Job Description

Job title: Policy Engagement Officer

Reporting to: Chief Executive

Salary: £35,112 (VHS Grade 3)

Hours: 35 per week

Location: 18 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EP (with hybrid working options)

Benefits: 25 days annual leave, 7 public holidays, 6 floating and office closure days, 6% pension employer contribution (terms and conditions apply), death in service insurance.

Who we are

We are the national intermediary and network for voluntary health organisations in Scotland. Our vision is a healthier, fairer Scotland served by a thriving voluntary health sector. Our mission is to improve people's health and wellbeing by providing an effective national network for voluntary health organisations. We work with our members and others to address health inequalities, to improve health related policy, systems and partnership working, and to help people and communities to live healthier and fairer lives.

We are a registered Scottish charity and a company limited by guarantee, governed by our Board of Trustees/Directors. Our team comprises six employees and one freelancer. We receive financial support from the Scottish Government, for which we deliver an annual programme of work.

What we do

Collaboration and networking: we promote more integrated working and co-produced solutions between the voluntary and statutory sectors in order to promote equality and reduce health inequalities. We facilitate networking and we promote partnership working, co-production and mutual support across our membership.

Promotion and advocacy: we amplify the voice of the voluntary health sector by providing our members with a wide range of opportunities to share their experience, expertise, views and ideas with wider audiences. We gather, build and promote evidence about the third sector's contribution to health agendas and outcomes.

Leadership and influence: we bring the voluntary health sector's voice and expertise into national policy making. We do this by connecting our members with Scottish Government,

NHS and other public sector decision makers. We support a two-way flow of information and ideas, and provide a platform for our members to be critical friends to policy makers.

Knowledge into action: we raise our members' awareness of health priorities, we analyse and translate policy for and with our members. We provide our members with a wide range of information and opportunities for learning, knowledge exchange and creation, development and action.

Purpose of role

1. To deliver outcomes that further VHS's vision and help deliver its mission.
2. To plan and deliver an effective programme of policy, research and public affairs work, with a strong emphasis on engagement and communication with members, networks and other external stakeholders.
3. To work collaboratively and pro-actively with the Chief Executive and all team members to support delivery of VHS's overall strategy and work programme.

Key results areas

1. Actively engage our membership in the full range of VHS's policy and public affairs work, using a wide range of communication methods, including face to face, written and digital.

2. Identify, analyse and communicate relevant policy developments and their impact on health to VHS members. Translate complex policy ideas for third sector audiences. Prepare high quality responses on formal policy consultations. Prepare and disseminate briefings, reports and case studies.

3. Provide effective platforms to support VHS members to develop their voice and influence. Support members to contribute actively to national working groups, cross-party groups and similar. Participate directly in such groups, as appropriate. Establish systems for disseminating feedback from these groups to the wider VHS membership. Lead and support the Heath Policy Officers Network.

4. Survey and analyse members' activities, impact and priorities and build a robust evidence base on the third sector's contribution to health. Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation tools as required. Lead on the development and implementation of research projects.

5. Contribute actively to the production and delivery of external communications to support VHS's policy and public affairs work. Collaborate closely with colleagues to actively content manage the VHS website and deliver an effective social media strategy. Write and contribute content for the E-bulletin and website.

6. Collaborate actively with the Events and Engagement Lead and other colleagues in the development and delivery of successful policy events. Deliver presentations and workshops on policy topics. Produce Key Messages from VHS events and produce minutes of meetings of the Cross Party Group on Health Inequalities.

8. Represent VHS and manage active and effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholder and partner organisations. These include the Scottish Government, NHS,

Public Health Scotland, the Scottish Parliament, academic institutions, and a wide range of third sector organisations.

9. Contribute actively and constructively to VHS's overall development, including to its strategic plan and operational plans. Provide appropriate support for the Chief Executive. Provide reports to the Board of Trustees/Directors and VHS's funders as required. Support the drafting of funding and partnership proposals.

10. Take responsibility for administration of own work and communications, including electronic filing and data input to Salesforce (VHS customer relationship management system).

11. Be actively committed to your own development and learning. Contribute constructively at your support and appraisal meetings. Be a supportive and flexible team player.

12. Carry out other tasks and duties as required.

Person Specification

This post requires the following experience, competences and knowledge:

1. Demonstrable understanding of policy making structures and processes in Scotland. Strong track record of engagement with government policy development systems/processes and with policy makers, preferably in relation to the Scottish Government (for example, writing responses to public consultations or serving on policy groups).

2. An understanding of public affairs and the Scottish parliamentary system and processes.

3. Able to write high quality material that communicates content/ideas clearly and compellingly.

4. Numerate: able to gather, analyse and use data.

5. Pro-active team player: able and willing to work very collaboratively, flexibly and responsively in a fast paced working environment

6. Excellent interpersonal skills: able to communicate effectively (face to face as well as electronically) with a wide range of stakeholders, to build positive working relationships and to achieve positive results through other people.

7. Conscientious and committed to producing accurate and high quality work at all times.

8. High degree of self-motivation: ability to take the initiative, to prioritise and manage own workload and to learn fast.

9. Ability to stay calm under pressure, work to tight deadlines and find flexible solutions to problems.

10. Competence and confidence in using IT applications, including Microsoft programmes, digital and social media.

11. Knowledge and understanding of the third sector in Scotland, e.g. through previous paid or voluntary roles.

Experience and knowledge in the following areas would be an advantage:

1. Knowledge and understanding of current health and social care issues in Scotland.
2. Knowledge and experience of research and evaluation methodologies.
3. Educated to degree level, or equivalent level of experience.
4. Comfortable using Wordpress or similar to content manage websites.
5. Comfortable using a Customer Relations Management System, e.g. Salesforce.

Closing date for applications: 9.00 am on Monday 13th November 2023.

Interviews will be held in person between 27th and 29th November 2023.