**Social Innovation Challenge - Programme Manager Job Description**

**Job title:**        Programme Manager

**Reporting to:** Head of Programmes

**Salary:**            £34k p.a. (pro-rata)

**Hours:**            Part-time (28 hrs p/w)

**Based:**            Home working, with occasional access to our office in Edinburgh

**Start date:**       ASAP

**Contract:**         Permanent

**Interview date:** 9 February 2022

**Job Advert**

Firstport is looking for a [Programme Manager] with a background in community engagement and a track record of using user-centred service design methodologies to help us shape, launch and deliver our new Social Innovation Challenge. Building on the success of our previous Social Innovation Competition, Firstport aims to launch a redesigned programme to support innovative and collaborative social enterprise solutions to challenges facing individuals, communities and the environment.

This refreshed iteration of the competition will be based on a ‘challenge prize’ approach, where a specific problem or challenge is posed, and individuals and businesses are invited to provide enterprising, innovative solutions to address it.

The challenge will be aimed at the aspiring and early-stage social entrepreneurs currently supported by Firstport as well as new potential participants, partners and stakeholders within the wider Scottish ecosystem. The format of the challenge will be led by the communities engaged, but it is envisaged that collaboration among challenge participants will be encouraged and that successful challenge participants will receive funding to kickstart/deliver their proposals, together with tailored business support

*The Social Innovation Challenge will address annual themes, with the first round building on the legacy of COP26 and seeking solutions to climate challenge issues facing rural communities.*

Highly organised, dynamic and a strong networker, the successful candidate will have good knowledge of user research and service design methodologies. They will demonstrate experience in supporting people from a wide range of backgrounds to design new products or services or come up with solutions to specific issues or problems. Experience of previous work on a challenge model would be an advantage.

The successful candidate will have excellent written and spoken communication skills and be confident presenting to different audiences. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the concept of social enterprise and social innovation, and of the opportunities and challenges for start-ups and early-stage enterprises.

Applications from freelancers interested in developing the programme on a project basis may be considered.

**Job description**

The Programme Manager (PM) will be responsible for re-designing and implementing a fresh approach to our Social Innovation Competition based on a challenge-prize model.

The PM will lead initial user research and community engagement and work with a multi-disciplinary team to develop the programme format and criteria.

They will lead on identifying and engaging with potential stakeholders. This will include those relevant to the chosen theme of the first annual challenge, as well as stakeholders from Scotland’s wider social enterprise, innovation and business networks.

The PM will work closely with our Digital and Communications Team to oversee the promotion of the Challenge and will take part in a targeted outreach campaign.

They will also work alongside our team of Business Advisers, engaging directly with Challenge participants. This will include providing support prior to submission of proposals, and after the competition has closed. It is envisaged that both successful and unsuccessful Challenge participants with strong ideas receive the support they need to move forward.

The PM will co-ordinate the shortlisting process and decision-making panels.

In addition, the PM will be involved in steering the direction of the competition in future years and will once again employ user research to identify and define each annual challenge.

**Key Duties and Responsibilities**

**General**

* Take a user-centric approach to the design, launch and delivery of the Social Innovation Challenge
* Identify and engage with stakeholders to define the challenge format and criteria based on user needs
* Undertake stakeholder and user research activities
* Lead project team meetings and facilitate workshops, as required, working closely with colleagues across business support, communications and programmes to ensure a joined-up approach
* Conduct outreach and oversee delivery of promotional activity to encourage participants from a wide range of backgrounds and geographical locations within Scotland to step forward
* Provide support participants both in the period prior to submitting their applications, and post-award decision (both successful and unsuccessful), linking them up with other potential partners and sources of support and funding as appropriate
* Encourage and facilitate collaboration between potential applicants
* Work with the wider Awards team to facilitate application, shortlisting and decision-making processes
* Ensure the programme is designed to be as accessible as possible, taking into account additional support needs of potential applicants.

**Other**

* Develop opportunities to upskill colleagues and share learning
* This is a new role and there may be scope to become involved in other programmes.

**Person specification - skills and key qualities**

We are looking for talented people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities. Whether through lived or gained experience, or both, you will understand and share a passion for what we do.

**Essential**

* Experienced in using user-centred/service design methodologies to engage with and understand the needs of communities.
* Experienced in community engagement
* Proven ability to support people from a wide range of backgrounds to design new products or services or come up with solutions to specific issues or problems.
* Evidence of having developed strong networks of contacts
* Proven ability to identify and establish relationships with new stakeholders and partners
* Proven ability to support potential participants and encourage collaboration and joint working
* Exceptional communication skills – written and spoken; confident in presenting to different audiences both in person and remotely using digital tools (e.g. Zoom)
* Excellent organisational and time management skills to manage multiple priorities concurrently.
* Understanding of the concepts of Social Enterprise and Social Innovation
* Ability to identify sustainable business proposals

**Desirable**

* Experience of working on a challenge model, hackathon or similar approach
* Experience of working in the field of Social Enterprise and/or Social Innovation
* Experience of working with innovative businesses
* Experience of innovation ecosystem (private and third sector)
* Understanding of grant making processes and design and application of funding criteria
* Understanding and experience of agile working practices
* Knowledge of the support ecosystem for early-stage purpose-driven businesses in Scotland

**About Firstport**

The Firstport Group is Scotland’s leading agency for supporting social entrepreneurs, social enterprises, and purpose-led businesses. Encompassing Firstport for Social Entrepreneurs and FirstImpact, the group has over 14 years’ experience supporting thousands of entrepreneurs to develop, start, and grow their businesses.

Firstport is Scotland’s development agency for start-up social enterprise. We support early-stage social enterprises and highly motivated people to test, refine and grow their ideas into viable social businesses. Our support includes seed funds, business advice, training, practical tools, and connections to help social entrepreneurs make their ideas a reality.

FirstImpact works with the wider business-as-a-force-for-good movement across all sectors who want to structure and grow their businesses in a way that is profitable, mission-led, and impact-focused.

In 2019 we launched our strategy, [Increasing Social Impact Through Entrepreneurship,](https://www.firstport.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Firstport-strategy-Increasing-impact-through-entrepreneurship.pdf)with a focus on increasing our capacity to support the growing interest in social entrepreneurship and playing a more purposeful role in shaping the wellbeing economy in Scotland. While we continue to pursue the principles outlined in the strategy, we are doing so with a renewed and refreshed focus, considering the context in which we now operate, and the need to respond to a different future.

We are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and we aim to recruit and retain the best candidates from the widest pool of talent, one which reflects the communities we serve.

We strive to create an environment where everyone can be themselves and do their best work. We offer:

* A generous holiday package with 33 annual leave entitlement (including bank holidays). Office closure the days between Christmas and New Year
* Pension scheme
* Flexible working
* An Employee Assistance Programme, which provides access to a range of support relating to work/life balance, physical, emotional, and mental health
* Bike-to-work scheme

Find out more about us on our website - [www.firstport.org.uk](http://www.firstport.org.uk)