

Post	Policy Officer
Salary	£33,409, per annum plus 6% pension (pro-rata)
Duration	3-year fixed term
Hours	17.5 hours per week
Location	Flexible as to location including home-based; office accommodation in Glasgow; and open to other locations in Scotland. Travel is expected where required to meet project delivery.
Line Manager	Policy and Campaigns Manager

JOB PURPOSE

To support the development and delivery of the Poverty Alliance's *Taking Action on Rural Poverty* project. Supporting the work of the project's Development Officers, the Policy Officer will play a leading role in the project's aim to strengthen evidenced based advocacy work on rural poverty by civil society organisations in two rural Local Authority areas. The Policy Officer will be responsible for amplifying the findings of the project across rural Scotland, ensuring that the findings translate into action. This will require engagement with civil society organisations, Local Authorities and national policymakers to ensure that 'rural proofing' is a core aspect of anti-poverty policy and practice.

JOB BACKGROUND

The Poverty Alliance acts as the national anti-poverty network in Scotland, with a membership base including representatives from the community and voluntary sectors, trade unions, faith groups, statutory bodies and others. The Scottish Government, local authorities and charitable trusts financially support us to carry out our work, alongside our members.

Set up in 1992, the Poverty Alliance has a long track record in working with individuals and communities facing poverty both to take action against poverty themselves as well as to have an influence over the solutions to poverty and social exclusion. In recent years we have increasingly sought to 'convert' this grassroots engagement work into clearer policy positions and to support the lobbying and

influencing work of the Poverty Alliance. The Policy Officer will enhance the Alliance's capacity to intervene effectively in key policy areas and to lobby for change.

To help take forward this approach we will be delivering a new project *Taking Action on Rural Poverty*, funded by the Robertson Trust, to develop solutions to the rural poverty premium. This project aims to better connect groups and organisations operating in rural parts of Scotland, and develop more effective participation structures which are informed by the needs and aspirations of people living in poverty. The project has three core objectives:

1. To support people with direct experience of poverty and trauma, community and voluntary organisations, the private sector and public bodies to collaborate to address the poverty premium;
2. To support the enhancement of participation processes in rural areas to enable people with experience of poverty and trauma to contribute to local decision making; and
3. To strengthen evidenced based advocacy work on rural poverty by civil society organisations in two rural Local Authority areas, with lessons applicable across rural Scotland and in national policy.

The Policy Officer will work alongside all the stakeholders involved in the project to ensure that policy and practice lessons emerging from the activity are effectively disseminated and used in advocacy opportunities. These opportunities would include those at the local level with local authorities and development agencies, as well as at the national level with Scottish Government and other national bodies.

Policy advocacy will broadly cover two areas: those relating to rural poverty, with a focus on the poverty premium; and those relating to approaches to participatory policy development in rural Scotland. A key aspect of the Policy Officer role will be connecting the evidence and experience emerging at the local level with Scotland wide policy issues, and helping to contribute to the rural proofing of policy. They will work closely with research and policy colleagues in the project team to contribute to the wider impact of the project across Scotland.

The post will require someone who has experience of policy analysis and development, including covering a range of areas including economic development, social policy and community development. Knowledge and experience of rural poverty and of rural civil society organisations and networks would be an advantage.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities are:

1. **Supporting the development and delivery of *Taking Action on Rural Poverty* policy and advocacy activities**
2. **Utilising evidence from the project to develop, and contribute to, a range of policy papers and outputs**

3. Engaging with key policy stakeholders in local and national government and across civil society in support of the project's findings and positions.

Detailed responsibilities:

1. Supporting the development and delivery of Taking Action on Rural Poverty policy and advocacy activities

- Providing relevant policy inputs on key issues to project participants.
- Identifying policy and advocacy opportunities for the project's outputs.
- Ensuring project participants have effective policy support to undertake advocacy actions.
- Supporting the engagement of wider policy stakeholders in the development of TARP.

2. Contributing to a range of policy papers and outputs

- To draft responses to policy consultations relevant to the Taking Action on Rural Poverty project.
- Produce a range of briefings and position papers based on evidence drawn from the Taking Action on Rural Poverty project.
- To work with colleagues in the Policy and Campaigns team to ensure the effective communication of Poverty Alliance policy positions.
- Supporting communications activity relevant to the project, including engagement on social media.
- To contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the Poverty Alliance's policy impact.

3. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders

- To build and maintain relationships with stakeholders in key policy areas, including elected members (MSPs, MPs, local councillors), government officials, local authority officials, to build support for Poverty Alliance policy positions.
- To maintain relationships with key individuals and organisations across civil society, including Poverty Alliance members, to ensure that our policy positions and campaigning goals are effectively coordinated.
- Engage with key Scottish and UK civil society campaigns relevant to the Taking Action on Rural Poverty project.

General

- To contribute to project team meetings and planning processes as required.
- Contribute to a positive working environment in which equality and diversity are valued and staff are enabled to do their best.
- To carry out other tasks and duties as required by the Policy and Campaigns Manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Experience

- Experience in a policy and/or public affairs environment.
- Experience of developing relationships and networks to influence social justice policy at the local or national level.
- Experience of working in fast paced environment, and able to work under own direction.
- Demonstrable experience of applying effective problem-solving techniques when the situation demands.

Essential Knowledge and skills

- Excellent understanding of the poverty related social policy landscape (including but not limited to social security, employment, health inequalities, housing, public services, democratic participation) and its application in practice in Scotland.
- Excellent understanding of the Scottish and UK political and parliamentary landscape and processes.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of media and audiences.
- Good analytical problem-solving skills.
- Demonstrable commitment to collaborative team work.
- Demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equality and valuing diversity.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, and ability to influence/persuade a wide range of stakeholders.
- Excellent organisational and workload management skills.
- IT skills, in particular MS Teams, SharePoint, Zoom.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of working alongside people with experience of poverty.
- Experience of working on rural policy issues.
- Experience of working on communications activity, including news media and social media.
- Educated to Degree level, or equivalent, in appropriate discipline e.g. Social Sciences.
- A sound understanding of Scottish civil society organisations including the voluntary and community sectors, trade unions, faith groups, etc.