



Job Description: Policy Research and Influencing Lead

Post: Policy, Research and Influencing Lead
Hours: 30 or 35 hours per week
Location: £27,795 - £33,972 full time, pro-rata for part-time
Reports to: Head of Policy and Strategy

About OPFS

OPFS was founded in 1940 and since then we have been at the forefront of shaping policy and services in Scotland, that support single parents and their children. Today, there are over 144,000 single parent families in Scotland, 25% of all families. We champion their voices and keep their needs at the heart of everything we do.

We want a society in which single parent families are treated equally and fairly. To help achieve this we provide a range of single parent tailored services. We do this through our advice channels, self-help pages on our website and our local community-based services. To create lasting change we involve single parents, experts by experience, to influence policies which challenge discrimination and judgmental attitudes, which will reduce child poverty and make services more accessible to all families.

Overview

The Policy, Research and Influencing Lead will play a key role in supporting OPFS achieve its mission - to ensure the challenge of being both sole carer and breadwinner is recognised and to support single parent families to live free of discrimination, judgmental attitudes and poverty to achieve their potential.

You will have a central role in OPFS policy, research and influencing work, including:

- Leading on developing strong policy recommendations across the range of issues affecting single parent families.
- Utilise research of relevance to single parent families to support OPFS's external messaging and forward planning. Where resource allows, commission additional research.
- Developing impactful policy influencing strategies to improve the lives of single parents, by influencing the Scottish and UK Governments as well as local authorities and the general public to achieve change.
- Working collaboratively with OPFS Comm's team and colleagues and stakeholders to disseminate OPFS policy and research activities.



- Working with OPFS Business Development team to secure funding for the organisation's policy and research activity.

Specific Duties Include

Policy Work

- Acting as a source of expertise on the issues affecting single parents, lead work on specific policy projects, maintain up to date knowledge on research relating to single parent families.
- Build and maintain up to date knowledge of policy, parliamentary and other legislative developments affecting the lives of single parents.
- Work effectively and regularly with OPFS services and Communications team to ensure a two-way dialogue of emerging issues and changes to policy and practice.

Research, policy development and influencing

- Produce briefings, reports and consultation responses for Government, public bodies and other organisations and stakeholders.
- Manage relevant research projects and budgets where required to inform policy development.
- Identify and build strong relationships with single parents, key stakeholders, including civil servants, Parliamentarians, and policy colleagues to maximise OPFS impact and influence.
- Develop influencing strategies to achieves a tangible and identifiable change in policy and practice for single parents.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of OPFS s organisational strategy.

Media and campaigning

- Contribute to media work, maintaining and building OPFS public profile in interviews and media planning across key policy areas.
- Take an active role in supporting OPFS's campaigns, including working with the Communications Team to support the development of campaigning strategies and maximise the contribution of single parents to OPFS campaigning work.

Project management

- Work with OPFS Business Development team to write funding bids in key priority areas of policy work.
- Develop and manage policy budgets, taking responsibility for ensuring resources are used effectively and reporting regularly and when required.
- Take an active approach to managing and planning work in line with OPFS strategic priorities and communicating effectively with colleagues throughout.



Managing work and contributing to the team

- Work constructively within the Policy and Campaigns team and teams across OPFS respecting and supporting colleagues and sharing policy and research expertise.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues, external stakeholders, and networks, to maximise dissemination opportunities for OPFS policy and research.

Corporate responsibilities

- To actively contribute to OPFS organisational cohesion, supporting cross-team working, and a problem-solving approach.
- To work in line with OPFS values and Code of Conduct.
- To take personal responsibility and ensure compliance with corporate policies, including safeguarding, confidentiality, health and safety and data protection.
- To champion equal opportunities and diversity both in your area of work and the wider organisation.
- To ensure single parent voice and experience informs the design and development of OPFS policy & influencing work where appropriate.

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Creative, strategic and experienced in delivering impactful campaigns.
- Knowledge of and previous experience working on the main policy areas affecting single parent families such as social security, employment, child poverty, child or family policy.
- A sound understanding of the policy environment, political institutions, and process of government.
- Experience of primary qualitative and quantitative research.
- Experience in combining research and policy project work with reactive activities.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate and represent OPFS with a variety of audiences, including single parents, civil servants, MSPs, MPs and other senior charity stakeholders.
- Strong planning and project management experience, overseeing the delivery of multiple projects to deadline and within resources.
- Ability to plan and manage own workload, which delivers quality outputs and outcomes towards the overall organisational strategy.
- Ability to work under pressure.
- Proven ability to develop strong, effective relationships internally and externally and work effectively as a team member and contribute to cross-team working.
- Knowledge and understanding of single parent issues and the impact on children, young people and adults.

- Able to work confidentially in a digital office, including standard Microsoft office software packages, CRM databases and social media and identifying opportunities to use digital to improve efficiency.
- Highly developed understanding of equality and diversity and how it affects the organisation.

Desirable

- Experience in drafting press statements and giving media interviews.
- Experience of working with single parents.

Terms & Conditions

1. **Period of appointment:** The appointment is fixed term until 31st March 2023. Any extension would be dependent on funding being secured. Confirmation of appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a 3-month probationary period, and references.
2. **Salary:** £27,795 - £33,972 full time, pro-rata for part time.
3. **Hours of Work:** 30 or 35 hours per week.
4. **Holidays:** Holiday entitlement of 5.6 weeks per annum will accrue pro rata to the hours worked and be paid with your monthly salary. This will include an additional 5 days per year after 5 years' service. (This will be pro-rated from your start date in the fifth year of service).
5. **Pension:** You will be auto enrolled from your start date. Your contribution will be 3% and OPFS will contribute 7%.
6. **Training and support and supervision:** You will receive induction training and frequent support in the first three months. Thereafter you will receive monthly individual support and supervision and annual appraisals. Regular team meetings will be held, and staff have access to internal and external training.
7. **Equal Opportunities and Family Friendly Employment:** OPFS aims to be an equal opportunity and family friendly employer. OPFS has Investors In People status and Living Wage accreditation.
8. **Closing date:** The closing date is 22nd December 2021 at 5pm. We will be in touch with shortlisted candidates for interviews in January 2022. Please download an application form from our website www.opfs.org.uk and email your completed application form to jobs@opfs.org.uk. Please contact info@opfs.org.uk or 0131 556 3899 if you require a paper application form.

The role description is a broad picture of the post at the time of preparation. It is not an exhaustive list of all possible duties, and it is recognised that volunteering roles change and evolve over time.