

Head of Technology

Salary: £55k-£60k, depending on experience

About Voice 21

Voice 21 is the national oracy education charity. We exist to empower every child to use their voice for success in school and life. Our work transforms learning and life chances through talk by increasing access to a high-quality oracy education for those that need it most. Follow the links to find out more about [why oracy is so vital](#) and the [impact Voice 21 has](#).

Voice 21 is leading the conversation to prioritise oracy within schools and teaching. In July 2023, the [Labour party announced its commitment to prioritise oracy and speaking lessons as part of its future mission for education](#). As a result oracy has become a major talking point, with the topic and Voice 21 appearing on the front pages of the national newspapers and leading discussion on TV and radio.

Your opportunity

Tackle a vital challenge, with great people. Voice 21 exists to transform young people's learning and life chances through talk and we are aiming to be working with 2,000 schools a year by 2025. To reach this goal we recruit great people and give them real responsibility, training and support.

Output-focused culture, with flexible working opportunities. We have an agile and flexible approach – our team can work when and wherever works best to deliver the requirements of their role. For staff working at home, we support them to create a workspace and provide technology that enables them to work effectively.

Real development opportunities. We believe in supporting people to develop the skills they need to be excellent – whether this means funding external training, finding a mentor to support them or giving them the time to learn from others in the organisations through our regular CPD sessions. We also offer paid study leave for team members taking part in formal studies outside of work.

For more information on why we think you should apply for the role, see the “Why work for us” section at the end of this job description.

Your purpose

You will be joining Voice 21 at an extremely exciting time, both organisationally and in terms of technology. We have just launched the [Voice 21 Exchange](#), our school-facing wordpress site, through which we are planning to centre every aspect of our member schools' interactions with us over the coming years, from booking onto courses, to participating in online learning, to submitting and viewing impact data. We are looking for someone who understands the power of technology in organisational transformation, and who understands how to strategically develop and implement technology systems to benefit our schools and our staff.

The Head of Technology will lead the development and implementation of Voice 21's technology strategy in line with our organisational strategy and priorities. The Head of Technology will be accountable for all aspects of our technology, data and systems. They will ensure that we take the opportunity to improve our member and staff experience through technology improvements, have

reliable and robust data and reporting, and provide appropriate training and support to the rest of Voice 21.

Most importantly, you will lead the technology team at Voice 21, ensuring that we have the right mix of skills within the team and that we promote a culture of expertise, trust and connection.

Your responsibilities

- Lead the development, monitoring and implementation of the organisation's technology strategy in line with organisational strategy and priorities, specifically:
 - Responsible for administration and setup of internal productivity systems such as slack
 - Responsible for ensuring our Voice 21 Exchange, Salesforce and other systems (Zendesk, Campaign Monitor, Xero, Hibob, JazzHR & Big Query) are built in a way that is aligned with our tech strategy and approach, working with the owners of each of these systems
 - Responsible for integration between systems
- Promote and enable the development and maintenance of a data aware culture, which treats data as an asset, with oversight of data protection and information security.
- Support and enable a high quality school experience by ensuring that the technology team can translate and prioritise departmental business needs into scalable, impactful and cost effective technology solutions
- Lead and manage the Technology team, creating the strategic direction, processes and culture to enable them to directly support and add value to the rest of the organisation and ensure their continued professional development
- Ensure that we procure and develop best in class systems and software and enable the whole organisation to get the most out of our technology.
- Lead the development and implementation of organisation-wide technology initiatives, leading and participating in project teams as required
- Consistently communicate the priorities, impact and needs of the technology team to influence and support the evolution of our organisational and departmental strategies
- As a member of our Extended Leadership Team, contribute to the organisation's strategic direction and goals, as well as consistently promoting and displaying values aligned behaviour
- Any other duties commensurate with the role level as required by the Director of Operations

What the role might look like:

Within 3 months, you'll have:

- Audited our current technology stack and ways of working and made recommendations for change, including any additional roles or support required.
- Reviewed our technology strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose, working with the Senior Technology Advisor and the Director of Operations.
- Built strong relationships and ways of working with the tech team, enabling individual and team performance.

Within 6 months, you'll have:

- Led on creating and communicating a high level tech roadmap, working with stakeholders across Voice 21 to set a multi year direction for our systems and data which has cross organisational buy in
- Consistently influenced organisational decision making and the thinking of other team's through promoting and advocating the value that the tech team brings
- Ensured that we have the right resource within the tech team to deliver the tech and organisational strategy.

From 6 months onwards, we expect for you to be:

- Owning every aspect of our technology strategy and operations
- Establishing and reporting on KPIs for technology BAU
- Leading and managing a high performing tech team to drive Voice 21 forward
- Consistently contributing to the overall strategic direction and culture of Voice 21

This job is for you if you...

- Have significant experience of leading and growing a technology function
- Have strong technical expertise in one or more areas within this job description and a willingness to learn more. While this role is primarily a leadership role, it is important that the successful candidate understands the details and is able to support and develop team members as required.
- Can grow and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders.
- Are able to perform effectively under pressure with good personal organisation, time management and prioritisation skills
- Have a strong attention to detail and creative problem solving skills
- Want to see the direct impact your work has in a fast-paced, growing organisation
- Are passionate about education and improving children's life chances. Our ideal candidate will have previous experience working in the education sector, but this is not essential.

Who you'll work with:

- The Technology Team - you will be line managing:
 - Wordpress Developer - responsible for the development of the Voice 21 Exchange
 - Data Transformation Lead - responsible for data strategy and day to day information security and data protection
 - Database Systems Administrator - responsible for the maintenance and development of our salesforce CRM system
- The Director of Operations - who will be your line manager and will support in providing strategic direction and support, along with our Senior Technology Advisor (Paul Osborne, ex-CTO of The Key).
- Multiple stakeholders across the organisation, particularly in our Engagement, Growth, Programmes, Product Management and Finance functions.

Where you'll work: Remote, with travel to our London office and elsewhere for meetings. Occasional overnight stays may be required depending on where you are based.

Contract: Permanent, subject to successful probation review at 3 months.

Terms: We would welcome applications on a full-time or 4-day per week basis

Application details

To apply:

Please send your most recent CV and a document answering the questions below to careers@voice21.org with the subject "Head of Technology application":

- Tell us why you want to work at Voice 21. What is it about us and our mission that excites you? (Max. 400 words).
- Making direct reference to the job description (both the 'Your responsibilities' and 'This job is for you if...' sections), please tell us the three main reasons why you would make an excellent Head of Technology (Max. 400 words).
- Tell us about something you have achieved recently in a professional context that you are proud of (Max 200 words).
- Please specify where you saw the job advertised.

Closing date: Sunday 24th March, midnight.

We reserve the right to close applications early.

Interview date: We will hold initial telephone interviews in the week commencing 25th March and second round interviews by zoom in the week commencing Monday 8th April.

Start date: As soon as possible, but we will be flexible for the right candidate.

Questions: if you have any questions about the role, or would like to discuss it before submitting an application, please contact Jim Riddiford, Director of Operations (jim@voice21.org)

Valuing every voice

Voice 21 believes that every voice should be heard and valued. We are committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and do not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership.

We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join Voice 21.

Why work for us?

We hope that we have given you a good sense of what life at Voice 21 is like and what the role entails - please see below for some more reasons to apply!

Holiday: 25 days annual leave plus additional 3 day Christmas closure period as well as two Expertise Days per year. Holiday entitlement increases are linked to length of service.

Benefits: Employer contribution to pension (5%), interest-free season ticket, cycle and technology loans and work from home allowance.

Wellbeing: We provide an Employee Assistance Programme through Health Assured which provides all Voice 21 employees 24/7/365 support if needed.

The way we work: We have an agile and flexible approach – our team can work when and wherever works best to deliver the requirements of their role. For staff working at home, we support them to create a workspace and provide technology that enables them to work effectively. You will also have regular opportunities to get together as a whole staff and in your team, including away days, social events and other development events.

Development opportunities: We believe in supporting people to develop the skills they need to be excellent – whether this means funding external training, finding a mentor to support them or giving them the time to learn from others in the organisations through our regular CPD sessions. We also offer paid study leave for team members taking part in formal studies outside of work. If you want to volunteer as a school governor, trustee or in some other capacity for a mission-aligned organisation. We support our team to take on these commitments without taking annual leave.

Voices of Voice 21

We recently asked our team what they enjoy most about working at Voice 21. Below is a selection of their responses:

"I really enjoy working in an organisation that strives for innovation and is rooted in research of what actually works for teachers in the daily life of a classroom and a school curriculum."

"I find it inspiring being part of the Voice 21 team - being surrounded by passionate, mission-driven people makes me want to bring my best every day, because I know that my fab colleagues won't let a good idea gather dust - everything will be snapped up and built into something that helps us make a difference for the students in our schools."

"At Voice 21, there is a strong culture of sharing expertise and this ensures that your voice is valued and ideas heard, no matter your role. Although a lot of the day-to-day work is virtual, relationships are strong. The very purposefully planned in-person meetings help these relationships to grow and flourish, as does the high level of collaboration in teams."

"One of the many things I love about working at Voice 21 are the opportunities for professional development. Working in a small, fast-growing organisation has given me the chance to grow professionally and to expand my skill set in a supportive environment."