of all-through education to enable relationships and provide coherence across a child's educational journey.**

We wanted to create a community of pupils, parents and teachers united by the highest expectations of what *every* young person can achieve and the commitment to do whatever it takes to help them get there.



## HOW

**Reach Academy Feltham** is a small, all-through school with 60 children in each year group (from Reception to Year 13). The school's human-scale and intentional approach ensures that every child builds strong, trusting relationships and social networks both within and beyond the school's gates.

**Reach Academy Feltham** has developed a rigorous, carefully-sequenced, backwards-planned, cross-phase curriculum to ensure every child achieves well academically and is well-prepared for the next stage of their life.

# In 2018, we opened our Children's Hub...

## WHY

**Because we realised that a great school is necessary but not sufficient to ensure every child in Feltham can live a life of choice and opportunity.**

We found that many of our students required deeper and more wide-ranging support than a school is typically able to provide.



## HOW

**We set up the Reach Children's Hub to provide an integrated pipeline of support for local children and families to complement the work of the school.**

Informed by international-evidence and local experiences<sup>2</sup>, the Hub creates space to curate insights and accelerate real change. The Hub's provision, then, is ever-evolving; responding to the community's needs.

In partnership with a wide-range of partners, the Hub currently provides perinatal support, Early Years Workforce training and development, parenting programmes, community organising, careers support and much, much more.

*<sup>2</sup> Including, but not limited to, the [Harlem Children's Zone](#), [StriveTogether](#), and the [West London Zone](#).*

# In 2020, we launched our Convening Partnership...

## WHY

**Because disadvantage is a profoundly complex issue—and the only way to address those is through collaboration and collective impact.**

If we want to affect and sustain transformational, systems change, we recognised the need—and opportunity—to embed wider networks of local organisations and stakeholders.



## HOW

**We launched the Feltham Convening Partnership: a cross-sector community partnership that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in our local area.**

Bringing together local people, services and organisations to work collectively requires a clear set of guiding values and design principles.

Our values define *how* we work—these are the core ideals which we share as a collective of individuals engaging together in this project. Our design principles define *what* we do—these are the principles to guide our way of working and the kinds of activity we will engage in.

You can find out more about those [here](#).

# Today, we're partnering with others to scale this approach...

## WHY

Because we've seen how profoundly high-quality, community-based 'cradle-to-career' support can positively impact children, their families and wider communities.

Because we believe, fervently, in the power of partnership. We've learnt a lot of lessons along the way but—critically—still don't have *all* of the answers, and acknowledge that we won't find them on our own.



## HOW

**We're working with local leaders around the country to provide cradle-to-career support for young people—grounded in great schools.**

We're focusing our present efforts on:

- 1 **Building partnerships** with all-through schools and trusts to curate insights and accelerate change; we're facilitating peer-to-peer learning and sharing our insights and asks with schools and policymakers nationwide.
- 2 **Developing school and trust leaders** to catalyse and sustain the transformational change their communities desire; we're delivering highly-focused leadership programmes to ensure these leaders possess the knowledge, agency and relationships to affect systems change.

We'll share some more information about our programmes and activities in the following section 🙌

# Our team

*Who we are and how we work together*

# Our organisation

The **Reach Foundation** is a registered charity responsible for the *Reach Children's Hub*, the *Feltham Convening Partnership*, and—until recently—*Oak National Academy*. It's also a corporate member of the *Reach Academy Trust*, which runs our school/s and teacher development programmes.

**Rebecca Cramer**  
CEO | Reach Academy Trust



**Ed Vanker**  
CEO | Reach Foundation



# Our team

As mooted in the section above, our team—the **Growth & Impact** team—is the newest addition to the Foundation, led by James Townsend.



**Ed Vainker**

CEO | Reach Foundation

**James Townsend**

Director | Growth & Impact

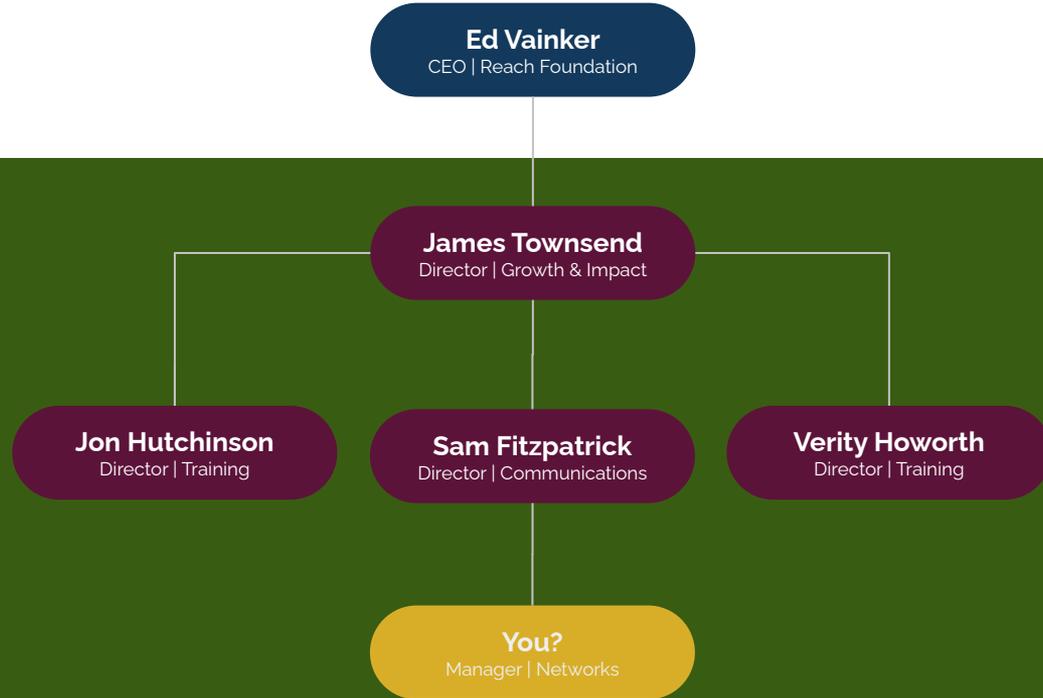


**Mei Lim**

Director | RCH & FCP



# Who we are



# Where we work

Our programme work is national and our team members work remotely. The map below illustrates roughly where our current **G&I team members** (see **blue pins**) and **programme partners** (see **yellow pins**) are based.

You'll note that our people and projects are clustered in the **South West** and **Yorkshire** at the moment, with an emerging presence in the **South (East)**—where the Reach Foundation is based.

Over the next few years, we expect to deepen our relationships in these regions before expanding our presence elsewhere.

As such, while this is a remote role, the *Networks Manager* will ideally be located near their line managers in the **South West**.

# What we're doing

**We're at an early stage in terms of scaling our work beyond Feltham.**

Notwithstanding this, in the last two years, our small team has designed, tested, and launched a number of innovative projects—including, but not limited to, our two core programmes highlighted on the following slides.

There is *huge* potential to further deepen and expand our impact, and to improve our collective understanding about precisely what it takes to enable outstanding cradle-to-career support for all.

# Our programmes



## We're building partnerships

to enhance the understanding, knowledge, and capacity required to develop, refine and sustain effective models of cradle-to-career support



Our **Cradle-to-Career Partnership** is a growing partnership of all-through schools and trusts supporting each other to develop local cradle-to-career models of support, anchored in great schools.

This year, we've been working in partnership with ten leading school trusts, with activity focused around 12 communities.

## We're developing leaders

to catalyse and sustain the transformational change communities desire



Our **SW100** is a one-year school leadership programme for aspiring headteachers in the South West committed to eradicating educational inequality. We aim to identify and support 100 high-impact school leaders into headship over the next ten years.

We're currently exploring the viability of adapting this model for other regions in England.

# How we work together

We practice what we preach. We prioritise building strong, trusting relationships with one another and believe fervently in working in partnership with others to initiate and sustain change.

We believe that small (but mighty!) teams best enable this; they foster a greater sense of ownership and agency, and create higher-levels of engagement, trust and challenge.

As such, we want our team to retain its human-scale and the nimbleness that enables.

We really enjoy working together. We value each others' expertise and are happy mucking in to get stuff done. We all enjoy being involved directly with designing and delivering our programmes and in building partnerships beyond the team to enable further growth.

In the next section, we'll share more information about the *Networks Manager* role.

# About the role

Networks Manager

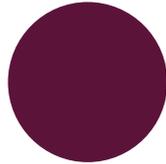
# Role responsibilities

The Networks Manager will support our work in three main ways:



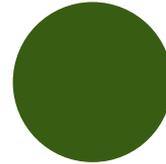
**Events  
management**

Moments



**Community  
building**

Meaning



**Operational  
support**

Momentum

# Events management

**We believe that *moments* matter**—and so we're intentional about the experiences we create and curate for people participating in our programmes and partnerships.

We're long-standing advocates of [relation-centred practice](#).

It's not always easy but we think it's really important to create time and space to bring people together—*in person*—to develop the strong, trusting relationships we know are so crucial for engendering collective impact.

This academic year, we're on track to deliver more than 30 in person events, in addition to a further ~75 hours of online activity. That means our team of five produces and delivers an average of two events per week during term time—none of which could be considered 'rinse-and-repeat' affairs.

We're thinking critically—and creatively—about how best to identify and nurture the right leaders, and what *we* need to do to enable *them* to forge relationships, build shared knowledge and understanding, and lead change.

That means we host a heady blend of residentials, single-day conferences, informal summits, seminars, and school visits each term; this year, we've spent lots of time in the South West, London, and Yorkshire—with a trip to Nashville penned in during the Easter break for good measure too.

To this end, the ideal candidate will:

- ✓ Possess a proven track record of producing and delivering successful events
- ✓ Enjoy bringing people together!
- ✓ Be up for the many creative and logistical challenges our programmes present
- ✓ Possess excellent attention to detail
- ✓ Enjoy a varied workload

# Community building

But *convening* people is just one part of the collective impact pie. **Meaning matters.**

As a team, we need to ensure that our partners and participants hold clearly defined common agendas, are building shared knowledge and understanding within (and between) their respective communities of practice, and are building momentum through continuous communication and mutually-reinforcing activities.

**We need to generate trust;** trust in one another (as individuals), as well as trust in our processes for moving forward (as a group). Our team's geared up to confront some of the most complex and wicked challenges affecting children and young people today—but those issues aren't always the most *urgent* ones facing the leaders we work with on a daily or weekly basis.

That means that we, as a team, need to continually *narrate the importance* of this work while supporting leaders to elevate it within their own organisations. We need to build confidence that our programmes *will* improve the young people's lives our leaders care so deeply about, while being sensitive and empathetic towards the many stressors and strains being placed upon them.

So, it's important our Network Manager:

- ✓ Is familiar with the services that support children and young people
- ✓ Is critically engaged with the challenges facing those organisations
- ✓ Is an adept communicator with strong '~~soft~~' 'human-centered' skills (including excellent social and emotional intelligence)
- ✓ Has experience establishing, building and/or serving communities (of practice)
- ✓ Is willing and able to proactively identify issues and use their initiative to confidently address them

# Operational support

I *know* what you're thinking, this sounds suspiciously like a catch-all for miscellaneous activities that nobody else wants to do...

It's not that. This domain is certainly no less important than the previous two. In fact, you could easily make the argument this aspect of the role is *more* important because we're at such a critical stage in our development.

We acknowledge this and are committed to giving it the due care and attention it requires. While we're still in the early throes of this work, there are plenty of green shoots and we're extremely encouraged by its potential to deliver—and so we're thinking critically about how best to expand our impact.

We know the answer isn't 'more of the same'; it's about **creating momentum**.

## The 'Operational support' domain will be dominated by activities supporting our team's central function: that is, growth and impact.

That means our Network Manager will possess the skills required to:

- ✓ Establish simple, elegant and scalable internal process and systems that enable us to spend as much time as possible doing our most impactful work. This is a simple task to describe but difficult to do brilliantly.
- ✓ Conduct research and present analyses to inform decision making—i.e. decisions relating to both grand strategic objectives and more pressing operational ones.
- ✓ Support the development and execution of annual delivery plans for existing and emerging programmes alike.
- ✓ Capture and share insights from our programme activities, to help us accurately appraise the impact of our work.
- ✓ Create and monitor programme budgets—track income and expenditure and report clear insights to senior management and the wider team.

# Skills

So, it's a wide-ranging role within a fast-moving team—what skills will the ideal candidate be able to demonstrate?

- ✓ **Excellent programme/project/events management skills** with an amazing attention to detail.
- ✓ **Fantastic verbal and written communication skills** with the ability to communicate with a wide range of audiences.
- ✓ **Strong interpersonal skills** to build trusting relationships with a wide range of people.
- ✓ **Strong analytical skills.** We're looking for someone who's comfortable reviewing qualitative feedback, processing datasets, and curating insights to share with others.
- ✓ **Adaptability!** This is part attribute and part skill. Working in partnership with others is great but it isn't always easy. The ideal candidate will approach collaborative working with positivity and humility, they'll seek feedback actively, *and* be open to both improving their existing technical skills and developing new ones.

# Details

**Role title:** Manager—*Networks*

**Reports to:** Director—*Communications*

**Location:** Flexible

**Salary:** £30-35k/pa (dependent on prior experience)

**Contract:** 40 hours per week; 25 days' annual leave. Requests for flexible working will be considered

**Start date:** ASAP

## Next steps...

- 1 If you'd like to formally apply for the role, [please complete this form](#) by Sunday 16th April
- 2 If you're intrigued but have outstanding questions, [please book an informal call with us](#) to discuss
- 3 Applications will be reviewed and considered upon submission
- 4 Successful applicants will be invited to complete a virtual interview in the last two weeks of April
- 5 If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to [contact us via email](#)