

Head of 'Ones to Watch' & senior research manager

Location: Central Oxford

Reports to: CEO

Salary: £45,000 - £65,000

Type: Permanent/full-time



Oxford-based **Fast Track** is looking for an experienced and talented researcher and project manager to join our senior management team and be responsible for our high-profile Ones to Watch programmes, which identify Britain's star companies of the future and are published in the Business section of **The Sunday Times**. They will also be expected to help with the strategic development of the business.

The ideal candidate should be a bright graduate with **at least five years'** relevant company research and project management experience, a team leader with excellent writing skills and a strong interest in Britain's private companies. They should have the ability to build productive relationships with leading entrepreneurs and our blue-chip sponsors. They could come from a variety of backgrounds, including, but not limited to: accountancy, private equity, corporate finance or business consultancy.

To thrive in the role, the successful candidate will need to embrace our culture of continuous improvement, have exceptional attention to detail and strong account handling skills at a senior level.

The role & responsibilities

The head of Ones to Watch (OtW) will work alongside our head of league tables and head of research operations and help to manage our 11-strong team of researchers. The successful candidate will lead Fast Track's four OtW programmes, and our Disruptors to Watch, which identify Britain's private companies with star potential.

Key aspects of the role include:

- **Project management:** oversee the research of Fast Track's OtW programmes published in **The Sunday Times**. Review, improve and present shortlisting docs for internal judging and help manage external judging with sponsors
- **Research and analysis:** conduct primary research, identify and visit future star companies, analyse their accounts and develop strategies to win over unresponsive companies and engage their founders. Write and/or edit the supporting OtW articles, with by-lines in **The Sunday Times** supplement
- **Account handling:** help account manage blue-chip clients that sponsor Ones to Watch programmes, and other sponsors where relevant. Meet and greet OtW companies' reps at national awards dinners
- **Networking dinners:** work closely with our events team to help to engage Ones to Watch companies to secure their attendance at our 30+ invitation-only networking dinners, and assist at up to 8 dinners a year

The candidate

- Graduate with at least five years' relevant company research, project and team management experience; some level of accountancy training would be an advantage
- Strong interest in and knowledge of entrepreneurs and private companies; good understanding of company accounts and ability to analyse private-company performance in multiple sectors
- Experienced at using financial data sources as key research tools, such as Fame and Companies House
- Excellent inter-personal skills and experience of managing people
- Robust, organised, flexible and adaptable with meticulous attention to detail and ability to write clearly and concisely and deliver to tight deadlines
- Highly service-orientated, with experience of client servicing

The company

Who we are

- Fast Track is the UK's leading research and networking events company focused on top-performing private companies and entrepreneurs, from the fastest-growing tech companies to the largest private companies, which we rank in our league tables in **The Sunday Times**
- It was founded in 1997 by our chief executive Hamish Stevenson with cornerstone, and ongoing, support from Richard Branson and Virgin
- Our sole source of revenue is from our blue-chip sponsors, who use their sponsorship to raise their profile amongst different types of private companies, and to meet and win new business from hard-to-reach entrepreneurs and directors at our company visits and networking events
- We employ 24 full-time members of staff, and eight freelance researchers; many staff have worked with Fast Track for over ten years

What we do

- We research and publish seven annual private company league tables with **The Sunday Times**; and our 30+ highly-regarded, invitation-only events create valuable networking opportunities for their entrepreneurial directors and our sponsors
- We conduct 350 annual research visits to companies shortlisted for our league tables, accompanied by partners from our sponsors, where we interview the founders, chief executives and finance directors
- Our sponsors include: Virgin (all 22 yrs); HSBC, Lloyds, PwC, and UBS Wealth Management (15+ yrs); Barclays, BDO, Hiscox, Grant Thornton and Virgin Atlantic (10+ yrs); BGF, BMW and Linklaters (5+ yrs); DHL and N+1 Singer (3 yrs); and Oracle Netsuite and Santander (1 yr)
- Attendees and speakers at our events range from founders of our alumni growth companies such as Fever-Tree, Matchesfashion.com and Skyscanner, to the founders and CEOs of our alumni from the largest private companies such as Ineos, Dyson, and Pret A Manger

How to apply

Please email jobs@fasttrack.co.uk, in confidence, with your max. two-page application letter, including your current and expected remuneration, notice period, and where you saw the vacancy; and a copy of your CV.

For further info, contact Eva Gronbech on **01865 297100**.

How the recruitment process will work

- *Online assessment*: all applications will be reviewed, and selected candidates will be asked to complete a one-hour online exercises
- *Telephone interviews*: after the online exercises have been assessed, shortlisted candidates will be telephone-interviewed by a member of the team, before we potentially invite you to one of our second-round interview evenings at Fast Track's offices in St Clements, Oxford
- *Interview evening*: we will aim to hold multiple dates between now and Wednesday 20 March, to accommodate as many candidates as possible. These interview evenings typically last from 5pm to 8pm, and will include candidates from across the roles.

We will start with a presentation about the company and the different roles, then candidates will have the opportunity to ask questions. This will be followed by one short written skills-based exercise (no preparation needed), a short individual interview, and a more informal chat with senior members of our team. (Note: these are not group interviews or tasks, merely a more efficient way for us to manage the time of our senior management team as we are recruiting for multiple roles)

- *Follow-up final round interviews*: all final-stage candidates for the more senior roles, and any other candidates where necessary, will be invited back for a final round of in-depth interviews, including with other members of the