Job Description

Practice Head – Future of Finance Initiative (FFI)

Organisation: Dvara Research

Function: Research, Policy and Strategic Partnerships

Level: Senior Leadership

About the Future of Finance Initiative

The Future of Finance Initiative (FFI) at Dvara Research examines how technological, market and institutional developments are reshaping financial services and their implications for financial inclusion, consumer protection and the broader financial system. The Initiative generates rigorous, interdisciplinary research and translates evidence into actionable policy recommendations, governance frameworks and institutional solutions. Its work spans digital financial services, digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence, data governance, financial consumer protection and responsible innovation. FFI works with regulators, policymakers, industry participants, international organisations and civil society to strengthen the inclusivity, accountability, resilience and effectiveness of India's evolving financial ecosystem.

Role Purpose

The Practice Head provides strategic, intellectual and institutional leadership to the Future of Finance Initiative. The role is responsible for defining the Initiative's research and policy agenda, building and leading multidisciplinary teams, developing strategic partnerships, mobilising resources and ensuring that research contributes meaningfully to regulatory thinking, institutional practice and public-policy outcomes. The Practice Head combines research excellence with policy judgement, stakeholder engagement and organisational leadership, positioning FFI as a credible and influential voice on the future of finance in India and internationally.

Key Responsibilities

1. Research Strategy and Intellectual Leadership

- Define and periodically refine the Initiative's medium- and long-term research agenda, anticipating emerging developments in financial services, technology and regulation.
- Identify consequential policy questions and develop research programmes that address gaps in evidence, governance and institutional design.
- Lead interdisciplinary research across financial regulation, digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence, data governance, consumer protection and financial inclusion.
- Ensure methodological rigour, analytical independence and the quality of research outputs.
- Translate complex technological and regulatory developments into accessible, evidence-based policy recommendations and implementable institutional frameworks.
- Foster original thinking and research that challenges prevailing assumptions and contributes new perspectives to policy debates.

2. Policy Influence and Institutional Engagement

- Develop strategies to translate research findings into regulatory, policy and institutional outcomes.
- Engage with regulators, government departments, industry bodies and other relevant institutions on emerging policy priorities.
- Lead policy submissions, regulatory consultation responses, technical recommendations and institutional reform proposals.
- Convene stakeholders to facilitate dialogue, collaborative problem-solving and consensus-building.
- Support the development and adoption of practical governance tools, regulatory approaches and industry frameworks.
- Monitor policy and institutional developments to identify opportunities for timely intervention.

3. Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation

- Build and sustain partnerships with research institutions, regulators, industry associations, multilateral organisations, philanthropic foundations and other stakeholders.
- Identify collaborative research, technical assistance, policy engagement and institutional capacity-building opportunities.
- Develop research proposals, partnerships and funding opportunities aligned with strategic priorities.
- Oversee funder and partner relationships, ensuring high-quality delivery and alignment with agreed objectives.
- Represent FFI in strategic collaborations and contribute to Dvara Research's institutional partnerships.

4. Practice Development and Organisational Leadership

- Develop annual work plans, operational priorities, resource requirements and budgets.
- Build, manage and mentor multidisciplinary research teams, fostering intellectual curiosity, professional development and high performance.
- Oversee research portfolios from conceptualisation and resource mobilisation through execution, dissemination and assessment of policy uptake.
- Establish systems for research quality assurance, project management, knowledge management and performance monitoring.
- Ensure timely delivery of outputs and contractual commitments without compromising rigour.
- Contribute to organisation-wide strategy, institutional development and cross-practice collaboration.

5. External Representation and Thought Leadership

- Position FFI as a leading source of independent, credible and policy-relevant research.
- Represent Dvara Research in senior policy consultations, conferences, expert groups and national and international forums.
- Lead policy papers, working papers, peer-reviewed publications, opinion pieces and other knowledge products.
- Build relationships with policymakers, practitioners and researchers to expand the Initiative's influence.
- Shape emerging policy conversations through timely research, public engagement and strategic convenings.

6. Impact, Learning and Accountability

- Define indicators for research quality, policy relevance, stakeholder engagement and institutional influence.
- Track uptake of recommendations in regulatory frameworks, industry practices and institutional initiatives.
- Encourage learning from policy engagements, implementation experience and stakeholder feedback.
- Maintain independence, research integrity and public-interest orientation.

Core Research and Policy Domains

- Digital financial inclusion: Access, usage, suitability and consumer outcomes across payments, credit, savings and insurance.
- Digital public infrastructure: Governance, interoperability, accessibility, institutional design and consumer-centricity.
- Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies: Responsible adoption, model governance, fairness, accountability and risk management.
- Financial consumer protection: Fraud, grievance redress, liability, market conduct, vulnerability and effective remedies.
- Data governance and digital trust: Privacy, consent, data-sharing architectures, platform governance and responsible data use.
- Financial-sector regulation and innovation: Responses to technological change, market structures, emerging business models and systemic risks.

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Postgraduate qualification in public policy, economics, finance, law, development studies, technology policy or related discipline.
- Approximately 10–15 years of relevant experience, including substantial research, policy advisory, financial regulation, technology governance or institutional leadership.
- Ability to develop and lead research programmes addressing complex public-policy questions.
- Strong understanding of India's financial-services ecosystem, regulatory institutions and digital economy.
- Experience engaging senior policymakers, regulators, industry and development organisations.
- Ability to manage multidisciplinary teams, research portfolios, budgets and partnerships.
- Excellent analytical, written and verbal communication skills, with high-quality research and policy outputs.

Desirable

- Experience developing governance frameworks, policy tools or institutional reform proposals.
- Exposure to international policy processes, multilateral institutions or cross-country research.
- Experience mobilising research funding and managing strategic partnerships.
- Recognised publications, policy contributions or thought leadership.

Key Competencies

Strategic and systems thinking; original and interdisciplinary research; regulatory and institutional judgement; policy translation and influence; stakeholder engagement; partnership development and resource mobilisation; team leadership; programme and financial management; executive communication; research integrity.

Expected Outcomes

1. A coherent, forward-looking and influential research agenda aligned with Dvara Research's mission.
2. High-quality research contributing to regulatory, policy or institutional change.
3. Sustained relationships with regulators, policymakers, industry and international organisations.
4. Effective development and delivery of a diversified portfolio of research and advisory engagements.
5. A capable, motivated and developing multidisciplinary research team.
6. Greater visibility, credibility and influence for FFI and Dvara Research.
7. Demonstrable uptake of research insights in policy deliberations, governance frameworks and institutional practices.

Role Summary

The Practice Head, Future of Finance Initiative, leads a multidisciplinary research and policy practice dedicated to shaping inclusive, responsible and resilient financial systems. The position combines intellectual leadership, policy influence, strategic partnerships, resource mobilisation and organisational management to translate rigorous evidence into meaningful regulatory and institutional outcomes.

Remuneration and Location

- Remuneration will be competitive and commensurate with experience
- This position is based remotely, and you will have the flexibility to work from anywhere within India
- Must be willing to travel extensively within India for internal and external meetings, amounting to atleast 20% of monthly working time

Duration

This is a full-time position.

Reporting

The 'Practice Head- Future of Finance Initiative' will report to the Lead at Dvara Research.

How to apply

Interested candidates may send their CV and cover letter to **supriya.saxena@dvara.com**, with the subject line: **"Practice Head - FFI – [Your Name]"**