

**Inclusive Church Mission Researcher** (Part-Time, 9 Months – Loughborough)

**Salary:** £7,500 (average 15 hours/week)

**Contract Duration:** 9 months (or less)

**Location:** Loughborough, Leicestershire, UK

Loughborough United Reformed Church (URC) is committed to fostering an inclusive community that welcomes and embraces individuals from all backgrounds and experiences.

We are seeking a creative, insightful and compassionate Inclusive Church Mission Researcher to help us discover how to engage and attract adults aged 20–50 in our inclusive Christian community, which is currently made up primarily of those aged 50–90.

We believe an inclusive church celebrates and affirms people whatever their disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality and wishes to reflect such diversity within the life of the church.

**Key Relationships:**

- Minister of Loughborough URC
- Elders of Loughborough URC
- Congregation of Loughborough URC
- Loughborough Churches Partnership

**Responsible to:** the Elders' Meeting of Loughborough URC through the Line Manager.

**The Role**

You will spend some time with the congregation on a Sunday to worship with and be present alongside our congregation, to help us research and reflect how our church can connect meaningfully with younger generations and those of diverse backgrounds within our town. Your research will inform how our church evolves to be a truly inclusive community and will inform the potential creation of a longer-term Mission, Outreach and Community Engagement role.

Please visit <https://loughboroughurc.co.uk> to learn more about our mission, values, and inclusive approach.

**Working Pattern:**

As part of this role you will be present within the regular life of the church in ways that will inform your research. That could include some evenings and weekends, as well as the time required for independent research, analysis and writing up.

To help us understand how our congregation can better welcome and engage people aged 20–50, the research project you will lead on will include:

- Shaping and agreeing the brief with the Elders' Meeting
- Creating and facilitating Focus Groups with current and potential church participants
- Designing and conducting interviews and questionnaires (online and in-person)
- Undertaking literature reviews on church engagement trends
- Analysing qualitative and quantitative data
- Regular updates to the Elders' Meeting regarding planning and progress
- Producing clear, compelling findings and recommendations
- You will also spend some time seeing what church life is like currently — attending worship, Bible studies, getting to know the current congregation and sharing your insights and updates through blogs.

**Contract Period:** If you believe that you can deliver this research by engaging in more hours per week over a shorter period, then please set that out in your application. The funds available remain the same.

**Expectation at the end of the contract:** A report with clear recommendations to the church of ways to reach out and build an inclusive Christian community for the people of Loughborough in the 20-50 age group. To be presented to the church as a Presentation and will inform the potential creation of a longer-term Mission, Outreach and Community Engagement role.

*There's potential for the researcher to apply for or help shape the follow-on role.*

**Background Information**

Loughborough is a town in North Leicestershire with good transport links to many areas of the country via the M1 or East Midlands Railway. It has a resident population of 65,000 people which is swelled by 18,000 students from October to

May. 30% of the population are aged 20-34, another 30% are aged 35-64. 76% are White British and 15% Asian.

The church is situated near to the town centre amongst early 20th Century housing stock. 45% of the residents within 1km are in privately rented accommodation but not all of these are full-time students. We believe we have a role within this area working with local residents and students who seek a church in the liberal reformed tradition. Our congregation is mainly aged 60-90 and is populated by people who arrived in the town to work when they were aged 20-50. It has a track record of being involved in Equality Action, Town of Sanctuary and is registered for Same-sex marriages. We have an active Community Centre that provides accommodation for a variety of groups and our own outreach to low income families and asylum seekers.

### **Person Specification:**

- A degree including dissertation in a field with social research methods (e.g., sociology, theology, anthropology), or have relevant research experience
- Understanding (or willingness to learn) about contemporary Christian, religious and societal trends in the UK
- Will share an understanding of inclusive church as one that celebrates and affirms people whatever their disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality and wishes to reflect such diversity within the life of the church.
- You will be an excellent researcher, communicator and writer and have a heart that welcomes everyone to God's banqueting table
- You will lead delivery of the project – including shaping briefs, undertaking literature reviews, questionnaire design, conducting in-person and online interviews and analysing data using established research methods
- Ensure the relevant research tasks are delivered on time, on budget and to the requirements of the brief
- Plan and sequence work, whilst regularly updating the Elders on progress
- Play a full role in the life of the church, including, building relationships attending worship, bible studies, writing blogs when available to do so.
- Interpret and disseminate research for the benefit of any future role that arises from this research

### **Knowledge**

- Basic understanding of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research

- Basic knowledge of contemporary Christianity and religious trends in Britain or a willingness to learn
- A understanding of the theological and biblical understanding supporting an inclusive church.

### **Skills**

- Strong project management skills, particularly research project management, from design to completion, to deadline
- Excellent communication—verbal, written, and ideally visual
- Strong IT skills (including MS Word, Excel, Outlook)
- Organised, detail-focused, and able to meet deadlines

### **Personal Attributes**

- Warm, relational and enthusiastic about inclusivity
- Deeply interested in people's motivations, faith, and belonging
- A creative, curious mind with a heart for welcoming everyone to God's banqueting table
- A personal Christian faith and a commitment to the values of our church – Inviting, Including, Involving, Invoking, Investing and Inspiring (as set out in our website) <https://loughboroughurc.co.uk>
- An innovative thinker who is able to work independently and be self-motivated

### **Practical Requirements**

- Must have the right to work in the UK
- Includes 45 hours of paid holiday plus any public holidays within contract period.
- Should be based near Loughborough or able to spend 2 days per week in the area for the duration of the role
- There is an occupational requirement for applicants to be practising Christians, as allowed by the Equality Act 2010 (Schedule 9, Part 1).

**Closing Date for Applications: 30 November 2025** (but if there is a suitable candidate we may interview before that date and close the applications)

**If you wish to have an informal talk please contact our Minister Craig Muir: 07483 107735 by text in the first instance and he will ring you back when available.**

Please apply by email to [loughboroughurc@gmail.com](mailto:loughboroughurc@gmail.com) no later than Sunday 30 November 2025 with a CV that sets out your research experience and whether any research projects have been quantitative and qualitative or mixed; and how you would anticipate setting up this research project

Loughborough URC is committed to the values of *Inviting, Including, Involving, Invoking, Investing, and Inspiring*. Within your application choose two of these and share how they resonate with your own experience or vision of church life.