

Head of Networks

Purpose of the team:

Teach First has a potentially powerful position at the nexus of an extraordinary network, comprised of thousands of professionals, all deeply committed to our vision that one day, no child's success should be limited by their background. This includes nearly 10,000 Teach First Ambassadors (our alumni who have completed the two-year training programme, teaching in a school in a challenging area of the UK), over 1000 partner schools in the poorest and most complex areas of England and Wales, hundreds of businesses and corporate partners and a range of strong contacts with political influence.

The team is a new, reporting directly into the Chief Executive Officer, responsible for increasing the span and influence of the networks within the Teach First community, so that:

1. More, great teachers are equipped and inspired by their networks to enter, stay and be more impactful in the classroom
2. More school leaders are well connected through networks to increase the spread of knowledge and inspiration across the sector/community
3. More schools can draw on a strong community and network which surrounds them for support and the policy environment is more positive due to the deeper connections between policy makers and those on the front line.

There are currently 36 active and growing networks that we are supporting across the country, including networks of ambassador social entrepreneurs, senior leaders, Headteachers, those focused on issues such as shared headship or subjects like MFL and English. The networks are predominantly ambassador-focussed at the moment, but our aim is to ensure that high impact networks of support are soon available to all participants on our programmes and all our partner schools, as well as all ambassadors who want to work together and with others to accelerate change.

Critically, the Network Development Team is also responsible for supporting the broader ambassador community (whether or not they are actively engaged in network activity) with inspirational communications across multiple channels, an excellent 'customer service' enquiry desk, a clear menu of opportunities through which to get involved, strong data and processes and inspirational storytelling and communications. This work is vitally important and will take at least 50% of the Head of Networks' time and attention. It is complex, as resources are tight and ambassadors are diverse geographically, politically, in age, cohort profile, background etc. However, it is an exciting challenge as the community is full of incredible, dedicated, talented, driven people, working hard to end educational inequality from a variety of fields. The ambassador community will grow to around 30,000 within the next 10 years. There are currently 50 Head Teachers, 400 senior leaders in schools, 90 Social Entrepreneurs over 30 working in government and the Civil Service. We also part of a global movement of 65,000 alumni of similar 'Teach for All' programmes across the world.

We are a small, nimble, team working with some of the most driven and dynamic people working towards ending educational inequality today, looking for an experienced Head of Networks to join us to help shape our strategy and its implementation going forward.

Purpose of the role:

To develop and implement all aspects of the Network Development strategy, including:

1. How we engage ambassadors in all roles and regions through inspirational communications across all channels
2. How we develop high-impact, largely self-sustaining networks in the areas that need them most
3. How we monitor and measure the success of our work with both the broader ambassador community and the networks within and beyond it

The role presents a fantastic opportunity to shape the direction of this work at a critical turning point in Teach First's strategic development.

The ideal candidate will have expertise in alumni mobilisation and building high-impact, self-sustaining networks. They will be a strong strategic thinker, effective project manager, strong line manager and an excellent communicator.

Your responsibilities will include:

- Developing the Teach First centre of expertise on network development:
 - Ensure that our approach to network development is research-based and evidence-informed
 - Develop the network process, codifying the types of networks that we support and the way that we can support them for maximum impact
 - Lead the review of all current policies, processes and procedures for networks
 - Lead the development of internal understanding of Networks
 - Work with colleagues to embed network development in all Teach First programmes
- Developing the Teach First ambassador strategy so that we deliver the highest possible value at low cost
 - Ensuring that we have an effective approach to engaging with ambassadors of all our programmes, including:
 - A strong, multi-channel communication strategy
 - A strong and evolving set of opportunities for ambassadors to engage with TF
 - A strong set of messages that build ambassadors' sense of self-efficacy and leadership from the outset
 - Effective means for listening to and responding to the community
 - Sensible targets that don't create perverse incentives
- Leading the policies, processes and communications that underpin an excellent customer experience for the Teach First alumni community:
 - Ensuring that our regular communications are effective at inspiring and engaging ambassadors with high quality content
 - Ensure that the alumni community understand the 'offer' ensuring its clear and well communicated
 - Lead team of Officers to develop CRM, Data, Community Processes & Policies and Reporting
 - Support Network Officer to triage the alumni inbox and enquiries

The critical responsibilities of this role are described above. They may be subject to reasonable changes from time to time in line with business need. As part of the role you may be required to travel to other UK locations from time to time. You will also be required to attend away days/retreats and the annual "Offsite" event which is mandatory for all employees.

Person Specification

Essential skills and experience:

- **Knowing the market**
 - Experience of building successful, growing, self-sustaining networks
 - Skilled in using research to inform approach to building networks
 - Experience in the strategic and operational management of alumni networks
- **Project Management:**
 - Proficient ability to develop projects using best practice project management tools and techniques
 - Ability to monitor the implementation of multiple projects
 - Clear communicator of project plans and outcomes
- **Managing and Developing others:**
 - Proficient ability to manage performance, delegating and empowering others
 - Creates space for learning, providing stretch assignments as appropriate

- **Communicating and Influencing:**
 - Ability to confidently convey key messages on the purpose and potential of network development to both internal and external audiences to build a call for action
 - Advises others on different approaches to expand influence to key stakeholders

Desirable skills and experience:

- **Relationship Management:**
 - Proficient ability to use data and CRM, can act as a role model for others
 - Identify key decision makers and building knowledge and relationship with them
 - Process literate
- **Data insight:**
 - Uses data and evidence to form recommendations and insights into project / programme outcomes, direction and improvements.
- **Knowing the market**
 - Experience of building successful, growing, self-sustaining networks in the education sector